# Learning through observation: Observing the specialist phonics practitioner

Use the following prompts to help you focus on aspects of good practice in the teaching of phonics.

Teacher………………………………………… Date …………………………….. Year Group……………………

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| **Teacher’s planning and subject knowledge**  What is the **learning objective/outcome** for the lesson? Where does this come from?  How is phonics **specific vocabulary** used by both teacher and pupils? (E.g. phoneme, grapheme, blending)  What **resources** are used by the teacher during whole class teaching? In what ways do these support pupils’ learning? How effective are they and why? (Consider the whole classroom. Look at the walls)  What **resources** are used by pupils during the lesson? Have all children got access to the same resources? How do pupils access resources? What impact do these have on children’s learning?  How does the teacher **review** previously taught sounds?  How does the teacher **teach** a new phoneme (sound)? How does the teacher encourage the children to articulate phonemes(sounds) correctly; does the teacher refer to the name of the letter? How does the teacher demonstrate clearly how to read the letter? How does the teacher then demonstrate how to write the letter?  How do the children **practise** their phonemes and then match graphemes? How do the children practise blending for reading and segmenting for spelling?  How do the children **apply** their phonic knowledge and skills in purposeful reading and writing activities?  How does the teacher tackle **misconceptions**? |
| **Pupil Progress** How does the teacher make links with previous lessons? What strategies does the teacher use to assess how well the pupils are doing in the lesson? (E.g. questioning, pupil self-assessment, scanning, commenting on written work, asking the teaching assistant). How does the teacher use this information to improve learning within the lesson and over time? Is there a sense of progression over the lesson? How is this achieved? Are pupils asked what they have learned at the end of the lesson? |
| **Questioning/explicit instruction** Does the teacher use a balance of questioning alongside explicit instruction? What sort of questions does the teacher ask in order to develop children’s thinking? How much time does the teacher allow for thinking? Who does the teacher ask to answer? Why? Does the teacher use partner work? Is questioning used to extend children of all levels of attainment? |
| **Organisation** How are pupils organised in the different stages of the lesson? What impact does this have on their learning? How does the teacher ensure that all pupils can participate fully? |
| **Mastery** How does the teacher ensure all parts of the lesson are accessible and challenging to **all** pupils? How are activities designed to enable mastery and to deepen and broaden understanding of higher attainers? |
| **Three key things that I have learned from this observation:**  1.  2.  3. |