Two Approaches to Reading

- whole word
- phonics

Whole Word

English spelling is crazy:
- one starts with /w/
- two has no /w/
- three has no /t/
- four has no /r/
- five has /au/ not /i/

Why?

- why does knight begin with ‘k’ and have silent ‘gh’?
- why is ‘i’ /i/ in sit but /ai/ in site?
- why are both ‘f’ and ‘ph’ /f/?

Phonics

- there is some regularity in spelling
- this regularity can help children learn to read
- children must be able to guess unfamiliar words

initial ‘p’

- pen
- pot
- panda
- pony
- notice the ‘p’
- notice the lips
- now everyone find something starting with ‘p’
final ‘p’
• cap
• tap
• sip
• pop

Now everyone find something ending with ‘p’.

‘p’ can also come in the middle
• happy
• puppy
• carpet

Can you think of any more words with ‘p’ in the middle?

why use ‘p’
• it is a common sound
• it is bilabial, which means we can see its articulation
• it is rarely silent and it is usually pronounced as /p/

think of:
• an example of silent ‘p’
• an example of ‘p’ that is not /p/

now try ‘t’
• tap
• toy
• tin
• toe

• now you find something beginning with ‘t’
• find three things that end with ‘t’

Consonant Digraphs
• some digraphs can be taught: ‘th’, ‘sh’ ....

Vowels
• vowels are more difficult
• the Roman alphabet does not have enough, so English “doubles up”
two basic pronunciations for each vowel

- short sound
- letter name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Sound</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'a'</td>
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<tr>
<td>'e'</td>
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<tr>
<td>'i'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'o'</td>
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<tr>
<td>'u'</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Letter Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>letter</th>
<th>sound</th>
<th>examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'a'</td>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td>cake, late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'e'</td>
<td>/ɛ/</td>
<td>see, bee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'i'</td>
<td>/ɪ/</td>
<td>bite, ride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'o'</td>
<td>/ɒ/</td>
<td>nose, bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'u'</td>
<td>/ʌ/</td>
<td>tune, rude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Magic 'e'

- results in letter name occurring:
  - wave
  - bite
  - home ...

Magic 'e' helps a vowel spell its name. (SoE p. 73)

Vowel Digraphs

- often gives the letter name for the first letter:
  - 'ai' = /æ/ (wait, rain)
  - 'ea' = /ɛ/ (neat, read)
  - 'oa' = /ɒ/ (road, boat)

but there are lots of problems: book, head,

Summary

- phonics can be helpful
- start with easy consonants: 'p', 'b', 't' ...
- some digraph consonants can be taught: 'sh', 'th' ...
- teach two basic pronunciations for each vowel
- acknowledge that not all problems can be solved
- whole word approach is also needed