

Further information about the self-assessment process

The Department has published criteria to help schools and early years settings judge how well teaching programmes meet the characteristics of high quality phonic work as defined in the Review of Early Reading. We will be strongly encouraging schools and early years settings to consider these criteria when making decisions about the type of commercial programme they choose. The criteria are not prioritised in any way and we would expect a good support programme to meet all the criteria.

To ensure that this process is as easy and useful as possible for schools and settings we invite publishers of commercial programmes to evaluate their own programme against the criteria and complete a self-assessment form. The form is in two parts:

Part 1 - This 'snapshot' assessment provides information about what the programme offers and demonstrates how the programme fares overall against the criteria.

Part 2 - This offers publishers a chance to present further detailed information about how their programme meets each of the criteria.

This process is a voluntary one; however, we would urge providers of phonics teaching programmes to ensure that schools and settings have relevant information in order to make informed choices about the support require.

In completing their self-evaluation publishers should bear in mind that schools and settings may have a large number of self-assessments to consider, therefore information provided should be succinct and focused on the criteria in a form that is easy to read and understand. Please note that there are word limits for the text boxes provided within the template.

Completed self-assessments can be displayed on this website for schools to browse through before making a decision. The Department does not endorse, rank or otherwise prioritise the programmes and publishers that appear on this website. Programmes with completed templates should not be regarded as, or publicised as, a DfES 'approved' programme. However, completed templates can used for purposes of demonstrating to schools how a programme meets the criteria and can for example, be displayed on publishers' own website.

We expect that publishers will provide accurate information about their programme and the Department is establishing a process to ensure that a random selection of completed entries can be independently scrutinised for accuracy. We will make further information about this process available on this website soon.

If you would like to submit a completed document to be added to this website please e-mail your document to: phonics.mailbox@dfes.gsi.gov.uk. We will aim to add your template to the website within 10 working days from submission.

Self-assessment form

Part 1 – Snapshot assessment

The self-assessment below provides a snapshot of how this programme meets the core criteria for a high quality phonics programme. For more detailed information on how this programme meets each of the core criteria please see part 2 below.

Name of programme:

THRASS: Teaching Handwriting Reading And Spelling Skills

Please tick as appropriate

This programme should:	Fully meet	Not meet
present high quality systematic phonic work, as defined by the Independent review of teaching of early reading and now encapsulated in the Primary Framework, as the prime approach to decoding print	√	
enable children to start learning phonic knowledge and skills systematically by the age of five with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of key stage one	√	
be designed for the teaching of discrete, daily sessions progressing from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills and covering the major grapheme phoneme correspondences	√	
enable children's progress to be assessed	√	
use a multi-sensory approach so that children learn variously from simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities which are designed to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills	√	
demonstrate that phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading	√	
demonstrate how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words	√	

ensure children apply phonic knowledge and skills as their first approach to reading and spelling even if a word is not completely phonically regular	√	
ensure that children are taught high frequency words that do not conform completely to grapheme/phoneme correspondence rules	√	
ensure that, as early as possible, children have opportunities to read texts (and spell words) that are within the reach of their phonic knowledge and skills even though every single word in the text may not be entirely decodable by the children unaided	√	

Please explain how your programme meets the core criteria above:

THRASS is a 'ten-skills' programme for the systematic teaching of synthetic and analytic phonics.

The programme focuses on the 44 phonemes of spoken English, the 120 keygraphemes of written English (the most frequent graphs, digraphs and trigraphs) and the reading and spelling of the 500 high frequency words.

By the end of Key Stage 1, learners know the many different 'jobs' that letters do in the high frequency words, so they are competent and confident with the alphabetic principle.

15 Minutes a Day x 2 is a four-year scheme of work for teaching and assessing the ten skills.

All skills are assessed by criterion-referenced tests with observable standards of achievement - recorded on a profilecard.

Simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities are encouraged throughout (VAK skills).

The free Phoneme Machine software has a SYNTHESIZE THE WORD button for blending the phonemes, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading, in 500 high frequency words.

Most of our resources show the phoneme/grapheme relationship, through having all words clearly separated into their graphemes.

'Fidelity to the Model' is encouraged through high quality accredited training. Tens of thousands of evaluations can be viewed on Professional Development Courses on our website.

Please provide a brief explanation of what your programme provides, e.g. resources

TEACHING THRASS is the guide to the ten skills. 15 Minutes a Day x 2 is our four-year scheme of work. Our printed, audio, video, magnetic and software resources are all listed on our website. Our free Phoneme Machine software, accredited by SMART Technologies and showcased by Microsoft from May 2007, is downloadable (as is the associated PowerPoint).

