

Name: _____

Phoneme Thinking: A Mix and a Muddle!

Learning about animals helps us to look after them! But the animal facts below have got muddled! Some of the words have got mixed up. Can you use the letters to make a word?

Clue: All the words have the 'or' phoneme in them. Make the 'or' grapheme and then see if you can use the rest of the letters to make a word. Then draw a picture of your favourite fact!

Rhinos have a o h n r _____ on their nose.

Polar bears live at the t n o h r _____ pole.

Fish swim in a r a o c l _____ reef.

Deep in the s o e f r t _____ you can find i l l o g a r s _____.



Name: _____

“In the reef, in the short reeds, is a moray eel. It’s a long fish that hunts for little fish to eat.”

How many words in this sentence have the ‘or’ phoneme in them? _____

Start, Middle OR End

The ‘or’ phoneme can be at the start of a word, or in the middle or at the end. These words are all animals. Do not worry if you have not heard of them, just sound them out carefully. Circle the animals that have ‘or’ at the start of their name:

orca

horse

dormouse

alligator

oryx

stork

orangutan

loris

tortoise

porcupine

hornet

Can you think of any other words with ‘or’ in them?

Name: _____

Phoneme Thinking: A Mix and a Muddle Answers

Rhinos have a h o r n on their nose.

Polar bears live at the n o r t h pole.

Fish swim in a c o r a l reef.

Deep in the f o r e s t you can find g o r i l l a s.

“In the reef, in the short reeds, is a moray eel. It’s a long fish that hunts for little fish to eat.”

How many words in this sentence have the ‘or’ phoneme in them? 3 words have the ‘or’ phoneme in them.

‘Orca’, ‘oryx’ and ‘orangutan’ have ‘or’ at the start of their name.

Other words with ‘or’ in them include: corn, fork, born, torch, force, sport, sword, storm, story, lorry, morning

Name: _____

Guidance for Parents

This reading and writing activity should help your child practice their phonics. This activity is aimed at early readers and writers i.e. KS1 who are able to sound out, read simple texts and form letters. It is designed to practice writing/‘encoding’ and reading skills to help with spelling and sounding out.

The focus is on the ‘or’ phoneme/sound as in ‘form’ or ‘order’. This is represented by the ‘or’ grapheme/letters. This is taken from the national curriculum. If your child’s school uses the ‘Read Write Inc’ phonic scheme, this phoneme is from Set 2 and is called ‘*or, shut the door*’. This phoneme is common at the beginning, middle and end of words, such as in ‘orb’, ‘adorn’ and ‘tractor’. Each activity therefore demonstrates this potential.

The first activity helps emphasise the construction of words around the set phoneme, so learners can explore how this phoneme may appear in words they might not know, such as coral, or not recognise instantly, like gorilla. The second and third parts then reinforce recognition of this phoneme, both in familiar words like ‘for’ and ‘short’ and in unfamiliar words like ‘moray’ or ‘oryx’. Successfully reading some of these unusual words should be praised to help build confidence.

Learners are likely to encounter references to animals they are not familiar with. If they are interested or intrigued by them, this is a great jumping off point to research the animals further. Are their clips of the animals on YouTube? Could they draw a picture of the animals? Where do they think they live and what might they eat? Phonics, as a toolkit for future reading and writing skills, can be shown to be a gateway to exploring the world. This opportunity for exploration will hopefully encourage children to engage with their phonics practice as well as the natural world and improve their familiarity, understanding and enthusiasm for both.