



teach reading using games™

# Systematic Synthetic Phonics Instruction Booklet

- **trugs** is flexible and adaptable so that it is suitable for use in mainstream schools as soon as any fall off of pace from a 'core' programme is identified and can be used at any stage.
- **trugs** provides the key principles of the 'core criteria' for group and one-to-one intervention to enable a phonics first and fast approach. Card games are designed for groups and one-to-one. Each decodable card game takes about 2 minutes to play.
- **trugs** may be used to supplement 'core' programmes by providing additional materials in the form of decodable card games to 'catch up' pupils to their expected pace as soon as possible. See the trugs structure - page 5.
- **trugs** ensures that multi-sensory activities are engaging whilst firmly focused on intensifying the learning associated with its phonic goal. See the three decodable card games at each Stage - page 2.
- **trugs** does not neglect the need for an engaging and helpful approach to the more challenging graphemes and phonemes. See Tricky Words games 1 and 2 that target high frequency words slowly and systematically - page 14.
- **trugs** stories are phonetically decodable at each of the structured stages and build on the previous stage to ensure that they are appropriate at each level in order to apply the practice and phonic knowledge that pupils have learnt.
- There is no use of whole-word strategies, cues from context, guessing or pictures.

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# Systematic Synthetic Phonics



**trugs** follows the guidelines set down by the UK Government to support the teaching of reading using systematic synthetic phonics. This Booklet contains comprehensive explanations.

## A systematic synthetic phonics resource

### trugs offers

practise, reinforcement and consolidation  
to all systematic synthetic phonics programmes giving  
variety and breadth of material for teachers to use  
with their pupils

**trugs** enhances the good practice of systematic synthetic phonics. **trugs** achieves this by using decodable card games that provide enjoyment to children as they learn to read and spell.

Within the various **trugs** resource the following is covered:

1. Reading
2. Spelling
3. Writing
4. Dictation
5. Tracking progress

it is important to understand that within these decodable card games is a highly professional approach, resulting in lots of reading, spelling and writing – together with monitoring and tracking pupil progress.

The playing of the games requires pupils to read words by decoding them, sounding out the phonemes and reading from left to right all through the word. This is done over and over again when playing each and every card game. A huge amount of decoding and reading is achieved in this way. Pupils are so encouraged. They love playing - it gives them a real sense of fun and yet all the time they are reading, over and over again.

Incidental reading using correct systematic synthetic phonics reinforcement.  
No pictures and no guessing to achieve reading success.

Designed by a teacher with 35 years phonics teaching experience in Primary and Secondary Schools.

**trugs** allows teachers to support their teaching methods of systematic synthetic phonics in a hugely fun and engaging way. Professionally they feel safe with the material and they know that their children are succeeding in a manner that captures their enthusiasm.

## How to play these decodable card games

Note: The person practising their reading skills is referred to as the 'reader'  
The person helping the 'reader' with their reading is referred to as the 'helper'

### Get it (for 2 players)

- Find the two Master Cards and put one in front of the 'helper' and one in front of the 'reader'
- Shuffle the rest of the pack and place it face down
- Look at the coloured shape on the top card
- Refer to the Master Card and look at the coloured words corresponding to the coloured shape on the top card of the pack
- 'Reader' reads each of these words by saying the sounds and blending them from left to right all through the word (unless they can read the word automatically).
- Both 'reader' and 'helper' select which word it could be by reading it, but allow the 'reader' to select first  
**Each player reads their chosen word out loud.**
- Turn the card over – The 'reader' reads the word. The person who selected correctly keeps the card, placing it face up in front of them
- If no-one selected correctly the card goes to the bottom of the pack

**The winner is the player with the most cards at the end**

#### Advantages of playing Get it

- Constantly looking (visual) at all the words on the Master Card
- Hearing (auditory) others reading words that they select
- Get it contains the easiest words at each Stage

### Match it (for 2 to 4 players)

- Shuffle the cards and deal 5 cards to each player
- Place the remaining cards face down between the players and take the top card off and turn it over placing it beside the pack
- Players now pick up their cards and hold them in their hand so that they can see them but no one else can see them
- The first player to start selects a card from their hand that is the same colour OR the same number as the card beside the pack and places it on top of the card on the table. **Read the word out loud.** The player reads the word by saying the sounds and blending them from left to right all through the word (unless they can read the word automatically).
- If the first player cannot go, but they have a trugs card, they can use it as a 'joker card' to choose a colour of their choice. They place the trugs card down and tell the next player what colour they must put down
- If the first player does not have a trugs card, then they must pick up a card from the pack
- The next player then plays and so on

