

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

**FINAL REPORT ON THE OTLA PHASE 6 (ENGLISH) PROJECT -
DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING OF POST-16 PHONICS
APPROACHES**

Haringey Adult Learning Service

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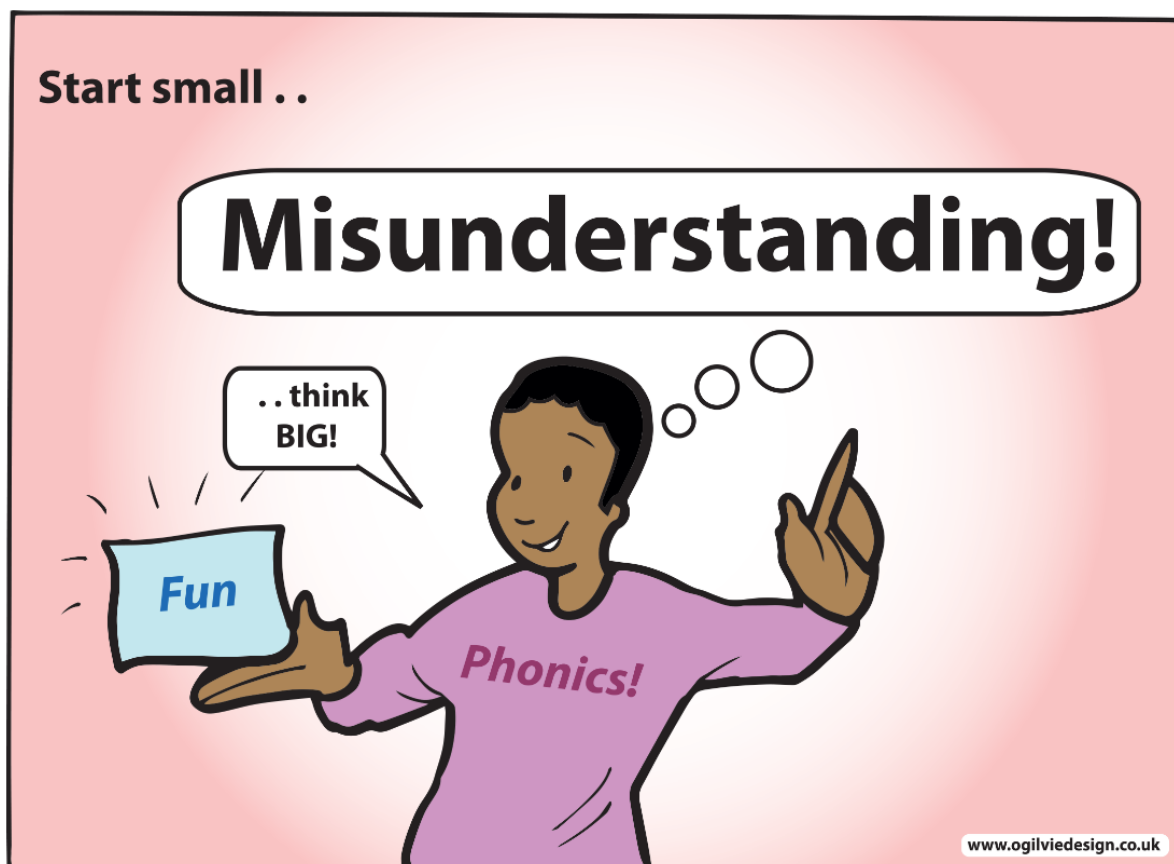


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Final Report - Deepening understanding of Post-16 phonics approaches

Haringey Adult Learning Service



This project's approach was twofold: facilitating use of Post-16 Phonics approaches generally across the service and specifically through instituting a phonics-based spelling club. The project fostered meaningful collaboration between tutors, volunteers, support staff and learners.

Summary

Haringey Adult Learning Service (HALS) is a local authority provider for learners aged 19 plus. The service provides courses through 5 programme areas (Functional Skills, ESOL, Wellbeing, Career Development and Family Learning), aligned to council strategic priorities in economic development and health.

The reformed Functional Skills emphasis on underpinning skills led HALS to seek a whole-service approach to improvement that gave tutors new tools to support learner confidence through improved spelling and reading, identified as challenging for a large proportion of the learner cohort.

Rationale

Analysis of initial assessments in the service identified spelling as an underdeveloped skill area. Learners reported that spelling issues held them back in career or study and contributed to feelings of low self-esteem and self-confidence.

A further identified need across the service was in reading both study texts and for pleasure. Learners and assessment staff reported challenges in decoding which affected both achievement and retention.

The service has a goal to improve how volunteers and frontline staff are used to support teaching, learning and assessment.

Approach

Training & Support for Staff and Volunteers

We delivered a series of CPD and support sessions for frontline staff and volunteers as well as tutors and curriculum leads. These included:

- Post-16 Phonics for spelling workshops delivered by our mentor for 28 staff and representatives from 4 other London Borough ACLS;
- project visits to classrooms;
- weekly cross curricular discussions, including learner support staff, supporting the rationale and aims of the project;
- staff-led training equipping colleagues with 5-minute Try Out activities.

Teaching

Two drop-in spelling clubs were delivered on Friday mornings. They were divided into Pre-Entry to Entry Level 1 literacy skills and a group with skills working at Entry Level 2 plus. Over the 8 focused weeks of the club, 20 learners attended and actively took part.

Learners were encouraged to explore how spelling had impacted on their lives and study, and to take a proactive role in understanding the phonics approach and evaluating the lesson activities in continuous feedback. As the lessons continued, tutor diary reflections describe how the initial 'design' was adapted, and a pattern developed, that involved starting sessions with a text, underlining and sorting activities focusing on key sounds and culminating with work on word stretching on mini whiteboards. Learners were also encouraged to explore the frequency of graphemes and reported that this helped reduce the stress of the spelling 'mountain'. The use of personal whiteboards created a safe space shown by the more reluctant writers who very quickly moved to put ideas in writing (see Appendices 4 and 5).

Try-out activities

Tutors and support staff were given activities from the Post-16 Phonics toolkit or those adapted in the Spelling Club to trial in classes or in other learner support contexts. Activities were tried in 6 different classes across ESOL, ICT, English and maths.

