

Musical phonics intervention project for Year 3

An alternative approach to support children struggling with their phonic development, using music as a vehicle to help embed the learning and offer fun, multi-sensory interactions with words and sounds.

Background

The project looks at using aspects of the music curriculum to support an area of phonics that children find difficult; alternative vowel spellings. Some children struggle with these as readers; most children get muddled when they spell. As both music and phonics are sound based, the link is a strong, natural and helpful one to make. Significant learning points for both subjects are covered in the resource; neither subject 'piggy backs' on the other. It has been developed for children in Year 3 who are challenged by their phonics work, to be used in a small group situation (up to 8 individuals) supported by a familiar member of school staff. However, schools may feel that it may also be appropriate in Years 2 and 4, with some adaptations.

A soft-touch intervention

Children who are struggling to read need more practice with hearing sounds and seeing spellings. Their issues are often with:

- phonological awareness (recognising sounds),
- processing speed (e.g. seeing a symbol and recognising or saying it),
- memory (both working memory and long-term memory).

The alternative long vowel sound spellings particularly challenging as there are so many variables to explore. Music lends itself to the sort of repeated practice struggling readers need to secure this knowledge in their memories and to become fluent with matching the different spellings to their sounds.

Note that this is not a systematic revision of all phonics but a support for one particularly challenging area.

Intended Impact

- children will develop greater fluency with their long vowel sounds and spellings
- children will be more confident when tackling unfamiliar spellings or encountering new words in their reading
- children will make meaningful links between phonics and music
- children will use music and songs to help them recall their phonic knowledge
- children will build tools to help them develop their own strategies to remembering long vowel sounds and their alternative spellings
- CPD for school-based staff who will be upskilled to work with other children through this alternative phonic intervention approach



Resource description

There are 5 units in our Sounds Aloud phonics project, one unit of work for each ½ term. Within each unit, work focusses on a specific genre or 'mood' of music and a long vowel sound. The mood is important to support securing the phonic knowledge in long term memory. Each unit is intended span a 5/6 week term.

Each main session will last 45 minutes with at least 2 x 10 minute revision sessions built in between main sessions – timing at each teacher's discretion. The main session will be planned and delivered by the HMS practitioner supported by a key member of the school-based staff (familiar LSA / HLTA / class teacher).

The main sessions are very similar in format to encourage a routine that frees children's attention to focus on content so maximising the time for completing tasks.

Revision sessions will be led by school-based staff in between the weekly sessions, discussed and developed in direct response to the main session to continue working on key aspects of learning to further embed and deepen the children's knowledge and working levels.

Resources required are minimal for each unit:

- musical extracts, songs and backing tracks to accompany each unit
- flashcards and other visual resources
- school reading book
- access to a collaborative board (Padlet or similar)

All resources will be freely available to the school for the entirety of the project.

Project breakdown:

- initial meeting with HT / SENCo / Class-teacher / LSA to discuss overview of project and expectations, logistics and timeframes
- 1 hour planning and success criteria setting with designated school based practitioners (LSA /class teacher / SENCo)
- baseline assessment sessions 2 hours (based on 8 children @15 mins per assessment)
- weekly sessions per half-term,(dates agreed between school and HMS practitioner)
 - 45 minutes contact time per week
 - 2 x 10 minute revision sessions (led by school-based staff)
 - evaluation of project, feedback, evidence collation
 - tracking and monitoring of all children involved in project
 - free access to all planning and resources during project input
- final assessment and pupil voice evaluation 2 hours (based on 8 children @ 15 mins per assessment)

Total cost: £1,875

