

INTRODUCTION TO DIRECT PHONICS

BOOK ONE

WHAT IS DIRECT PHONICS?

Direct Phonics is an extension of the National Literacy Strategy. It meets the requirements to provide an even more deliberate and repetitive teaching programme for those children that continue to struggle with basic literacy after they have participated in initiatives such as Early Literacy Support or Additional Literacy Support.

Within the National Literacy Strategy, this extent of additional intervention has been described as the 'third wave', where the first two 'waves' have provided effective teaching in the Literacy Hour and a limited period of small group literacy support. As Direct Phonics teaches phonics in the context of sentence reading and writing, it builds on the NLS 'searchlight model'.

We have found that Direct Phonics works because:

- **The content is cumulative and very repetitive**
- **The teaching method follows a routine of 'model-lead-check'**
- **Children listen, speak, read and write in each lesson**
- **Each lesson has the same predictable pattern consisting of five basic activities:**
 - Say (repeat after teacher)
 - Match (point to)
 - Make (blend)
 - Read
 - Write

Our trials of Direct Phonics have shown that the programme is ideal for teaching groups of children making similar progress or individual children whose progress requires even more specific attention. We have found that:

- **The length of a lesson is about 15-20 minutes.**
- **Progress is best when teaching takes place every day.**
- **The clear instructions can be followed by both teachers and teaching assistants.**
- **The checks on progress through word and sentence dictations are particularly useful.**

THE CONTENTS OF DIRECT PHONICS BOOK ONE

Book One has 10 blocks of lessons with 6 lessons in each block, i.e. a total of 60 lessons. Each block of lessons is self-contained in that it has its own:

- Summary lesson notes for teachers/teaching assistants
- Pupil sheets to be photocopied
- Words for top-up activities
- Sentences for assessment/dictation
- Words for assessment at the end of the block
- Certificate of achievement

Each block of 6 lessons introduces new learning and revises previous learning. The contents of teaching blocks 1 to 5 are shown in Table 1 and the contents of blocks 6 to 10 in Table 2.

Table 1: Contents of Teaching Blocks 1 to 5

Blocks	New content	Revision
Block 1: Lessons 1 to 6	<i>Letters:</i> a m s t <i>Words:</i> am Sam at mat sat <i>Sight words:</i> I like Tim and	
Block 2: Lessons 7 to 12	<i>Letters:</i> i d <i>Words:</i> dad mad sad is it sit <i>Sight words:</i> Emma the on dog	a m s t at am Sam mat sat I like Tim and
Block 3: Lessons 13 to 18	<i>Letters:</i> c p <i>Words:</i> cat did as pat pit dip pip tip tap <i>Sight words:</i> my said see can	a m s t i d at am Sam mat sat I like Tim and Emma the on dog
Block 4: Lessons 19 to 24	<i>Letters:</i> e n h <i>Words:</i> pin cap nap pen nip ten tin pet hit hat hip pip hen <i>Sight words:</i> Meg she	a m s t i d c p at am Sam mat sat cat did as pat pit dip pip tip tap I like Tim and Emma the on dog my said see can
Block 5: Lessons 25 to 30	<i>Letters:</i> o l g <i>Words:</i> an on hot not top hop leg log got get let lot <i>Sight words:</i> look has me good	<i>Selection from:</i> a e i m s t d c p n h at am Sam mat sat cat did as pat pit dip pip tip tap pin cap nap pen nip pen ten tin pet hit hat hip pip hen I like Tim and Emma the on dog my said see can Meg she

Table 2: Contents of Teaching Blocks 6 to 10

Blocks	New content	Revision
Block 6: Lessons 31 to 36	<i>Letters:</i> b <i>Words:</i> bin big bit beg <i>Sight words:</i> we are to play	p l g t e o i n peg top get log pot pet it lip top pig in tin net in ten Look good Emma my and has we are see the like to
Block 7: Lessons 37 to 42	<i>Letters:</i> f u r <i>Words:</i> fog fig bag fit fan bug rug fun bun gun tug but nut <i>Sight words:</i> with ball this come	b i g o a t n Selection of words from previous lessons containing these letters and selection of previous sight words
Block 8: Lessons 43 to 48	<i>Letters:</i> sh z x <i>Words:</i> shop ship zip fox Max fix mix box <i>Sight words:</i> going Mum friend his	o i p n d a m f Selection of words from previous lessons containing these letters and selection of previous sight words
Block 9: Lessons 49 to 54	<i>Letters:</i> v j y w <i>Words:</i> van jam yet wet way jay jet pay <i>Sight words:</i> our you they was	n u a m e t p Selection of words from previous lessons containing these letters and selection of previous sight words
Block 10: Lessons 55 to 60	<i>Letters:</i> k ch <i>Words:</i> Kay chip chap chin <i>Sight words:</i> them were	y e a t p i f sh n Selection of words from previous lessons containing these letters and selection of previous sight words

REGULAR WORDS AND SIGHT WORDS

Each lesson moves fast from **letter recognition** to **word building** to **sentence reading**. We think that it is essential to use the phonically regular words in sentences as soon as possible. In order to be able to construct sentences, we have introduced key sight words from the very start. We have kept these sight words to the minimum as they require children to recognise words as a whole at a time when the children are learning to sound out elements within the words. We have found that, for many children, the sight words require more repetition than the phonically regular words because they cannot apply newly learnt phonic strategies to recognising sight words.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

When children have completed Direct Phonics Book One, we expect them to have learnt to read and write all letters (phoneme/graphemes), words containing these letters (consonant-vowel-consonant words such as mat, hot, sit), and sentences containing the words and selected sight words. These learning outcomes are shown in Table 3.

