Standards & Testing Agency

Structure of the phonics screening check

The phonics screening check contains 40 words divided into two sections of 20 words. Both sections contain a mixture of real words and pseudo-words.

Section 1

- Page 1 Four pseudo-words
- Page 2 Four pseudo-words
- Page 3 Four pseudo-words
- Page 4 Four real words
- Page 5 Four real words

Section 2

- Page 6 Four pseudo-words
- Page 7 Four pseudo-words
- Page 8 Four real words

- Page 9 Four real words
- Page 10 Four real words

All pseudo-words in the check are accompanied by a picture of an imaginary creature. This provides a context for the child (naming the type of imaginary creature) to ensure that they are not trying to match the pseudo-word to a word in their vocabulary.

Content of the phonics screening check

Section 1

The words in section 1 will have a variety of simple word structures (for example CVC, VCC, CCVC and CVCC) using:

- single letters (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, I, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q(u), r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z)
- some consonant digraphs (ch, ck, ff, ll, ng, sh, ss, th, zz)
- frequent and consistent vowel digraphs (ar, ee, oi, oo,or)

Section 2

The words in section 2 will have a variety of more complex word structures (for example CCVCC, CCCVC, CCCVCC and two syllable words) with some:

- additional consonant digraphs (ph, wh)
- less frequent and consistent vowel digraphs, including split digraphs (a-e, ai, au, aw, ay, ea, e-e, er, ew, i-e, ie, ir, oa, o-e, ou, ow, oy, ue, u-e, ur)
- trigraphs (air, igh).

Is there anything wrong with this page?

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