Professional learning: Evidence of changes in teaching, learning and assessment practices

This project encouraged regular reflection on the part of participants in the form of an email 'diary'. The key participants used their reflections to feed back into the project proposal on a weekly basis and were empowered to make their own adjustments through evaluation and discussion (Appendix 4).

Assumptions which were made in the initial framework of the project plan – for example that the phonics approach would be more valuable to Functional Skills classes than ESOL – were re-evaluated and adjusted. Some of the clearest evidence of success was drawn from the ESOL team both in terms of tutor feedback and engagement and learner progress. Learner referrals from ESOL increased in the first few weeks of the project as ESOL learners reported back to the classes the benefits of being in the club. These were limited to maintain a balance of ESOL and first language speakers in the club, and a separate 'phonics for ESOL' club was proposed along with specific training in phonics for ESOL.

The Post-16 phonics toolkit formed a core resource underpinning the activities base of the spelling club; however, learner responses to the piloted activities were used as guides to implement, adapt or reject activities as the club progressed and evolved. Activities from the toolkit recommended and trialed in the club have been embedded within Functional Skills Entry Level classes to support achievement.

Participation in CPD activities designed to give the project as wide a reach as possible was high. From the beginning of the project, a range of CPD sessions took place and resulted in a series of formal and informal professional discussions cascading into team meetings and, of course, beside the photocopier! CPD sessions on the project and the approach were opened out to colleagues from other London Boroughs and information and progress from the project was shared in network groups.

A CPD session co-presented by the volunteer lead included staff from all curriculum areas, support staff and curriculum managers (see Appendix 3). 5-minute 'Try-out' materials and activities were disseminated to all CPD participants to encourage whole service support for the project and to broaden understanding of the approach and raise interest and awareness across the service. Reflection and evaluation were encouraged particularly from non-specialists and those outside the main focus of project activity. Feedback from staff demonstrated an interest in learning more about the phonics-based approach and its impact on learners as well as their own understanding of spelling.

"I enjoyed delivering the task, but it will take time some for me to grow in confidence with teaching phonics."

"Through research and practice, I am finding it easier to embed a phonic based approach in my classes. My initial fears have gone and now I am quite enthusiastic"

about finding ways to teach phonics to my learners and making the sessions fun and beneficial to them as well."

"I combined the phonics activity with columns and tables in my ECDL class – it was easy and fun to embed."

Evidence of improved collaboration and changes in organisational practices

Three volunteers took key roles in this research in designing, trialling and evaluating the activities in the club and classroom, writing reflections of the project, supporting offshoots of the project (a weekly reading club), and co-delivering CPD. This has raised the profile of volunteers in the organisation and led to an award nomination for one volunteer.

The priority given to involvement of all service staff in CPD containing educational theory and practice was well received. Staff with key responsibilities for Learning Difficulties or Disabilities, marketing and team administration reported positively on their experience:

"it was great to be involved"

"phonics seems like a revolution"

"it gives a new way of looking at supporting our learners to not feel like failures."

Links and professional discussions between Functional Skills tutors and Pre/Entry Level 1 ESOL tutors and support staff around literacy issues have increased through sharing learners, tracking progress and email dialogue about the Spelling Club. Referrals from ESOL to literacy, whilst already in place at Level 1 and Level 2, have now started to develop at Pre-Entry level.

The paper-based initial assessment for literacy has been revised to make it more accessible for learners with Pre-Entry needs. Changes were influenced by feedback from spelling club members. One learner went from being emotional when faced with an enrolment form to 'achieving' an initial assessment and involvement in a discussion around his literacy strengths.

Evidence of improvement in learners' achievements, retention and progression

"I break down the word into sounds and that is helpful."

"I feel these lessons are very good and would like them to continue."

"That went so fast – can we have longer!"

Although retention on Functional Skills courses was a key aim, it soon became apparent that there would be further impact in creating access to literacy sessions for learners who otherwise would not have been able to access learning at HALS because of their Pre-Entry assessments. For these learners like R, a Jamaican-born

male, the activity of moving from 'cat' and 'bed' to 'mattress', 'battery' and 'bedroom' in his first session was such an achievement that he took these words home on sticky notes to post around his shared flat.

Uptake from Functional Skills classes directly to the Spelling Club was low because of timetabling restraints; however, tutors reported that learner confidence in spelling has improved dramatically through the introduction of the phonics based 'slot' in lessons. Retention on Entry Level FS classes has increased from 74.25% in December 2018 to 94.7% in December 2019.

Most referrals were from ESOL classes, and tutor feedback reported progress in class to have increased rapidly in conjunction with attendance on the Spelling Club. Tutor comments included:

"S is demonstrating really rapid progress now in class. Her confidence has grown and she now reads longer words where previously she would hesitate or even stop"

"T really wants to continue with Spelling Club, even if it means she has to drop out of ESOL as she can't juggle both. It is clearly meeting her needs far more than her original class."

Learning from this project

A key success of the Spelling Club was learner feedback on how the approach helped towards rapid, 'adult' achievements. Sessions ended with a plenary conversation with learners about 'what we liked and what worked.'

Most of the learners arrived with very low self-confidence. For some, it was the first time they had attended a literacy session since childhood and for others it was as an alternative or alongside a course of study where negative experiences were still lingering. All learners had an initial conversation with a tutor during their first club session, which explored feelings towards literacy and specifically what role 'spelling' played in this.

Vocabulary chosen by learners indicated the extent and impact of the barriers with words like 'scared', 'stressed', 'depressed' being frequently linked to the word 'spelling'. Although not all learners continued to attend, those who did gave positive feedback about the following contributory factors to their ongoing involvement:

- Moving rapidly in one session from a single sound or CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) word to a range of relevant multisyllabic words e.g. fun to misunderstanding
- Use of concepts which recognised and valued learners' prior knowledge such as the learners having a 'database of sounds'
- A set routine of activities developed over the first weeks of the course enabled learners to feel confident about their own spelling and also empowered to support new learners and introduce them to the concepts as 'knowledge experts'

- Small group size with one tutor and a volunteer meant that no-one was left to struggle or feel lost.
- Focusing on the phonics-based approach, rather than a series of rules, meant that key issues could be highlighted, addressed and then implemented within the rapid extension activities giving more 'success points'.

