



**A COMPLETE PHONICS RESOURCE
TO SUPPORT CHILDREN**



**GUIDANCE
FOR RAPID
CATCH-UP
FOR AGE 7+**

Introducing Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up for age 7+

We urgently need to teach any child who cannot read in Year 2 or above.

Every child in Year 2 or above who cannot read at age-related expectations needs urgent targeted support so that they can access the curriculum and enjoy reading as soon as possible.

Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up is a complete catch-up programme that mirrors the main phonics programme but has a faster pace. It has been created to help children catch up quickly. This quote from the Reading framework (2021) makes it clear why this is so important:

'After Year 1, learning in the wider curriculum depends increasingly on literacy. Pupils who cannot read well enough do not have full access to the curriculum. Those who fail to learn to read early on often start to dislike reading. They read less than others – and less often – and do not accumulate the background knowledge and vocabulary from reading that their peers do. The word-rich get richer, while the word-poor get poorer.'

In addition to this Teacher's guide, the Rapid Catch-up programme includes the following:

Printed books and resources from Collins:

- 50 new decodable books matched exactly to the Rapid Catch-up programme, including 10 blending practice books for Phases 2 and 3
- Rapid Catch-up word cards and tricky word cards for all phases.

On the Little Wandle website at www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk:

- Rapid Catch-up assessment tools
- Rapid Catch-up weekly grids
- Rapid Catch-up 'How to' videos
- a range of other teaching resources including images.

All of the resources have been designed to work seamlessly with existing Little Wandle resources such as the grapheme cards and picture cards, and the grapheme charts and mats.

Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up has been trialled in schools with high levels of EAL and Pupil Premium so that we can be sure that it provides the support needed to develop language alongside teaching reading words.

The programme has been developed to ensure plenty of repeated practice in blending, word reading and spelling in each lesson, using a range of activities such as **Change it**, **Match the words to the pictures** and **Mix it up**. Children also need to learn the meaning of the words that they read, which is why we provide simple definitions or contextualising sentences for words.

By the end of the programme children should be reading with enough fluency and accuracy to access the curriculum in class, and to read with enjoyment and understanding.

Identifying children for Rapid Catch-up

'It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.'
English National Curriculum (DfE, 2013)

Any child in your school who is reading at below the expected level for their age should be assessed immediately to identify what support and teaching they need to become fluent, accurate readers. For children in Reception or Year 1 who are following the Little Wandle programme, intervention should be in the form of individual or group Keep-up. (See the Keep-up area of the Little Wandle website.)

Rapid Catch-up assessment

Children in Year 2 and above who are not at age-related expectations for reading should be assessed using the Rapid Catch-up phonics assessment and fluency assessment to check if they need to follow the Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up programme. The assessments, assessment guidance and supporting videos can be found in the Rapid Catch-up area of the Little Wandle website, and you will find detailed information on how to carry out the assessments there.

By using these assessments, you will be able to work out exactly what gaps these children have, and put in place a robust programme to ensure they learn to read quickly. The assessments will also help you to match children to the appropriate reading book.

You will need to:

- assess all children on entry to the Rapid Catch-up programme so their pathway and specific teaching can be created
- re-assess children when they complete Phases 2, 3 and 4
- assess children who are following the Phase 5 part of the programme every four weeks
- assess children at the end of the programme to check they are ready to leave Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up.

The Rapid Catch-up fluency assessment should be used to find out about children's reading accuracy and rate of reading as they become more confident readers in Phase 5, and to tell you whether children have gained enough fluency and accuracy to exit the Rapid Catch-up programme. In order to understand the meaning of what they are reading, children need to be reading at approximately 90 words per minute.

Organising and timetabling Rapid Catch-up

Typically, you will be teaching individual children in the Rapid Catch-up lessons but the programme can be used for small groups if the children have been assessed to have largely the same needs. All of the resources and activities in this guide can be used with individuals or groups of children. For simplicity we have used the term 'children' throughout.

