Phonics – technical terms

Use the correct pronunciation for sounds! See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW_v-1s

Use the following technical vocab as much as possible when teaching – using technical terms means we can describe language to children accurately.

Grapheme – the way a sound is written down. The grapheme might also be referred to as the name of the sound eg “the name/grapheme of this letter is A” (where A rhymes with “hay”).

Phoneme – strictly, a unit of sound – but explained to the children as the sound a letter or combination of words spells. (Here, the letter A makes an “a” sound, as in “cat”)

Digraph – two letters spelling one sound – eg “ee”, “ai”

Trigraph – 3 letters spelling one sound – eg “air” “ear”

Split digraph – when putting an e on the end of a CVC word changes the middle vowel from a long sound to a short sound, or from its letter sound to its letter name: cap to cape.

Blend – building (synthesising) phonemes together in the correct order to form a word.

Segment – the opposite of blending – being able to identify the component phonemes in a word.

Long vowel - eg “ee”, “ai”

Short vowel – eg “e” “i” (Kids need to be able to identify long or short vowels for spelling patterns later on)

Phoneme frame – boxes drawn on the screen or paper, one box for each phoneme in a word eg

\[
\begin{array}{c}
c \quad a \quad t \\
sh \quad ar \quad k
\end{array}
\]

Sound buttons – annotating underneath words to make the sounds in them clear. A dot us used for a single letter phoneme, a short line for a digraph or trigraph.

eg

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Bun} \\
\text{soil} \\
\text{shook} \\
\text{cave}
\end{array}
\]

CVC word is a word made from a Consonant, Vowel, Consonant..Eg: cat, pig, hat, sail, cheep (all these words have 3 sounds in them). Documents might also refer to CCVC words (as in snip, sleep), or CVCC words (as in jump, bang)

Schwa a weak, unstressed vowel sound. It’s the most common sound in English. For example about, butter, library. It’s where the vowel is said as a sort of “uh” sound when pronounced.

Other thing to teach and refer to:

Vowel, consonant, syllable, root word, suffix, prefix

Really useful extra information is in the “notes of guidance for practitioners” publication from the Letters and sounds pack (as PDF – not in print any more)