**The first player to use up all their cards is the winner**

#### Advantages of playing Match it

- Constantly looking (visual) and hearing (auditory) whilst actually placing cards down (kinaesthetic)
- Can be played within a group of up to 6 players or one to one
- Incidental learning as players hugely enjoy the matching of colour and number without realising they are reading as well

## Take it (for 2 to 4 players)

- Shuffle the pack and place it face down between the players
  - The first player turns the top card over and puts the card face up in front of them. **Read the word out loud.** The player reads the word by saying the sounds and blending them from left to right all through the word (unless they can read the word automatically).
  - The second player does the same
  - Continue taking it in turns and collecting the words into sets (there are 5 sets of four) reading the words each time
  - When a player picks up a card with a word that is the same colour (the same set) as his fellow players then he/she takes all the cards of the same colour (the same set) and adds them to theirs! **Read all the words in that set out loud**
  - This continues with the cards being collected in sets, but continually being taken by the players when they pick up the relevant corresponding cards
- The player ending up with the most sets of cards is the winner**

### Advantages of playing Take it

- Enables over-learning as words are re-read every time words are taken
- Encourages listening skills
- A light-hearted, multi-sensory approach, encouraging a good atmosphere to decoding
- Contains the hardest words within the particular Stage being reinforced

## Use it (for 2 or more players)

- Place the pack face down between the players
  - The first player turns the top card over and places it in front of him/her
  - The 'reader' always reads the word in the centre of the card out loud – even if it is the 'helper's' go
  - The 'reader' reads the black words in the corners. These are high frequency words, where the 'reader' reads the words phonetically where possible, identifying the phonemes they know and reading from left to right all through the word.
- See how to read high frequency words towards the end of this booklet

### The player then constructs a sentence:

- beginning with one of the four high frequency words in the corner
- containing the target word from the centre
- which must not be longer than 20 words otherwise there is a danger that the sentence becomes rambling
- guide and encourage good sentence development using connectives and vocabulary development where possible

Add up the words in the sentence and record the score on a piece of paper. Repeat for each sentence with each player.

The winner is the person with the highest total after all the cards are used or after an agreed amount of time

### This game can be used for:

Language development – verbal sentence construction

Handwriting practise and spelling reinforcement – written sentence work

### Advantages of playing Use it

The 'helper' should:

- help the 'reader' with sentence construction – whether verbally or written
- suggest connectives like 'because' etc
- encourage good use of language

### Where to start and how often to play

- The games are in Stages – so it is always best to start at the lowest numbered stage in the box
- Play any of the four card games at that Stage, as often as you wish. The games are graded in order of difficulty – Get it, Match it and Take it. So you can always choose the level of difficulty at each Stage
- When the 'reader' feels confident with the Stage that they are on and can read the words automatically, then progress to the next stage. NB. It is always good to revisit earlier Stages to reinforce what has been learned, thereby gaining confidence
- There is an 'Explanation Card' at each stage, in place of a manual. This gives a short, succinct explanation about the particular stage.

## **trugs introduction – a resource for use with synthetic phonics programmes.**

The Government in England has provided a set of core criteria that define the key features of an effective systematic synthetic phonics teaching programme, for the initial teaching of reading and writing. This booklet explains to teachers and parents how to use **trugs** to support teaching according to these criteria.

### **What is systematic synthetic phonics?**

**Systematic:** Teaching is highly structured and letter-sound correspondences are introduced in a prescribed order.

**Synthetic:** Unfamiliar written words are read by translating letters into sounds and ‘synthesising’ or blending the sounds all through the word to achieve full pronunciation of whole words.

**Phonics:** Students are taught correspondences between graphemes in written language and phonemes in spoken language and how to use these correspondences to read and spell words.

Through this booklet you will discover the benefits of using decodable card games to reinforce good synthetic phonics teaching.

**trugs** provides consolidation of knowledge and skills taught in phonics lessons.

Whilst **trugs** is primarily designed to consolidate reading skills, the activities can also be used effectively for spelling and writing. **trugs** gives pupils the practice they need in reading, spelling and writing in a hugely engaging way.