Table 3:
Learning outcomes of Direct Phonics Book One

Can read and write letters	a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p r s t u v w x y z sh ch (q is introduced in Book 2 as -quø)
Can read and write words	am Sam at mat sat dad mad sad is it sit cat did as pat pit dip pip tip tap pin cap nap pen nip ten tin pet hit hat hip pip hen an on hot not top hop leg log got get let lot bin big bit beg fog fig bag fit fan bug rug fun bun gun tug but nut shop ship zip fox Max fix mix box van jam yet wet way jay jet pay Kay chip chap chin
Can read sight words	I like Tim and Emma the on dog my said see can Meg she look has me good we are to play with ball this come going Mum friend his our you they was them were
Can read and write sentences	Each lesson contains sentences with the words and sight words. The progression can be illustrated with the following sentences: I like Sam (Block1); Sam is Timø dog (Block 2); Tim and Emma like Sam (Block 3); -Meg is my catø said Emma (Block 4); Sam is a good dog (Block 5); Sam and Meg like to play (Block 6); We can play with the bat and ball (Block 7); Come and see the fox in the box (Block 8); We are going to the shop (Block 9); We are going to get fish and chips (Block 10).

USE OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Direct Phonics introduces small pictures of the main characters to help children cue into the names that are being used. The main characters are: Tim, Emma, Sam the dog and Meg the cat. We have kept pictures to the minimum for two reasons: First, Direct Phonics requires children to listen, i.e. to develop their auditory skills, and so pictures might detract their attention away from this. Second, pupil lesson sheets need to be simple and free from distractions. Children can, of course, draw their own illustrations if they wish.

THE COMPLETE TRACK OR THE FAST TRACK

In order to ensure consolidated learning, Direct Phonics moves in very small steps and contains plenty of repetition. Depending on the needs of the children, you can follow the whole programme, the Complete Track, or a selection of lessons, the Fast Track.

- **The Complete Track teaches all the lessons.**
- **The Fast Track covers two lessons from each of the 10 blocks.**
- **This is shown in Table 4 on the next page.**

It is possible to alternate between the Complete Track and the Fast Track:

- If you have started with the Complete Track and you find that the children are not in need of that much repetition, then you can try them on the Fast Track.
- If you have started on the Fast Track and think the children need more repetition, then you can switch to the Complete Track.
- Later, you may feel that the children are ready to cope with the pace of the Fast Track and switch back to it.

We have found that, for some children, the -sight words take much more time to learn than the phonically regular words. For these children, the Complete Track is useful in providing an increased amount of repetition of the sight words.

TEACHER'S LESSON NOTES AND PUPIL LESSON SHEETS

Each lesson has its own *summary notes for the teacher*. Below is a copy of Lesson 1.

Notes for Lesson 1	
Introduce sound/symbols: a m s	Revise: -
Match sound/symbols: a m s	
Make words: am Sam	
Match words: Word Matrix 1	Sight words: I like
Read: Matrix and sentences	
Write: m a s am Sam	

Each lesson also has a *pupil lesson sheet to be photocopied for each pupil*. Below is a copy of lesson 1.

Pupil lesson sheet for Lesson 1					
Match:					
	<table border="1"><tr><td>a</td><td>m</td><td>s</td></tr></table>	a	m	s	
a	m	s			
Match:					
	<table border="1"><tr><td>I</td><td>like</td></tr><tr><td>am</td><td>Sam</td></tr></table>	I	like	am	Sam
I	like				
am	Sam				
Read:	I am Sam.				

Lesson: 8

Match:

i	t	a	m	s
---	---	---	---	---

Match:

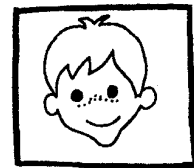
I	and	Sam	like
Tim	am	the	Emma

Read:

Emma and Tim.



Tim and Emma.



Lesson: 55*

Match:

k	y	e	a	t	p
---	---	---	---	---	---

Match:

them	they	our	were
was	you	are	friend

Read:

Kay is Emma's friend.

"We are friends," said Emma.

Lesson: 19*

Introduce Sound / symbols: e n **Revise:** p c a i

Match Sound / symbols: e n p c a i

Make words: pin cap nap pen nip

Match Words: Word Matrix 19 **Sight words:** ---

Read: Matrix and sentences

Write: e, n, a, i, pin, pen, pan, nip.

Lesson: 20

Introduce Sound / symbols: - **Revise:** e n p a i t

Match Sound / symbols: e n p a i t

Make Words: pen ten tap tip tin

Match Words: Word Matrix 20 **Sight Words:** ---

Read: Matrix and sentences

Write: e, n, a, i, pat, pet, tip, tap.

Lesson: 21

Introduce Sound / symbols: - **Revise:** p a i e t n

Match Sound / symbols: p a i e t n

Make Words: pit pat pet pip tip

Match Words: Word Matrix 21 **Sight words:** ---

Read: Matrix and sentences

Write: a, e, n, pen, ten, pet, pip.