



This year we will be using Sound Waves Literacy resources to support our teaching of reading and spelling.

## What will children learn in Sound Waves Literacy?

In Sound Waves Literacy, children are gradually taught a range of skills and strategies that promote a deeper understanding of words and how they work.

Teaching focuses on four main areas:

### Speech Sounds

Children are taught the 43 sounds of spoken Australian English and how to work with these sounds. They learn to answer questions like, 'What is the first sound in sun?' and 'How many sounds are in stop?'. This knowledge of sounds is critical for learning to read and spell in English.

### Sound-Letter Relationships

Children are taught the different letters that represent speech sounds in writing. For example, children learn that the same sound is used at the start of the words **cat**, **king** and **chemist**, but that the sound can be represented in different ways (**c**, **k** and **ch**).

Children are taught patterns that help them make decisions about which letters to use when spelling. For example, they learn that **dge** is used at the end of a word after a, e, i, o and u, like in **badge**, **ledge**, **bridge**, **lodge** and **budge**.

### Prefixes, Suffixes, and Greek and Latin Roots

In addition, children are taught the meaning and spelling of prefixes, suffixes, and Greek and Latin roots. For example, they learn that the prefix **re** means again, in words such as **replay**, **reheat** and **recycle**.

They also learn patterns that help them add these small parts to base words. For example, they learn to 'drop the **e**' when adding the suffix **ing** to words ending in **e**, like when changing **bake** to **baking**.

### Word Origins

Children in upper primary also learn about where words come from to help them understand and remember unusual or complex words. For example, they learn that the words **architect** and **orchestra** originate from Greek.

As children progress through primary school, the amount of time dedicated to each area changes. In the early years the majority of teaching time is spent on sound-letter relationships, whereas in the upper years children spend more time on prefixes, suffixes, and Greek and Latin roots.

**Did you know?**  
Australian English is produced using 43 speech sounds.

English uses the 26 letters of the alphabet to represent the 43 sounds in spoken language.

This mismatch between letters and sounds means sometimes more than one letter represents a sound. For example, the **sh** in **ship** and the **igh** in **high** are examples of more than one letter representing just one sound.