In order for children to make rapid progress, Rapid Catch-up phonics lessons must be timetabled three times a week. The lessons on days 1 and 2 will take 20 minutes each. For day 3, you will need to timetable a 10-minute phonics lesson and a 10- to 15-minute Reading practice session. (We recommend two short lessons/sessions but these could be combined if appropriate.) Lessons 4 and 5 will be short Reading practice sessions of 10 to 15 minutes each.

The three Reading practice sessions are essential so children have quality teaching of reading and time to apply their secure phonic knowledge in age-appropriate decodable books.

Day 1	20-minute phonics lesson
Day 2	20-minute phonics lesson
Day 3	Review day: A quick review of the teaching from days 1 and 2 10-minute phonics lesson plus 10- to 15-minute Reading practice session. In Phases 2 and 3, you will use the blending practice books for this session.
Day 4	10- to 15-minute Reading practice session
Day 5	10- to 15-minute Reading practice session

Where the lessons should take place

Make sure you have a base for your Rapid Catch-up teaching, so the lessons are in a familiar place for the children. This will really help with storing and organising your resources, too. The room should be quiet and private; a corridor is not the right place for a child who needs to listen carefully and concentrate, and who may feel very vulnerable about their reading status. Privacy is really important as it will allow the child to relax and for you to create the right atmosphere for learning together.

Training

Rapid Catch-up teachers must be fully trained, in both the full initial Little Wandle training and the specific Rapid Catch-up training. All the training is available online and on-demand in the CPD area of the Little Wandle website.

Teaching Rapid Catch-up

There are many reasons why children may need Rapid Catch-up.

- They have missed chunks of schooling and so have gaps in their phonic knowledge.
- They have not been taught with consistency and so have not secured adequate phonic knowledge to read fluently.
- They need more practice and time to secure each stage of the phonic code and so have fallen behind their peers.
- They are new to the country and reading/speaking English.

Tone, praise and pace

Children who have not learned to read at the same time as their peers will have lost confidence and may show this through their behaviour. It is vital that we make them feel safe and ready to learn in their Rapid Catch-up lessons. Children may feel that they cannot learn to read, it is too difficult or not for them. It is up to you to help them believe that they can do this by showing them that it is possible and celebrating their successes.

Older children in particular need to feel that they are not being patronised or considered 'not intelligent' because they have not yet learned to read. We must make all our children feel that they **can** do this, that they are making progress in every lesson and that the end goal of reading is worth the effort.

Keep your tone warm and encouraging and the pace of the lesson brisk so that every moment is used to learn. This is valuable time that you have together – it is making a real difference to the children you work with. Try to see these lessons as a team effort with yourself and the children working together. This really does make a difference.

Keep cognitive load low

- Keep distractions to a minimum; only put out the resources that you need for the lesson.
- Don't talk too much – use the minimum talk needed to teach. Too much talk is overwhelming for some children.
- Use the Little Wandle teaching resources – the grapheme cards are linked to the grapheme charts and ensure consistency.
- Use the same routines and activities; consistency really helps children to focus on learning to read rather than learning to do a new activity.

Teaching support: lesson templates, weekly grids and Prompt cards

The lesson templates for each phase (see pages 18 to 27) give you an overview of the Rapid Catch-up lesson. The weekly grids (on the Little Wandle website) detail the GPCs, words and tricky words that need to be taught or reviewed in each part of the lesson. The lesson content builds cumulatively, so it is important that you follow these in order.

The teaching in the Rapid Catch-up programme is pacy: this is vital because we want children to get back on track and reading as quickly as possible. But at times we need to slow down and drop the pace to ensure children secure new skills or knowledge. Our Prompt cards (see pages 28 to 61) and 'How to' videos (on the Little Wandle website) will support you with this.

A word about the schwa

The schwa is the name for the most common sound in English. It is the unstressed sound that we find in many words; it makes an ‘uh’ sound, which varies according to accent. The phonemic symbol for the schwa sound is ə. Schwa can be represented in writing by all five vowels, and by a number of digraphs and trigraphs such as ‘er’, ‘ou’, ‘or’ and ‘our’.

