



A step-by-step approach to teaching the English alphabet code

based on the work of Dr Diane McGuinness, author of *Why Children Can't Read*, 1997

The **Sound Reading System** revolutionises the teaching of reading and spelling by its logical approach to the English spelling system using comprehensive linguistic-phonics. SRS provides clarity for the teacher and the learner and should be part of any teacher's toolkit. The **Sound Reading System** gives the teacher extensive knowledge and understanding of the complex English alphabet code.

This will enable the teacher to teach the 44 sounds in the English language and the 176 common spellings that represent these sounds with confidence. This is managed by careful sequencing of simple, well-structured lessons and children learn that our writing system is a code, and precisely how this code works.

As a result, learning proceeds rapidly with minimal effort and with considerable satisfaction and enjoyment for both teacher and learner. SRS has a proven track record: on average, our catch-up students gain two years on standardised tests of reading, spelling, and comprehension after 18 lessons.



The **Sound Reading System** works with every age group, disentangling misconceptions and creating logical order for the learner. SRS explains the code, but the reading of 'real books' for enjoyment is always encouraged. The **Sound Reading System** will support:

- Beginner Readers
- Young learners who are showing signs of falling behind (Beginner readers started on SRS will be supported in their learning)
- Those that may still be catching up at the end of Primary or at Secondary level
- Adults who did not experience success at school.

"The code is so obvious that you wonder how we have lost sight of it. It is the essence of teaching reading and spelling. Discovering it provides the 'missing information' that we have neglected to teach." MPS, Primary Teacher, Yorkshire

"SRS should be a fundamental part of any teacher's tool kit... it is inexpensive and highly effective." AK, Head Teacher, Christchurch Primary School, London

"Once you know how, it's so simple." DVE, Special Needs Teacher, Sussex

Most importantly, when using the Sound Reading System, students no longer fail with learning to read and spell

"I have noticed a huge difference using SRS. Having sight word cards just didn't work at all and my children knew that they couldn't do it and they didn't even want to try. I was having a real battle with homework but now we are all much happier with the new approach. My children are really enjoying learning to read and I can see the difference with their confidence."

P2 Parent

Understanding the code

The English spelling code follows four principles and we can open the understanding of these principles by using the SRS keys, that move from simple to complex:



KEY 1 Sounds or phonemes are represented by single letters: **c-a-t d-o-g s-w-i-m**



KEY 2 A sound or phoneme can be represented by two or more letters: **h-i-ll sh-i-p th-ere**



KEY 3 The same sound or phoneme can be represented/spelled in more than one way: e.g the sound /ee/ spellings **m-e t-ree t-ea-m s-u-nn-y**



KEY 4 The same spelling may represent more than one sound: **h-o-t o-p-e-n t-o**

SRS teaches the learner to use these 'keys' logically and practically. And by default it shows the teacher how to teach a complex code very simply.

Read what people think of SRS...

A teacher of 5 year olds in Oxford said: "This is the most worthwhile course I have ever been on"

A teacher of 7 year olds said: "It has revolutionised my own understanding of spelling and how it works."

A tutor in a Young Offender's institution near Oxford, wrote: "I felt helpless with struggling readers - now I feel inspired!"

A parent said: "His whole attitude to school - work and learning has changed... His confidence has grown immensely... He is generally a more happy boy."

And a 9 year old child told us: "Guess what! When I first came to you I could not read. Now I can read Harry Potter books!"

Training in the Sound Reading System

The Sound Reading System Training is a live 4 -day training for teachers, teaching assistants and parents teaching Primary School Beginner readers and 'Catch -Up' readers to read and spell.

Currently SRS is being adapted for Standalone Training online due to Covid 19. The training will be formatted into 4 Parts over four weeks and each part divided into several modules.

The modules will include practical activities and questions based on the teaching and learning offered; teachers can work at their own pace, with each Part available for one week.

The training will include a Teacher's Handbook for each teacher and a disk containing all the Teaching materials. Each school will receive two complete hardcopy packs of the materials contained on the disk (worksheet book + cardstock).

SRS is a linguistic-phonetic programme that can be adapted to the Scottish Code- materials will be offered.

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"SRS is a very different approach that works in-depth with sounds and the connection between reading and spelling. I have invested in developing the SRS methods in my school and children are no longer failing with reading and spelling. The SRS message needs to be shared with all schools because every child has the right to be successful." **School Leader**

"SRS is an investment in pedagogy, not resources. It is the first step towards an education system which is truly inclusive and can support all learners to read and spell. Our teachers have been inspired, open to challenging the old methods and the impact on our pupils has been extraordinary." **School Leader**

"SRS has made a huge difference. The children quickly experienced success and they knew that they were learning. This then had a positive impact on the level of engagement in other curriculum learning across the week." **Class Teacher**

"I think that what struck me most about SRS was that it was the first programme I had ever used that went back to basics, it taught without the assumption that the learner knew anything- yet was never patronising. The teaching is led by speech sounds, which makes perfect sense. This has been very effective with my teenage pupils" **Special School Teacher**

"The programme successfully bridges the gap between phonics teaching and real books. The activities and strategies within SRS are easily applied to any text and ensure children are soon reading for meaning and enjoyment." **Specialist Teacher**