Other points of learning observed by the project participants were that:

- Learners took to the sound-based approaches at different rates. As the majority of learners needed rapid improvement, this would affect being able to use this approach with a larger group.
- Session preparation was labour intensive because of the lack of available and relevant resources.
- The 'Club' approach where the project was on a separate day to most accredited courses was helpful in encouraging a safe and inclusive atmosphere but also limited the reach of the project.
- The profile of the volunteer on this project was raised and she was appreciated across the service as 'non-specialist expert' (see Appendix 4).
- Professional discussions included and valued the input of non-teaching staff leading to an improved atmosphere of collaboration and pedagogical understanding across the service.
- Non-teaching staff began using newly acquired knowledge to support learners in completing forms and in the initial assessment process.

Appendix 1 - Case Study of B

Confidence

B is a white British man in his 40s. He attended a special needs school as a child. He presents as neurotypical and his learning difficulty is mild. He displays signs of dyslexia but has never been formally assessed for this condition. He has also had alcohol abuse issues in the past, which could have contributed to his retention issues, but he has been in recovery and clean for a number of years.

B came to the spelling club quite late. He came into HALS for an initial assessment to get onto an English course. His reading was assessed at being E1 and his writing was pre-entry. There were not any classes suitable for his level. He was offered the chance to try the spelling class. He engaged well and seemed motivated to learn. A simple diagnostic showed that he knew his alphabet and could spell simple cvc words, but did have some issues with the short vowel sound u. He decided to join the class and for the remaining six weeks he attended every session and was always punctual.

He enjoyed using a white board to spell words. He said that he liked spelling in this way as he felt he was able to make mistakes, practice and then get things right. Initially he showed some concerns over his handwriting, worrying that it was not neat enough. I explained that this did not matter, as long as his writing was legible.

He did appear to have some auditory processing issues. For example he did not initially hear the difference in the sound of the ea digraph in the words bread and steak, during a sorting exercise. After one or two repetitions of the tutor pronouncing the word, he was able to sort it. Initially I thought that this was a consequence of the process of sorting sounds by phonemes was unfamiliar to him. However, as the lessons progressed and we repeated sorting activities for other words, B still seemed to require extra processing times to 'fix the sounds' in his memory.

He responded well to building up words around phonemes eg writing the digraph oy in the middle of the mini whiteboard and then building up phonemes to make words such as enjoy or employ.

All learners were given entry level readers home each week to practice their reading. B enjoys reading. His confidence in reading grew each week and he liked the fact that he was able to explain unfamiliar words to other members of the class that had ESOL needs eg words like tunnel, cosy, etc. B has primary age children and he said that he has always felt 'bad' that he could not help them with their homework. He said he now felt more confident reading with his youngest child and was not embarrassed that they were learning together.

He was very keen for the class to continue and he will be returning to the new spelling class once it starts.

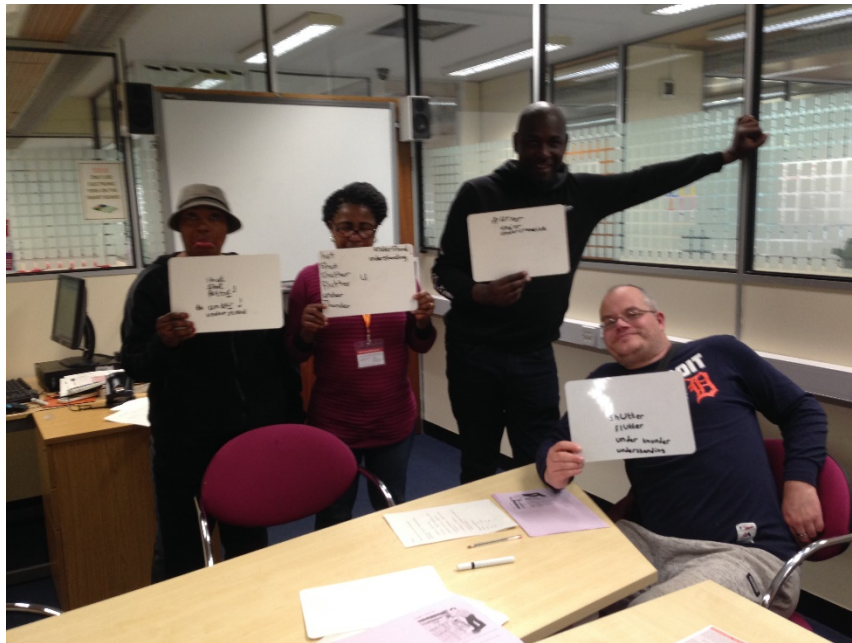
Quotes from B

At the start, I didn't feel too good. I didn't think I would get on here. This place is much more friendly.

I have 3 children sometimes they ask me to help with their homework and I can't help them. Filling in forms is very difficult. Also getting the tube I have to memorize the stations eg Bruce Grove to Oxford Circus.

Everyone's friendly. I knew that there were people in the same boat as me, but I didn't think I would meet them, here.

It's good to do the letters by sound. I enjoyed the gap fill the best. The word stretching is very helpful because you start off with small words and you end up with big words.



Appendix 2 - Case Study of S

Confidence

S is a female in her 40's who is originally from Ghana but has been living and working in the UK for over 20 years. She joined the spelling Club in one of the earliest sessions. She had been enrolled into an E1 ESOL course but both she and her teacher were concerned that this was not the correct course for her. Her tutor reported 'She felt frustrated in my class because she knows the other learners can't speak English but are able to read. She was thinking of quitting the course altogether as she felt it was not addressing her particular need.'

S was initially quite quiet in the course but her confidence built from session to session as she saw her own progress. This was quite different to her experience of other courses where she had felt 'out of place' and like leaving the study as she was 'not fast at learning like others.' S was present for every session and even reported that she had to rearrange her shift work in order to attend the club.

S has developed excellent independent study skills over the duration of the course. She methodically writes all words on the mini whiteboard and unlike the other learners in the class she does not write one word at a time and erase, she writes down lists of words. She then transfers these lists of words into her own notebook. She uses these lists to revise every day at home.

