

All About Phonics

2019 Skill Development Conference

Discussion 1: Why should we teach phonics during English class?

Benefits of Phonics

- Assists with the reading process
- Assists with the writing process
- Phonemic Awareness: the ability to separate letters with sounds and link sounds with letters.

Goals of teaching phonics

- To develop better phonemic awareness
- Familiarizing students with the sounds and structure of English
- Helping students overcome difficulties with English-only sounds and pronunciation
- Give students opportunities to practice reading English
- Encourage students and help boost their confidence

Discussion 2: What are some of your difficulties and/or challenges of teaching phonics?

Lesson Structure

Below is the outline of phonics instruction in the Kamiamakusa E-Friends curriculum. Basic instruction consists of 4 main steps: Review, Introduce, Reading Practice and Games. The following lesson plan takes around 10-15 minutes and can be modified as necessary.

Learned Phonics Review

- Prepare by placing the previously studied phonics cards on the board.
- Ask the students to read the alphabet letters featured on each card, followed by the sound associated with each phonic card.
- If the students are struggling to remember, use the associated gesture as a reminder
- Review should be conducted at a pace that is comfortable for the class!

Introduce new phonics

- When review is done, begin to introduce new phonics to the class. Phonics should be taught in small amounts (1-3). This allows for better retention and ease of learning.
 - Show the phonic card and ask the students to read the alphabet letter(s). If they do not know the answer, feel free to tell them.
 - Introduce the picture on the flashcard and ask the students for the English word. If they do not know the English word, you can introduce it to them.
 - Introduce the phonic card, using a gesture.
 - Introduce the new phonic sound loudly and clearly while doing a gesture.
 - Repeat the sound and gesture multiple times. Use exaggeration to help show how the mouth produces the sound.
 - Go through all the phonics one more time.
- ★ Make sure you DO NOT add additional sounds to the phonic.
- B should be [b] **NOT** /b/

Word Formation Practice

- Once students understand the proper pronunciation, they need to be able to apply this. Word formation exercises helps students practice reading techniques for simple words.
- Write a simple word (3-5 letters long) using only phonics that have been learned so far.
- Sound out each individual phonic and have students repeat after you. Do this slowly.
- Repeat the sounds, speeding up until it becomes a single word.

Game

- Say the word at natural speed, having the students repeat after you.
 - Repeat the above with similarly created words.
- ★ The goal of this exercise is to encourage students to learn what they're learning to read words. They do not have to memorize these words nor their meaning.
- Include a game at the end of the phonics lesson. These games can vary in difficulty depending on the class, but should be focused on listening and identifying phonics/words

Additional Resources

TOFUGU's JET Programme Teaching Resources (English only, last updated 2015)

<https://www.tofugu.com/japan/jet-program-teaching-resources/>

A HUGE Compilation of English teaching resources for JET ALTs. Be warned: some of the links are no longer updated but, most of them are archived so the information is still accessible.

Kumamoto JET Lesson Wiki: Phonics Warm-Up Lesson (English only):

[http://kumamotojet.com/mw/index.php?title=Phonics_Warm-Up_\(E-Friends_Version\)](http://kumamotojet.com/mw/index.php?title=Phonics_Warm-Up_(E-Friends_Version))

A guide to the E-Friends phonics lesson written by Nora is available on the Kumamoto JET wiki. This guide provides information on the lesson structure and how to prepare your own set of phonics flashcards.

2018 SDC Keynote Speech (English and Japanese):

<http://kumamotojet.com/shin/index.php/sdc/>

Last year's keynote speech presentation, accessible on KumamotoJET. Available in both English and Japanese, this PowerPoint provides an informative explanation of phonemic awareness as well as practical and simple ways to develop this ability.

Foxy Phonics (English language only, Japanese available in physical version):

<https://ajet.net/resources/education-resources/#Foxy>

Contains over 100 worksheets with illustrations, tongue twisters and much more! You can download the entire book (for free) on the AJET website.

Alphablocks youtube channel (English language only):

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_qs3c0ehDvZkbiEbOj6Drg/featured

An animated short series developed by the United Kingdom. They start by teaching individual phonics then progressing to word formation. They are a good source for phonic gestures and example words.