

Dear Families,



We are learning an important early reading skill called phoneme blending. Blending means putting individual sounds together to read a word. For example, when a child hears the sounds /s/, /a/, and /t/ and blends them together, they can read the word *sat*. Blending helps students move from knowing individual sounds to reading whole words smoothly. Blending begins when students learn the sounds that letters represent, such as /s/, /a/, and /t/. Once students can recognize these sounds, they begin blending them together to read CVC words like *sat*. As their skills grow, they begin blending four sounds in words such as *frog* and *nest*. Students are also introduced to additional sound patterns such as digraphs like *chip*, r-controlled vowels like *barn*, and vowel patterns such as *say*, *weigh*, *bake*, *rain*, and *great*.

As students learn more sound patterns, they also learn that one letter does not always represent one sound. For example, the word *barn* is not read as /b/, /a/, /r/, /n/. Instead, students apply their sound knowledge and read it as /b/, /ar/, /n/. Understanding these sound patterns helps students read words accurately. There are several ways children can learn to blend sounds. Your child may practice different approaches at school. Here are a few common blending strategies:

Sound-by-sound

blending: The child says each sound and then blends them together. It is crucial that the sounds are always blended back together so they hear the whole word.

Adult: "The sounds are /s/, /a/, /t/."

Child: "/s/, /a/, /t/."

Adult: "Now blend the sounds together."

Child: "sat."

Continuous blending:

The child stretches the sounds and slides them together to read the word smoothly. Often the vowel is "sung" or held a little longer to help connect the sounds.

Adult: "Stretch the sounds: /sssssss/,

/aaaaaaa/, /t/."

Child blends the sounds together:

"sat."

Successive blending:

The child blends two sounds together first, then adds the next sound to build the word.

Adult: "Listen to the sounds: /s/, /a/, /t/."

Child: "/s/, /a/, /t/."

Adult: "Blend the first two sounds."

Child: "sa."

Adult: "Now add the last sound."

Child: "sat."

With practice, blending will help children move from sounding out words to reading confidently. Thank you for helping your child grow as a reader.



Access the editable version [**HERE**](#).