"I spend one hour a day reading the books you give me and going over the lists," We discussed this revision in front of the class. S is obviously making the most progress within the group of learners and they are keen to hear how she is doing this. It was agreed in class that learners would all spend at least 15 minutes revising every day from the start of next term.

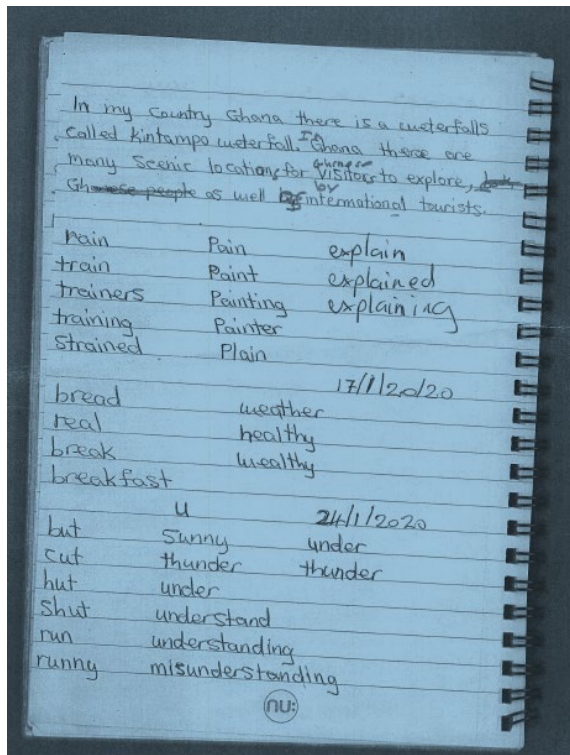
Her class tutor reported, 'She is now reading faster than before and does not stop when she sees longer words. She knows there is still a lot of progress to be made on her side, but she feels very positive about continuing the course.'

Quotes from S

At the beginning of the course it was really difficult. I felt bad about my spelling. It made me feel really upset.

I feel happy now about my spelling. I can spell more words and I can read more words.

I think learning words by sounds makes it easier. It is less confusing for me. I feel more confident. I am reading this book and understanding everything.



Appendix 3 - Phonics Project – Tutor Activity feedback

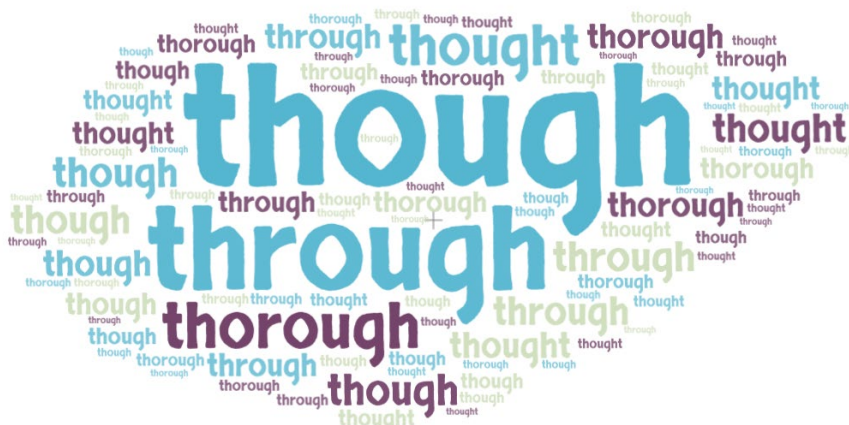
Conversation

Your Class	EB ECDL L2 7770
Your experience with using phonics-based approaches	<p>I am an IT teacher and I have not had any previous experience of phonics. However, I did attend the tutor led CPD prior to trying this activity.</p> <p>I liked the thorough activity so gave that a try.</p>
Number of learners taking part in the activity	11 learners
Time taken for activity	15 minutes
Learner response – Did the learners find the activity easy/enjoyable? Any 'lightbulb' moments?	<p>The learners found it fairly easy and they seemed to enjoy. The learners are mainly native speakers of English. One of them is dyslexic.</p> <p>The learners were competing about which group could find more words and they saw it as a game.</p>
<p>Tutor response – Did you enjoy delivering the activity?</p> <p>How confident would you feel in embedding a phonics-based approach in your class?</p>	<p>Yes I did. I felt quite confident explaining the activity and the learners were interested in hearing about the context and seemed quite appreciative of it.</p> <p>I feel confident that I could embed a phonics-based approach and it would work well with using columns and tables. The only thing is this would then take more time.</p>

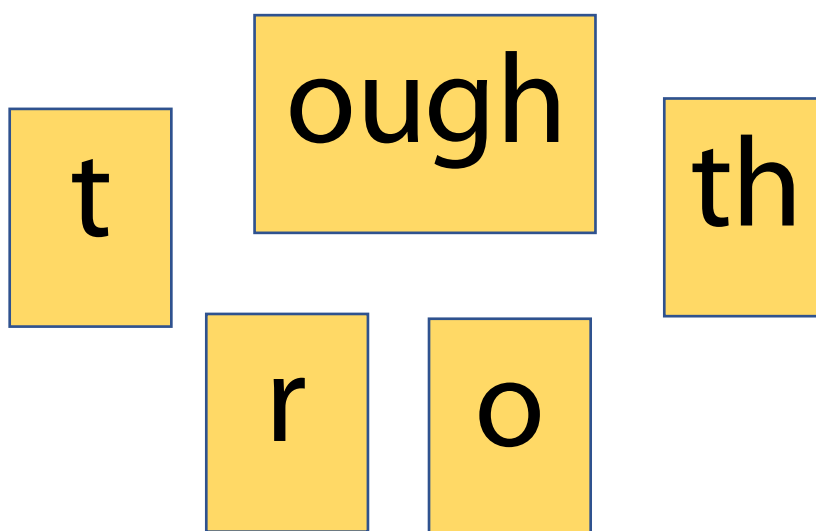
Your Class	MJ- E2 Skills Development ESOL
Your experience with using phonics-based approaches	I have used phonics widely in my lesson in an integrative approach to introduce a topic, the grammar points and to teach the related vocabulary using the correct pronunciation.
Number of learners taking part in the activity	10 learners
Time taken for activity	15 minutes
Learner response – Did the learners find the activity easy/enjoyable? Any 'lightbulb' moments?	<p>The activity involved practising the sounds of /S/,/Z/,/IZ/ of verbs in the third person singular of the Present Simple tense. In pairs, the learners said the verbs aloud and placed them in the correct column according to the pronunciation of the third person ending.</p> <p>Some learners found the activity challenging at first. However, with peer learning and support, all learners were able to complete the task.</p>
<p>Tutor response – Did you enjoy delivering the activity?</p> <p>How confident would you feel in embedding a phonics-based approach in your class?</p>	<p>Yes, I enjoyed delivering the task but it will take time some for me to grow in confidence with teaching phonics.</p> <p>Through research and practice, I am finding it easier to embed a phonic based approach in my classes. My initial fears have gone and now I am quite enthusiastic about finding ways to teach phonics to my learners and making the sessions fun and beneficial to them as well.</p>
Useful resources	<p>https://blog.allaboutlearningpress.com/prefixes/</p> <p>https://blog.allaboutlearningpress.com/suffixes/</p> <p>(notably the Word Flipper)</p>

