

PHONICS

Jolly Classroom




A fun, multisensory, interactive version of the Jolly Phonics programme

AT A GLANCE

- A new digital platform to support the teaching of the popular Jolly Phonics scheme
- Aligned with the Jolly Phonics Handbook and Pupil and Teacher's Books
- Promotes a fun, multisensory approach to learning letters and sounds
- A comprehensive, year-long programme comprising over 150 pre-planned lessons

REVIEWED BY: MIKE DAVIES



If teaching phonics is something you feel you can do standing on your head, knock yourself out. If not, this new arrival from Jolly Phonics might interest you.

Of course, you know of Jolly Phonics. Established well before the teaching of synthetic phonics was even included in the National Literacy Strategy of 1998, it is one of the most popular and enduring phonics programmes on the market. Like most successful products, it has had to move with the times. Recently, the fifth edition of the Jolly Phonics Handbook was launched, including updated illustrations and several new worksheets and additional new content. Now, they are introducing a digital platform to enhance its impact still further – Jolly Classroom.

As you might expect, it includes everything you need to introduce the 42 letter sounds to your pupils, along with the accompanying skills of letter formation, blending, segmenting and spotting tricky words. It then goes on to alternative spellings, new letter combinations, further tricky words and so on, while consolidating earlier learning. The resources work together to form an extensive year-long programme, aligned to both the familiar Jolly Phonics handbook, and pupil books.

Each letter sound is pre-recorded for you, in case you're self-conscious about your schwa. And you don't have to worry about repetitive strain injury from flourishing your flash cards, either. But, for me, what really brings the resources to life

is the way they use bright and appealing pictures, entertaining short stories, touch-screen letter formation and even brief ditties using familiar tunes to bring the learning to life. In all likelihood, the rookie readers will be absorbing their letters and sounds so happily, they won't realise what abstract magic they are mastering.

In order to embed that new learning still further, there is a wide variety of engaging activities included in Jolly Classroom. These can all be completed on an interactive whiteboard with the whole class, and many can also be printed out for pupils to attempt individually, if you so wish. I have every confidence that the children will love doing the activities, as they are based on the winning formula that has worked so well for Jolly Phonics for so many years.

From the teacher's perspective, I can see this not only saving a lot of planning time, but also providing an easy-to-follow, carefully structured programme that should make teaching phonics a joy. It's simple to set up and intuitive to use. But, just in case, like me, you are prone to techno-befuddlement, there are tips and instructions at every stage to keep you on track.

For existing fans of Jolly phonics, it will probably feel like an impressive film adaptation of a favourite book. But I can see it converting many newcomers, too. If you like to make your phonics lessons a vibrant, multi-sensory experience for your pupils, you will probably take to this like a spotty snake to hissing.

Teach Reading & Writing

VERDICT

- ✓ Bright and engaging
- ✓ Simple to set up and use
- ✓ Attractive, screen-based lessons
- ✓ Interactive, multisensory activities
- ✓ Saves planning time
- ✓ Perfectly pitched for young children
- ✓ Useful online support

UPGRADE IF...

You want to give your phonics lessons extra impact through engaging, multisensory, screen-based activities.