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Self-assessment form

Part 2 - Detailed self-assessment

This self assessment form gives schools and settings detailed information about this programme set against each core criterion. For a more general 'snapshot' assessment please see part 1 above.

Name of programme:

THRASS: Teaching Handwriting Reading And Spelling Skills

Please explain how your programme meets the following core criteria:

The programme should:

- present high quality systematic phonic work, as defined by the Independent review of teaching of early reading and now encapsulated in the Primary Framework, as the prime approach to decoding print

The core criteria are met through a 'ten-skills' approach for the systematic teaching of synthetic and analytic phonics.

A key feature is that essential speaking and listening skills are taught from the outset, in the first of ten stages, known as T1 Picture Location. The second stage, T2 Letter Location, is based on the recommendation that the naming of letters should be part of early phonic work. The programme progresses through eight further stages to ensure that all the core criteria are met. The stages are: T3 Letter Formation, T4 Grapheme Location, T5 Keyword Location, T6 Phoneme Location, T7 Keyword Synthesis, T8 Keygrapheme Recall, T9 Keyword Analysis and T10 THRASS 500 Tests.

'Fidelity to the Model' is encouraged through high quality accredited training. Tens of thousands of evaluations can be viewed on Professional Development Courses. We also provide a free email course and demonstration lessons as videostreams and downloadable ipods.

- enable children to start learning phonic knowledge and skills systematically by the age of five with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of key stage one

15 Minutes a Day x 2 is a four-year scheme of work for teaching and assessing the ten skills. Ideally, the programme should be started in nursery and the second, third and fourth years are Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

By the end of Year 2, the Profilecard and Assessment Chart should indicate that the learner has successfully achieved the outcomes for all ten skills. In

particular, they should be able to name and correctly form the letters, pronounce the 44 phonemes and 'blend read and spell' the 500 high frequency words.

By using the 120 keygraphemes for cross-curricular comparisons between words, including further alternative graphemes for the same phoneme, life-long word solving skills are well-established and can be further developed in Key Stage 2. Older learners are encouraged to help younger learners become fluent readers, through assisting with the acquisition of the ten skills and through paired reading.

- be designed for the teaching of discrete, daily sessions progressing from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills and covering the major grapheme phoneme correspondences

15 Minutes a Day x 2 is a four-year scheme of work for teaching and assessing the ten skills. In the first year, learners are taught for fifteen minutes a day and they progress to two fifteen minute sessions a day in the second, third and fourth years. Ideally, the programme should be started in nursery and the second, third and fourth years are Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

The 'First 15 Minutes' is for teaching the simple to more complex phonic knowledge and the major grapheme phoneme correspondences as displayed on the Picturechart and Graphemechart. The 'Second 15 Minutes' is for targetted reading and spelling practices for the 500 high frequency words.

The programme focuses on the 44 phonemes of spoken English, the 120 keygraphemes of written English (the most frequent graphs, digraphs and trigraphs) and the reading and spelling of the 500 high frequency words.

- enable children's progress to be assessed

Successful completion of the outcomes explained in the guide and the scheme of work are recorded by colouring and/or dating the boxes on the Profilecard, created and designed to be a day-to-day version of the more formal Assessment Chart. Ideally, both the Assessment Chart and the Class Profile Chart (Sheets 3 and 4 in the guide) should be completed at the END of each school year and passed-on to the next teacher, as a clear record of the scores and outcomes that have been achieved-and when! The profilecard is a concrete visual reference of progress, to be shared with the teacher, peers and parents. The profilecard can be shaded-in by either the child or the teacher, though it is a good idea to involve children in their own assessments.

All skills are assessed by group or individual criterion-referenced tests with observable standards of achievement - recorded on the profilecard.

- use a multi-sensory approach so that children learn variously from simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities which are designed to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills

Simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities are encouraged throughout (VAK skills) and are described in detail in the guide TEACHING THRASS and the 15 Minutes a Day x 2 scheme of work. All of the ten stages involve multisensory activities, largely related to activities involving the printed charts (such as the desk-size Picturechart and Overwrite Chart), Raps and Sequences CD, Phoneme-Grapheme Cards, Phoneme-Grapheme Big Book and Book, software (Phoneme Machine and also THRASS IT) and the Magnetic Graphemes (170 x 9cm high magnetic tiles made from 3mm thick laminated card).