Your Class	L1 Maths
Your experience with using phonics-based approaches	I didn't know anything about phonics but I like trying things out with my learners and I know some need help with literacy. The activity I chose included work on percentages.
Number of learners taking part in the activity	15
Time taken for activity	20 mins
Learner response – Did the learners find the activity easy/enjoyable? Any 'lightbulb' moments?	The learners liked the way that the activity had a maths focus in using percentages but they also were quite interested in the phonics approach in general. Looking at the frequency of words made spelling seem easier!
Tutor response – Did you enjoy delivering the activity? How confident would you feel in embedding a phonics-based approach in your class?	Yes, I did – I was quite surprised by what I learnt from the activity and so it was fun to see the learners enjoying the surprise too! I am not sure how much I could do this in class but with some more resources, I would be happy to give it a try.

'Thorough' exercise



Give learners 5 sticky notes and ask them to write the following on the sticky notes:



You are going to practise how by learning **one tricky spelling pattern** (grapheme) 'ough', you can easily spell **many** difficult and confusing words.

Start with your puzzle piece 'ough'

Now, join one puzzle piece to make thought 'th – ough'

Now, join another one to make thought 'though- t'

Take that away and add another to make through 'th – r – ough'

Finally make thorough 'th-o-r-ough' – What a thorough job you have done!

Finish this by writing the words down in your book.

Phonic bingo

enormous		frown	should		could	
	found		loud	town		
sour		clown	down		flour	

mouse		drown	would		thousand	
	around		loud	roundabout		
mouth		clown	flower		south	

power		frown	should		proud	
	round		loud	spacious		
pound		would	down		town	

house		south	should		could	
	gracious		loud	ground		
sour		crown	down		flour	

Word list

house	round	thousand	roundabout
frown	drown	round	spacious
sour	town	mouth	gracious
found	could	south	
clown	would	mouse	
down	power	around	
loud	pound	proud	
flower	flour	aloud	

Try Out activity - Ea digraph

Steve was feeling a bit under the weather. He really needed a break. He got up out of bed. He had to get ready for work. What he needed was a healthy breakfast.

He went downstairs. He opened the cupboard. There wasn't any bread. There wasn't any cereal. There was milk. At least he could have a cup of tea. At the back of the fridge he saw a piece of steak. It was a bit early for steak. He made himself a deal. He would eat some really healthy food for lunch.

He cooked the steak. He ate it with real pleasure. It was so pleasant. It tasted great! He began to feel better. It was a shame that he was not wealthy and could eat steak every morning for breakfast.

beach	bread	break
tea	weather	steak
really	ready	great
least	healthy	
deal	pleasure	
eat	pleasant	
	wealthy	
	breakfast	

Read aloud this text and listen to the sounds of the words. Underline any words that have ea words in them.

Put the words into the right column by sound

Are there any words that have ea in them, but sound different?

Appendix 4 – Volunteer reflections

Reflection. Lessons on 18.10. 2019 Friday: 9.30- 10.30am

Re: Entry 3 Spelling Club 18.10.19 9.30 – 10-30am.

Hi,

I agree with Sam and her comments that the lesson went well – and also that we can probably take only one more person in the group. Since the aim is to make students feel able and confident, for an individual learner to address a large group can be intimidating and may inhibit progress. As long as the group does not extend beyond 6, creating a plan/structure where the learners occasionally work in pairs, could also help increase confidence and participation.

With Sam’s guidance and using her lesson plans, I am happy to take the next Entry 3 class, 9.30-10.30am, on 1st November after the half-term break. However, it is good to know that if a new group has by then been organised, Sam is prepared to attend and help facilitate this class.

I support Sam’s idea that it would be good for students – as well as me! – for us to establish a routine they can recognize and feel comfortable with. I also think that such a routine, if used imaginatively with post-its, whiteboards, headlines to read out etc, in order to maintain interest and provide realistic challenges, will enhance learning.

Reflections.

- Starting the class with a recap, focusing on the ‘ea’ digraph and the different sounds/phones it makes within different words, I felt was a good start to the class. K especially responded to the task to create a table of different ‘ea’ sounds. But the others – O, V and E - joined in and Sam demonstrated how one sound [the long ee] was the most common phoneme for ‘ea’ words. This focus on commonality contributed to the one-to-many idea at the heart of this phonics toolkit.¹
- Throughout the class, Sam was good at identifying the needs of different learners and responding accordingly. She asked K to spell more complex words, such as ‘treasure’ and ‘measure’. Sam also asked Z what sort of verb ‘learnt’ was, knowing Z knew it was an irregular verb, and this helped bring her into the class and feel involved. Sam also showed how long words such as ‘employment’ could be broken down.
- Because E and V were not in the first class, they took longer to focus on the main idea in Post-16 Phonics about concentrating on parts of words and sounds and how understanding these opened up vocabulary and helped spelling. E was by the end of the class, still at the stage of thinking she could not spell rather than

¹ Post-16 Phonics Toolkit, Chp 7, One-to-Many

asking how certain sounds in words, eg. ight, our, er, ar, could be spelt. Providing a detailed recap on the theory is difficult in these circumstances, since one does not want to hold back or irritate others. Maybe a quick example of the core idea might help. Or getting one student to explain to another the main idea as they worked in pairs on another task, might be another option.²