Introducing the schwa in Phase 3

We first meet the schwa in Phase 3 when we read words ending in ‘er’. In many accents the ‘er’ makes an unstressed vowel sound at the end of words such as ‘bigger’ and ‘better’, but in other accents these words are pronounced with pure sounds.

We also teach children to read multi-syllable words in Phase 3. Words such as ‘hidden’, ‘lemon’ and ‘carrot’ can be read using the GPCs the children know and with the chunking technique:

- 1) Say the word with pure sounds, a syllable at a time, for example: c-a-rr/o-t.
- 2) Modify the pronunciation of the word ‘but we say carrət’ (with the schwa).
- 3) Teach vocabulary – ‘a carrot is a yummy vegetable!’

The schwa in Phase 5

Many combinations of vowels can make the schwa sound, especially in longer words. In Phase 5 week 9 for example, we read the word ‘adventure’. Here, we code ‘ture’ as ch – with a schwa at the end so it says /ch/ə!

In Phase 5 week 11, the (second) ‘o’ in ‘crocodile’, the ‘u’ in ‘difficult’, the ‘a’ in ‘umbrella’, the ‘or’ in ‘actor’ and the ‘re’ in ‘metre’ can all make the schwa! Once again, it all depends on accent. We teach children to read these words with the chunking method and pure sounds, and then how the word is said (in their accent) with the schwa. Always be guided by the children’s accent and pronunciation. This is important as so many English words have the schwa.

Example words containing the schwa sound in Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up

Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
bigger finger ladder carrot lemon	clearer further brighter children flower monster sunflower	annoy tiger paper feather giant octopus applaud water adventure* scissors parachute crocodile celebrate difficult actor flavour metre umbrella treasure vision magician

*coded as ‘ture’ /ch/ with a schwa at the end

How to use the resources

The physical teaching resources for Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up have been carefully created to help you teach with fidelity to the programme and use your assessment for learning to ensure all your children get the additional practice that they need to secure fluent reading of GPCs and words.

Grapheme cards



Use the **grapheme cards**:

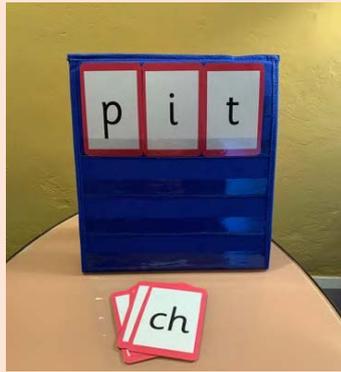
- to teach each new GPC in Phases 2, 3 and 5. The Phase 2 and 3 grapheme cards are ideal to use when you are making the link between the grapheme, the phoneme and the mnemonic/catchphrase.
- to make the words used in teacher-led blending in Phase 2. This is a crucial part of our pedagogy and ensures that children are taught to blend step-by-step. In this way, we model how to blend in every Phase 2 lesson, until the children are secure and do not need this support anymore. You can see this in practice in the Rapid Catch-up 'How to' video 'Teacher-led blending'.

Lesson/session		Quick review	Teach and practise				Practise and apply
Phonics	Day	GPCs	Teach new GPCs	Teacher-led/ral blending words	Independent reading words	Example definitions and sentences	Tricky words
	1 (20 mins)	-	s a t p i n	a-t s-a-t s-i-p n-i-p m-a-n t-i-p	sit pat pin nap tap tin	A nap is a short sleep. <i>It was time for the baby's nap.</i>	- Change it: sat sit sip tip tin pin pit pat Match the words to the picture: nap pan pin sit tin tap
	2 (20 mins)	s a t p i n	m d	a-m m-a-p m-a-n d-i-d t-i-p s-a-d	man map mat pad sad dad	A pad can be some sheets of paper that you write on, or the way an animal or human walks with quiet steps. <i>The cat padded across the room.</i>	- Change it: pad sad sat mat man map Match the words to the pictures: dip man map mat pad sad
	3a Review	s a t p i n m d	Precision teaching of Week 1 GPCs and words				Spelling/Mix it up: pit sip nap man dip dad

