

Where to start with our books:

Diagnostic Assessment

When a pupil begins a reading programme it is important to assess where the pupil is at, what knowledge and skills they have acquired and what they need to learn. It is also useful to observe their reading strategies. This will inform the teacher where to start and what to focus on. This is particularly important for children who are struggling with reading. This assessment will help to determine from which point the teacher should start teaching. The “Recommendations” sheet will match suitable decodable books from the Phonic Books range to the reading level of the pupil.

How to use this Diagnostic Assessment:

1. Cut out the reading cards below. The pupil should read them in the sequential order. The teacher’s sheet is for the teacher to record the pupil’s responses.
2. Ask the pupil to start with sounding out the letters at the beginning of the assessment. Note if the pronunciation of the sounds is precise (no “uh” after the consonants). Is the pupil using letter names instead of sounds?
3. Explain to the pupil that the words on cards 2-5 are nonsense words which help to assess decoding skills.
4. If the pupil starts to struggle, complete that section for diagnostic purposes. The teacher will need to use their judgement as to whether to start at this point or to start from the previous section in order to build up the confidence of the learner.
5. Record what the pupil has said (not just a tick or cross). This will inform the teacher about the pupil’s reading strategies.
6. Use the “Recommendations” sheet to see where to start and which books to use with your pupil.



card 1

s a t i m n o p b c
g h d e f v k l r u j
w z x y ff ll ss zz

card 2

s o f j u m r e l
k e d v u g z i f f

card 3

k a n d s e f t u m p
r o f t b e n k l a n t

card 4

t r o p f r e m p r a b
g l i m d r u f f s n o p

card 5

s t e n d p l i m p s l u p t
p r o n k f l a n t s t r o f t

card 6

c h i p s h e d t h i n
q u e s t t h a t r o c k w i n g

card 7

brittle which crackle
thanking glinted swinging
when rested

card 8

plain tweet stoat burst
instead frown stool might
hood stork coil chart clear

card 9

stay belong so person tread
sound grew wild could bald
annoy grass stare steer table
cream slow shirt again glue
cry push claw half there here

card 10

tape toe Pete messy world flute
tie fault laugh pear break stone
learn dine talk heart their

Name:

Date:

Diagnostic Assessment – teacher's sheet

1 s a t i m n o p b c g h d e f v k l r u j w
z x y f f l l s s z z

2 sof jum rel ked vug ziff

3 kand seft ump roft benk lant

4 trop frem prab glim druff snop

5 stend plimp slupt pronk flant stroft

6 chip shed thin quest that rock wing

7 brittle which crackle thanking glinted swinging when rested

8 plain tweet stoat burst instead frown stool might hood stork
coil chart clear

9 stay belong so person tread sound grew wild could bald
annoy grass stare steer table cream slow shirt again glue
cry push claw half there here

10 tape toe Pete messy world flute tie fault laugh pear break
stone learn dine talk heart their

Recommendations:

Use this sheet following a Diagnostic Assessment. *

	Diagnostic Assessment	Phonic Code knowledge/skill that needs addressing	Recommendations for Foundation Stage and KS1 & KS2	Recommendation for older readers in KS2 & KS3
1	s a t i m n o p b c g h d e f v k l r u j w z x y ff ll ss zz	sound/letter correspondence	Teach missing sounds. Start from Pet Shop Panda Book 1, Dandelion Launchers, Unit 1 (Reception), Dandelion World Stage 1, or Dandelion Readers, Unit 1.	Moon Dog Set 1 Readers/Activities Book
2	sof jum rel ked vug ziff	CVC level words and nonsense words	Start with Dandelion Launchers, Unit 1 (Reception), Dandelion World Stage 1, and/or Dandelion Readers, Unit 1.	Moon Dog Set 2 Readers/Activities Book CVC reading activities in Totem 1 and Alba Activities Books
3	kand seft ump roft benk lant	blending real and nonsense words at VCC and CVCC level	Start with Unit 7 Dandelion Launchers, Dandelion World Stage 7, and/or Unit 7 Dandelion Readers.	Moon Dog Series Set 2 or Magic Belt/That Dog! Book 1, or Totem/Alba Book 1 and Activities Books
4	trop frem prab glim druff snop	blending real and nonsense words at CCVC level	Start with Dandelion Launchers, Unit 8, Dandelion World Stage 8, and/or Dandelion Readers, Unit 8.	Moon Dog Series 2 Activities Book or start at Magic Belt/That Dog, Book 4 and Totem and Alba, Book 2 and Activities Books
5	stend plimp slupt pronk flant stroft	blending real and nonsense words at CCVCC and CCCVC level	Start with Dandelion Launchers, Unit 10, Dandelion World Stage 10, and/or Dandelion Readers, Unit 10.	Moon Dog Series 2 or start at Magic Belt/That Dog!, Book 5 and Totem/Alba Book 3 and Activities Books
6	chip shed thin quest that rock wing	ch sh th ck ng spellings	Start from Dandelion Launchers, Unit 11, Dandelion World Stage 11, and/or Dandelion Readers, Unit 11.	Moon Dog Series 2, Book 5 or start at Magic Belt Books/That Dog! Books 6-10 and Totem/Alba Book 4 and Activities Books
7	brittle which crackle thanking glinted swinging when rested	wh spelling and two-syllable words ending in ed, ing, and le	Start with Dandelion Readers, Unit 16.	Start at Magic Belt/That Dog! Books 11-12 and Totem/Alba, Book 5 and Activities Books
8	plain tweet stoat burst instead frown stool might hood stork coil chart clear	Spellings: ai, ee, oa, ur, ea, ow, oo, igh, oo, or, oi, ar, air, ear	Start with Dandelion Readers, Level 1 Extended code	Start at Moon Dogs Vowel Spellings then Totem/Alba Book 6 and Activities Books
9	stay belong so person tread sound grew wild could bald annoy grass stare steer table cream slow shirt again glue cry push claw half there here	Alternative spellings of target vowel sounds (see above).	Start with Dandelion Readers, Level 2 Extended code	Start at Moon Dogs Vowel Spellings then Totem/Alba Books 6-12 and Activities Books
10	tape toe Pete messy world flute tie fault laugh pear break stone learn dine talk heart their	More alternative spellings of target vowel sounds (see above list 8).	Start with Dandelion Readers, Level 3 Extended code. If the reader has difficulty with split vowel spellings – use Split Vowel Spelling Set.	Start at Talisman 1/Rescue/Island Adventure, Books 1-10 and Activities Books

* It is recommended to begin reading the Magic Belt, That Dog! Totem, Alba, Island Adventure, Talisman 1 and Rescue series from the beginning in order to follow the plot.

For more information please visit phonicsaustralia.com.au

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