- I led on differentiating between au/aw and used the whiteboard to show the different ³spellings of the same sound/phoneme. I found a context had to be used for some of the words – eg for ‘raw’, which could also be spelled ‘roar’, or ‘pause’ which could be spelled ‘paws’. But most of the learners spelt these accurately. ‘August’ proved a problem for E and O tended to add an ‘e’ to ‘raw’ and ‘saw’ until Sam intervened to say that the FIRST spelling of a word is often correct and having ‘second thoughts’ usually produced mistakes. Sam also focused on the word ‘because’ and usefully broke it down, introducing it as one of the most difficult words to spell – which I thought was a good approach.
- During the reading section from the booklet ‘Laughter’, various tricky words were discussed, such as ‘learnt’ and ‘laughter’. O especially liked the reading, but perhaps continued too long and disrupted the dynamics of the group a little. As Sam notes, O’s pronouncement sometimes needed help. Focusing on the grapheme/phoneme connection in vocabulary, rather than correcting individual words, may help this.⁴
- For homework, Sam provided Word Search exercises specialising in aw words. I had to explain to O how these worked and that the answers were on the back. It might have been useful, for some of the learners at least, to not assume students knew how Word Search works. Demonstrating how ONE of the words could be found in the block of letters on the sheet, may have helped.
- The class was very well planned/structured, the learners worked well together and enjoyed being in the group. This sense of being part of a friendly class I think could be developed further in conjunction with applying a routine - which may well settle the learners and reduce any initial anxieties they may possess.

² Post-16 Phonics Toolkit, Chp 5, Essential Concepts

³ Post-16 Phonics Toolkit, Chp 7, One-to-Many

⁴ Post-16 Toolkit, Chp 1.3, Principles & Practices

Reflection. Lessons on 15.11.2019 Friday: 9.30- 10.30am and 11.00- 12.00am.

1.Literacy Class Entry 3. 9.30 -10.30am.

Learners: E, O, K

- Due to a technical error, I did not receive Sam's preparations for both classes until Friday, and Sam was not in college to lead the classes. So, I used hurriedly made plans I had made a home Thursday evening based on former plans and the post-16 phonics toolkit.
- I began the class with a recap of last week focusing on the long 'a' sound spelt 'eigh' and 'ey'.⁵ I asked the learners to provide examples from last week's reading. E was quicker responding and understanding the task. Last week's reading/exercises were shown to K and he quickly comprehended the context and provided examples as did O too.
- I used the useful table of spelling options for Vowels provided by Gigi to explain further the phonics method of one-to-many and show what we had already covered.
- Using an example in the phonics toolkit⁶ I asked the learners to consider a menu of ingredients for tomato/vegetable soup and wrote up the different words they suggested: eg tomatoes, onions, potatoes, olive oil etc. Using these words and others I then asked them to make up their own menus and this led to the discussion of how certain words were spelt and their similarities. K was quick here and we discussed the connections between roast and toast and O asked about the difference between pea soup and peas.
- The general discussion and personal involvement of the learners was high and I felt this helped consolidate the group. The learners read out their menus and this led to further questions and comments.
- I then used some of the culinary terms to return to vowel sounds and focused on the long 'e' sound, eg beef and pea and this led to other words such as heel and deal.⁷
- To increase more involvement the learners then wrote two sentences – each one using a different long 'e' spelling (grapheme) – using the words we had discussed. This task was undertaken and each learner was able to devise two sentences. Both K and E wrote one of their sentences up on the whiteboard.
- When asked to differentiate between a long 'e' sound and a long 'a' in one sentence, O confused the long 'a' sound of 'today' with 'deal' in the sentence 'I made a deal today,' suggesting 'deal' and 'today' sounded the same. I once again suggested she focus on SAYING the word to herself or out loud, rather than

⁵ Post-16 Toolkit, Chp 7, One-to-Many

⁶ Post-16 Phonics Toolkit, Chp 3.2, Case Study and Chp 8, Spelling

⁷ Post-16 Phonics Toolkit, Chp 7, One-to-Many

looking at the text and guessing. A repetition of the one-to-many principle and on the table of the Vowel sounds I think helped clarify the issue.⁸

- Due to the various discussions we had little time for reading. E said she had not finished reading the extract 'The Golden Age of Cinema' which Sam had provided. So I suggested that for homework they work on finishing the piece and now underline all words containing a long 'e' sounds as well as long 'a' sound. I also handed out my own versions of Wordsearch to the learners since these were liked, especially by E. These were run on different subjects, rather than vowel sounds, eg aw and ay, but I hoped would still be useful.
- O sadly said she would not be attending anymore due to a family bereavement and that she was returning to Jamaica but may return to the UK in the new year.

⁸ Post-16 Toolkit, Chp 7, One-to-Many and Chp 1.3 Principles and Practices

2. Literacy Class Entry 1. 11.00 – 12.00am.

Learners: S, P and T

- For this class I used the resources and small white boards Sam had left with Reception, though at the time I did not know they contained the lesson plans and exercises. I have now left the file and whiteboards in the bottom of the large book-case opposite the door of Room 1 – accessed via the Computer Room
- I had received the email from Gigi which suggested Q would be joining the class. Instead P and T turned up and both afterwards registered with Sean [I think] in the Computer room. Both had the time wrong or had travel problems so arrived late. I did not do a personal profile of the educational background of P and T, as Sam had done for S, and she may want to do this next week.
- Again, I used my own quickly compiled plans for this class and began by focusing on further simple cvc words using the vowels u and o, and then showing how these words could make larger words. Eg funny and sunshine. S is picking this up and becoming more confident.⁹
- Explaining again, to all three, the cvc format and going through the vowels and consonants of the alphabet helped the students understand how the words worked. P was quick at identifying the difference and is alert and attentive. She says her English spelling/reading is not good, though she showed me that she had taken some rudimentary lessons in German. T needed a little more time to feel involved and be willing to participate which she did in the end.
- I used the white boards and the word 'dentist' to show how small words could be contained in larger ones and because S enjoyed the task last week. She and P especially responded to the exercise making other words such as den, tent, is.¹⁰
- We then focused on reading the text message S had to read for an ESOL exercise and had difficulties with. Last week I said we would try and cover this. I had typed this out and we all discussed the words, pronunciation and the questions. This led to how simple words sounded the same, but in different contexts were spelt differently eg. meat and meet, and to more joint discussions.
- I had printed out another story from 'Readwell Road' called 'Jim and Nan', but there was no time to go over this, and I suggested S take it home to read for homework.
- Although the lesson was not as well-planned as it should have been, the three students I think worked well together and generously exchanged both knowledge and questions with each other. Both P and T were happy to formally register for the course.