Use grapheme cards for teacher-led blending

- When reviewing GPCs: **Shuffle time**. Remember to use the grapheme side; only use the mnemonic/catchphrase if the children cannot automatically read the grapheme.
- For **Change it**. This game is part of the lessons in Phases 2, 3 and 4. You can see this in practice in the Rapid Catch-up 'How to' video 'Change it'.
- For **Mix it up**. Use the small grapheme cards to model spelling and for children to spell words in this one-to-one activity. You can see the activity in practice in the Rapid Catch-up 'How to' video 'Mix it up'.

Tip: A pocket chart or stand is very useful. Make sure you have all your graphemes in order, so you can make the changes easily!

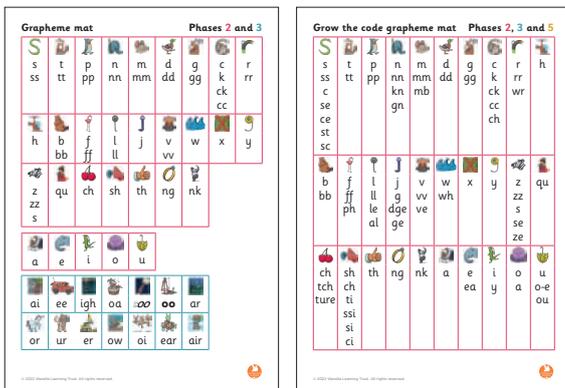


Tip: You will need to refer to both the Phase 2 and 3 grapheme cards when teaching Phase 5.



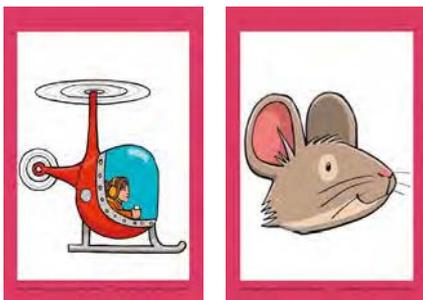
The **grapheme cards for Phase 5** do not have an image or catchphrase. This is because we want the children to focus on learning to read the GPC and not on learning a catchphrase for each alternative pronunciation of a grapheme. Instead, we refer back to the Phase 2 or 3 GPC, as that is the image associated with that phoneme on all our resources, including the 'Grow the code' chart and map. This is how we create a visual schema for children to grow the complex alphabetic code.

Grapheme mats



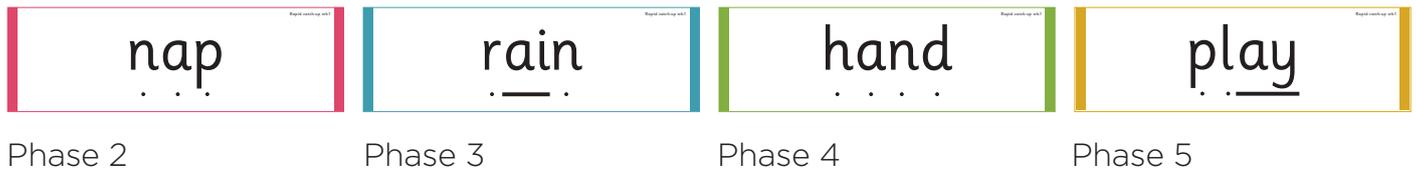
Download the **grapheme mat** for Phases 2 and 3 and the 'Grow the code' grapheme mat from the Little Wandle website, to use with the children in the lessons.