The Phoneme Machine software is accredited by market leader SMART Technologies for use on its interactive whiteboards. The associated PowerPoint also has a section on Interactive Teaching.

Our printed, audio, video, magnetic and software resources are all listed on our website.

- demonstrate that phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading

In T7 Keyword Synthesis, learners are assessed on their ability to 'blend, read and spell' the THRASS 120 keywords in the Phoneme Grapheme Book, simultaneously with the associated eight tracks on the Raps And Sequences CD. The activity can also be performed with a further eight tracks that have music and some sound effects in the background - which is distracting, but fun, and allows for the skill to be consolidated.

The free Phoneme Machine software has a SYNTHESIZE THE WORD button for blending the phonemes, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading, in 500 high frequency words. There is a 'Blend-Read' auto-function in the 'Auto on' area of the Word Grid for set lists of words or compiled lists.

In the THRASS IT software, in the Reading Section, words have to be created by selecting the phonemes in order and points are awarded for correct answers.

- demonstrate how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words

All the THRASS resources show learners that words can be segmented into separate phonemes - as illustrated by keygraphemes and/or vowel graphemes being printed in bold type and/or all the graphemes being physically separated within the words. For example, the Hotwords and all the

Phoneme Grapheme resources have the phoneme/grapheme relationship clearly shown through having all the words separated into their graphs, digraphs and trigraphs.

Segmentation and analysis skills are first introduced in stage T4 Grapheme Location (using the Magnetic Grapheme tiles), T6 Phoneme Location (by finding the graphemes in the keywords that share the same phoneme. This analysis is further developed and also assessed in T9 Keyword Analysis, using the Word Level Workchart, Grapheme Grid, Keyword Analysis Tests (Test C and Test V) and the Spelling Tiles (used with the associated downloadable Spelling Tiles Grid and Grapheme Grid).

- ensure children apply phonic knowledge and skills as their first approach to reading and spelling even if a word is not completely phonically regular

Learners are encouraged to consider the letters of the alphabet as being similar to players in a team, with the lower-case letters being the letters and the capitals merely substitutes - so they share the same name.

Learners are taught the many different 'jobs' that letters do in the high frequency words, so they are competent and confident with the alphabetic principle. Speaking and listening skills are taught with reference to the printed words on the THRASS charts and books - along with reading favourite books at school and at home. Learners are encouraged to associate phonemes with a specific letter or groups of letters (i.e. graphs, digraphs and trigraphs) and to blend all the phonemes to read the word.

As stated above, learners are assessed on their ability to 'blend, read and spell' the 120 keywords and the Phoneme Machine has a SYNTHESIZE THE WORD button for blending phonemes.

- ensure that children are taught high frequency words that do not conform completely to grapheme/phoneme correspondence rules

In the 'Second 15 Minutes', learners read and spell 500 high frequency words. The spelling is taught using the THRASS 'Say Name Cover Write Check' procedure and the use of Spelling Logs. Learners start with 30 one- and two-letter words, 85 three-letter words, the 100 'Hotwords' and progress to 160 four-letter, 128 five-letter, 35 six-letter and, finally, 52 seven- eight- and nine-letter words. On the Phoneme Machine software the words are separated into their grapheme/phoneme correspondences (as seen on the Screen Captures webpage). The phonemes are reinforced with the help of moving human lips. There is the option to display consonant grapheme/phoneme correspondences in blue and the vowels in red. Non-Phonographic Spellings are spellings that are not graphemes, because they represent more than one phoneme or they are abbreviations e.g. the 'x' in box and the 'd' 'r' in Dr. Non-

Phonographic spellings are underlined and displayed in black.

- ensure that, as early as possible, children have opportunities to read texts (and spell words) that are within the reach of their phonic knowledge and skills even though every single word in the text may not be entirely decodable by the children unaided

In the early stages, especially T1 Picture Location and T5 Keyword Location, teachers, assistants and parents work together to develop essential speaking and listening skills by acting-out, matching, naming, describing, categorizing and discussing 120 key pictures and the associated keywords with their children. The creation of phrases, sentences and stories is also very much encouraged to develop imagination, competence and confidence.

Parents also use the English Calendar Chart to develop reading and spelling skills, by asking questions about the days, dates, months, numbers, colours and letters on the chart.

In the 'Second 15 Minutes', learners first read and spell 30 one- and two-letter words, 85 three-letter words and 100 Hotwords.

Learners are encouraged to turn over the pages of a book, with the help of an older child or adult, to 'pretend-read' a favourite story. As stated in the Rose Review, 'sharing and enjoying favourite books' is a key activity.

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