⁹ Post-16 Toolkit, Chp 6, Basic Code Plus and Appendix 5 for a short vowel u activity

¹⁰ An alternative version of the activity in Post-16 Toolkit, Chp 6, Box A

Reflection. Lessons on 7.2.2020 Friday: 10.00 – 11.00 & 11.15 – 12.15pm.

1.Literacy Class Entry 3. 10.00 – 11.00. **Spelling Club – ES19/7875.**

Learners: L, Q, E, R

- R who usually comes to the second class [Entry 1] came to this class because of a doctor's appointment conflicting with the later time. This showed his commitment and Sam worked with him while I worked with the others.
- The class began reading a text focusing on the 'ou/ow' spellings and that the same sound could be spelt in different ways.¹¹ It was now apparent which exercises worked best with the group and using a text with words focusing on a specific sound and asking learners to underline these words while the text is read has proved particularly useful.¹²
- By this stage in the course, learners understand what is required and the task is helpful since it involves reading, comprehension and identifying accurate spelling via sound. Next, by placing the 'ou/ow' words in separate columns learners need to return to the words and once again consider how they function and are spelt.
- Asking learners to spell some of these words using whiteboards, also shown the need for repetition here and direct involvement. This often produces results learners find satisfying. E was particularly good at spelling the 'ou/ow' words, though Q took a little more time to realise how the system worked, assuming it was more complicated than it was. L also took a little more time. But using the grapheme 'ou/ow' as the CENTRE of each word and then building around this, eg 'ow' turning into 'brown', or 'ou' into 'cloud' made the learners feel in control.
- The progression from reading to spelling chosen words on whiteboards shows how different forms of learning are required for the information to be understood, internalised and used with confidence.
- The gap-fill exercise where provided ou/ow words had to be selected accurately to complete sentences encouraged learners to think about the meanings of the words as well as how they were spelt. All needed a little encouragement and again if learners were encouraged to speak the sentences involved, they were more likely to select the right word. Eg. 'My friend lives in **south** Tottenham' rather than 'My friend lives in **house** Tottenham.'¹³
- The class also discussed how the Spelling Club could develop and continue, but that it must end or alter in some way after half-term. Over the course learners kept returning to the class and were aware that to improve they needed to focus on reading and identifying how words are constructed, during the intervening week.
- All wanted the club to continue and took away reading material with them to use.

¹¹ Post-16 Toolkit, Chp 7, One-to-Many

¹² See appendix 5 for an example of this.

¹³ Post-16 Toolkit, Chp 5, Essential Concepts – Graphemes represent speech sounds

2. Literacy Class Entry 1. 11.15 – 1215pm. **Spelling Club - ES19/8092**

Learners: B and S¹⁴

- T was not able to make the class, but did drop-in and inform Sam.
- Sam again focused on the ou/ow grapheme, using the worksheet, but at a more simple and slower level.
- The reading of the text was more difficult for B and S, than the Entry 3 group, and certain individual words caused problems eg, spacious, enormous and frowns. But S had written words in her notebook from past lessons which had caused problems and which were also connected by sound, and she used these in present lessons to help her. She also added to these lists and so could refer to them and this has been largely responsible for her progress.
- Sam complemented S on her personal work and methods and encouraged B to do something similar since 1hr a week on this course without additional involvement would not be enough to improve his reading/spelling skills.
- The interest of the learners in the 'ou/ow' sound could be seen in questions which showed the alignment between cloud, crown, clown and crowd.
- After going over these words and others, the learners were then asked to spell on whiteboards particular words we had discussed and read. They were aided by being told beforehand that the word was an OU word or an OW word. The gap between being able to say a word and then spell it could be seen when B demonstrated difficulty in spelling a word we had just discussed and was written on the main white-board. However, once given a little time and space to consider how the words were spelt, he managed to spell the words accurately.
- S was quicker at this task, but as Sam pointed out, she had now attended about a dozen classes, while B had only been to a handful or less.
- The class ended via the game/quiz Word-Bingo. B needed a little help in identifying words spoken to the ones written on his card – which again all focused on ou/ow words.
- S's commitment to the course could be seen in the industrious way she had written down lists of words in her notebook; and B's commitment was evident when he opened up about former problems and asking if using material allocated to his daughter who has certain medical issues, was appropriate. Sam supported B and said it was fine to use such material, but that this class was for adults and we were trying to focus on material specifically designed for adults.
- From the comments made by all learners from both groups, it was evident they were committed to the course and would feel abandoned and unsupported in their quest to improve their English language skills if the classes ended, as they knew was now a possibility.

¹⁴ See Case Studies B and S for more about these learners.

Appendix 5 - Short vowel u activities

It was a sunny day. Ron left his house and shut the front door. He was going for a run. He liked running. He was not a great runner, but he enjoyed doing it very much. He ran under the bridge. He ran towards the tunnel. He ran along the canal. Suddenly, the sun went behind a cloud and he heard a rumble of thunder. Poor Ron he had forgotten to wear his raincoat. He would have to run home very fast!

Listen to the story write down every time you hear the short **u** sound. Now check with the text. Did you get all of the words with short vowel **u** in them?

Listen out for the short vowel **u** sound. Count them.