Picture cards



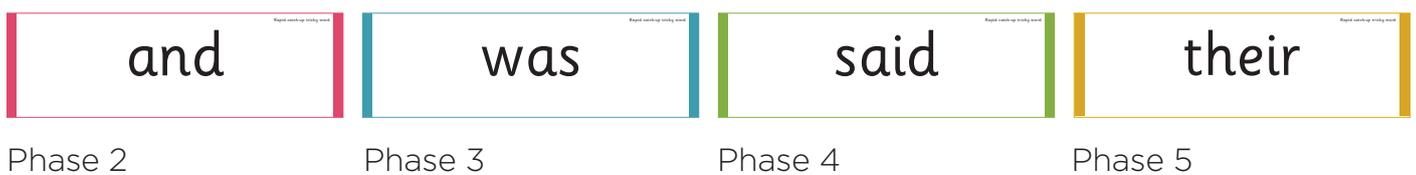
Use the **picture cards** when introducing a new GPC in Phase 2. The picture card is the same image as the mnemonic, to maximise on the link between the phoneme, the mnemonic and the grapheme.

Rapid Catch-up word cards



- Use the **Rapid Catch-up word cards** for independent reading. (This is in addition to teaching teacher-led blending with grapheme cards in Phase 2.)
- There are word cards for every phase. They are double sided with sound buttons on one side and just the word on the other.
- The word cards have coloured panels on the side to indicate the phase in which they are taught/reviewed: magenta for Phase 2, teal for Phase 3, green for Phase 4 and mustard for Phase 5. They also have the week they are taught/reviewed in the top right-hand corner to help with organisation.
- Additional copies of words reviewed in a different week are included, so you have all the words needed for each week.

Tricky word cards



There are tricky word cards for every phase. They are single sided and do not have sound buttons. These are reviewed after they are taught so it is best to keep them together so it is easy to find the cards you want for any lesson.

The tricky word cards also have coloured panels on the side to indicate their phase.

Tip: The words from the previous week(s) can stay in your pocket chart so they are easy to find and review in your lesson or at any other time.



How we chose the words

There are approximately 900 words/tricky words taught in the Rapid Catch-up programme. These are made up of the words used for oral and teacher-led blending, the words on the word cards and tricky word cards, plus additional words used in activities such as **Change it** and **Match the words to the pictures**.

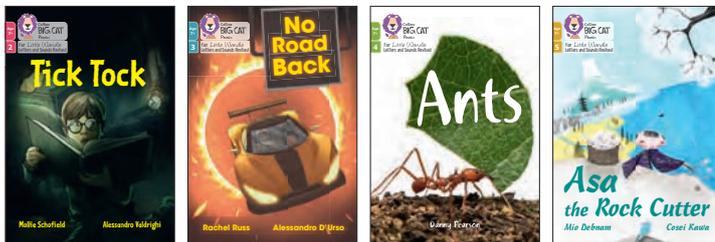
Decodable words

We chose the words for the Rapid Catch-up programme carefully, using the original research from the 2007 Letters and Sounds¹, which identified the 300 most common words, and the Collins Corpus, which extracted the most frequent words from 1.2 million words in 950 titles aimed at children aged three to 11. In this way we could teach children to read words that would have the greatest impact on their reading as efficiently as possible. We have organised these words into a cumulative progression.

Tricky words

The tricky words remain the same as those in the main Little Wandle programme. They are the original tricky words from Letters and Sounds combined with the Common Exception Words from the English National Curriculum Year 1 and 2 Spelling appendix.

Fully decodable books



Collins has created 50 fully **decodable books** that exactly match the progression and ambition of our Rapid Catch-up programme. They have been written for children age 7+ and provide practice at the correct level for each phase as well as ensuring that children's vocabulary and language development is supported.

The matching grid in the Rapid Catch-up assessment guidance on the Little Wandle website should be used to match each child's secure phonic knowledge in reading to the appropriate decodable reading book for the next four weeks.

Blending practice books



Among the 50 new decodable books are 10 blending practice books for use in Phases 2 and 3. These books have a very limited number of words and practise specific GPCs. They are used to focus on blending skills and extending vocabulary. They are identified in the weekly grids and there are supporting teacher's notes to guide you through how to use them. You can also see these books being taught in the Rapid Catch-up 'How to' video 'Blending practice books'.

¹ Masterson, J., Stuart, M., Dixon, M. and Lovejoy, S. (2003) *Children's Printed Word Database: Economic and Social Research Council funded project, R00023406*