Write all the words down here:

Match the words that rhyme:

thunder	mumble
sunny	hut
shut	blunder
rumble	funny

When you are adding **ing** to words that end in vowel/consonant you have to double the consonant eg run > running. Add **ing** to these words: cut, push, shut, hurt, hug,

Appendix 6 - TST Spelling Options

Spelling Options - Consonants

<p>'b'</p> <p>b bend</p> <hr/> <p>bb scrubbed</p> <hr/> <p>bu buy</p>	<p>'k'</p> <p>c cup</p> <hr/> <p>k kit</p> <hr/> <p>ck black</p> <hr/> <p>ch chemist</p> <hr/> <p>cc occur</p> <hr/> <p>que antique</p> <hr/> <p>qu mosquito</p>	<p>'ch'</p> <p>ch chin</p> <hr/> <p>tch witch</p> <hr/> <p>ture future</p> <hr/> <p>ti question</p>	<p>'d'</p> <p>d dig</p> <hr/> <p>dd middle</p> <hr/> <p>ed tinned</p>	<p>'f'</p> <p>f feed</p> <hr/> <p>ph phone</p> <hr/> <p>ff coffee</p> <hr/> <p>gh rough</p>
<p>'g'</p> <p>g get</p> <hr/> <p>gg bigger</p> <hr/> <p>gu guest</p> <hr/> <p>gue league</p> <hr/> <p>gh ghost</p>	<p>'h'</p> <p>h hat</p> <hr/> <p>wh who</p>	<p>'j'</p> <p>j jive</p> <hr/> <p>g gel</p> <hr/> <p>ge image</p> <hr/> <p>dge nudge</p>	<p>'l'</p> <p>l leg</p> <hr/> <p>ll fell</p> <hr/> <p>'le' ending</p> <hr/> <p>le table</p> <hr/> <p>al rational</p> <hr/> <p>el label</p> <hr/> <p>il fossil</p> <hr/> <p>ol symbol</p>	<p>'m'</p> <p>m mad</p> <hr/> <p>mm summer</p> <hr/> <p>me some</p> <hr/> <p>mn autumn</p> <hr/> <p>mb lamb</p>
<p>'ng'</p> <p>ng ring</p>	<p>'n'</p> <p>n nip</p> <hr/> <p>nn dinner</p> <hr/> <p>kn knit</p> <hr/> <p>gn gnat</p> <hr/> <p>pn pneumatic</p> <hr/> <p>ne imagine</p>	<p>'p'</p> <p>p pot</p> <hr/> <p>pp slipped</p>	<p>'r'</p> <p>r red</p> <hr/> <p>rr carry</p> <hr/> <p>wr wrap</p> <hr/> <p>rh rhino</p> <hr/> <p>rrh diarrhoea</p>	<p>'s'</p> <p>s sat</p> <hr/> <p>c city</p> <hr/> <p>ce dance</p> <hr/> <p>ss mess</p> <hr/> <p>se horse</p> <hr/> <p>st castle</p> <hr/> <p>sc science</p> <hr/> <p>ps psychology</p>
<p>'t'</p> <p>t ten</p> <hr/> <p>tt better</p> <hr/> <p>ed jumped</p> <hr/> <p>te private</p> <hr/> <p>pt receipt</p> <hr/> <p>bt doubt</p> <hr/> <p>th Thames</p>	<p>'v'</p> <p>v van</p> <hr/> <p>ve give</p> <hr/> <p>f of</p> <hr/> <p>ph Stephen</p>	<p>'qu'</p> <p>2 sounds /kw/</p> <hr/> <p>qu queen</p> <hr/> <p>cqu acquaint</p>	<p>'x' - 2 sounds /ks/</p> <p>x example, exit</p> <hr/> <p>xc excel, excess</p> <hr/> <p>(socks, picnics, walks)</p>	<p>'sh'</p> <p>sh shake</p> <hr/> <p>tion fraction</p> <hr/> <p>ss tissue</p> <hr/> <p>s sugar</p> <hr/> <p>ch chef</p> <hr/> <p>ci special</p> <hr/> <p>ce ocean</p>
<p>'th' 100%</p> <p>unvoiced</p> <p>thin</p> <hr/> <p>ether</p> <hr/> <p>through</p> <hr/> <p>voiced</p> <p>this</p> <hr/> <p>either</p> <hr/> <p>though</p> <hr/> <p>the breathe</p>	<p>'y'</p> <p>y yes</p> <hr/> <p>i onion</p>	<p>'w'</p> <p>w water</p> <hr/> <p>wh when</p> <hr/> <p>u penguin</p>	<p>'z'</p> <p>s has</p> <hr/> <p>se cheese</p> <hr/> <p>z zip</p> <hr/> <p>zz puzzle</p> <hr/> <p>ze sneeze</p>	
	<p>Scotland Only</p> <p>'wh' wh which</p> <hr/> <p>'ch' ch loch</p>			

Spelling Options UK

Vowels

adjust for accent

'a'
a plan

'e'
e bet
ea bread
ai said
a any
ie friend
eo leopard

'i'
i tin
y myth
u busy
o women
e pretty

'ar'
ar car
a father
ear heart
are are

'air'
are care
air hair
eir their
ere there

'o'
o dog
a want
ou cough
e ensemble

'u'
u bus
o love
ou touch
oo blood

'oo' look
oo took
u full
oul would

'ear'
ear clear
ere here
eer steer
eir weird

'ay'
a-e cake
a table
ay say
ai rain
ea break
ey they
eigh eight
ei vein
aigh straight

'ee'
ee see
e be
ea team
y baby
i taxi
e-e Pete
ey key
ie babies
ei receive
oe foetus
ay quay
ae archaeology
eo people

'er' stressed
dessert
er term
ir skirt
or world
ur fur
ear earth
our journey
ture mature

'ie'
i-e time
i child
y try
igh fight
ie pie
eigh height

'oe'
o so
o-e stone
ow throw
oa float
ou soul
oe toe
ough though eau bureau

'ow'
ou proud
ow now
ough plough

'oy'
oi boil
oy boy

'er' unstressed
desert
er hunter
or doctor
ar dollar
our colour
ure measure
re centre
ire Cheshire

'oo' moon
oo soon
u super
u-e flute
o do
ew flew
ou you
ue blue
ui bruise
ough through
oe shoe

'ue'
u dual
u-e fuse
ew few
ue cue
iew view
eu feud
eau beauty

'or'
or fork
ore sore
a water
aw paw
au August
ar war
our your
oar soar
ough thought
oor floor
al talk
augh taught
oa broad
ure sure