### **Systematic synthetic phonics and trugs**

Systematic: **trugs** systematic structure is referred to as ‘Stages’.

- There are 15 Stages which are explained on page 5.
- Before each Stage, the student is introduced to the letter/sound correspondences included in the games and activities, usually through the synthetic phonics programme used in phonics lessons.

Synthetic: Students read words by blending sounds all through the word, until they can read the words automatically.

- At each Stage there are 4 card games within the schools ‘**trugs**’ boxes and 3 card games within the ‘**trugs at home**’ boxes for parents. These games offer the opportunity to;

1. practise, reinforce and consolidate reading by playing the card games.
2. practise spelling by utilising the card games to demonstrate that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

#### **This then offers:**

- enjoyment and a multi-sensory approach to the reading and spelling process.
- the opportunity for lots of incidental, discrete learning to take place.
- repetition as they play the games so that they are reading or spelling over and over again without realising just how much they are achieving.

## trugs structure - within the various trugs products.

Pupils are expected to use their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences to read the words in the decodable card games. Teachers and parents should choose games that include only letter-sound correspondences that pupils either know or have been taught.

**Stage 0** Available as a separate deck. Introduces 16 letter sounds according to the s/a/t/p/i/n/ order

### Stage 0:

Introducing  
16 letter sounds:  
/s/a/t/p/ /i/n/m/d/  
/g/o/c/k/ /l/c/k/e/u/r/

### TW1 and TW2

High Frequency Words

### Box 1:

- Stage 1** cvc – sat yes big fox hug  
**Stage 2** ccvc – pram shall trip snack  
**Stage 3** cvcc and ccvc –  
left best crash drank  
**Stage 4** two syllable words –  
magnet instruct  
**Stage 5** 'ar' - 'or' - 'er' –  
car port her stir churn

### Box 2: **This Box**

- Stage 6** split digraph (vowel - consonant-e)  
make these fine code tuneful  
**Stage 7** vowel digraphs and trigraphs  
– snail seen light boat statue  
**Stage 8** alternative vowel digraphs – boy out paw  
**Stage 9** two syllable words – limit pilot  
**Stage 10** three syllable words – consider discontent

### Box 3:

- Stage 11** 'c' as in /s/ – mice pencil succeed  
**Stage 12** 'g' as in /j/ – gem page rigid  
**Stage 13** consonant-le – candle sensible  
**Stage 14** four syllable words – independent  
**Stage 15** suffixes with 'ti' 'ci' 'si' – electrician

**Stories and Monitoring** – within the **trugs** Boxes 1, 2 and 3 there are two decodable stories at each of the specific stages. These allow teachers to map incremental progression in phonic knowledge and skill. Teachers can track pupils' progress; assess for further learning and identify incipient difficulties for both reading and spelling.

### Tricky Words 1 and 2

Two 72-card decks to practise, reinforce and consolidate high frequency words. The order and progression of words have been selected from Letters and Sounds pages 193 and 195. Designed to be introduced slowly and systematically during the progression of the decodable words within **trugs** Boxes 1, 2 and 3.

### Explanation Cards for each trugs Stage

At each of the **trugs** Stages there is a systematic synthetic phonics Explanation Card giving a short explanation of the Stage. These can be found within the trugs boxes.

## **trugs decodable card games for reading – to practise, reinforce and consolidate**

### **Get it.**

In Get it, the pupil reads a short list of words by saying the sounds and blending them all through the word, until they can read the word automatically. They then select which word will be on the card they turn over. To win the game, they must read the words repeatedly, and so they gain the practice they need to recognise words quickly until they are able to read without sounding out aloud. The result is that they have fun and love the game at the same time as improving their ability to read fluently.

### **Match it.**

Each player has a hand of cards. They take it in turns to put their cards down to match the previous card with a number or a colour. Each time they put down a card, they must read the word on the card by saying the sounds and blending them all through the word, until they can read the word automatically. For many, this is their favourite game!

### **Take it.**

Each player in turn takes a card from the deck, places the card face up and reads it by saying the sounds and blending them all through the word, until they can read the word automatically. They are collecting colours. However, if there is a set of colours on the table in front of someone else then they can take that set and add it to the card they picked up. They can only keep the cards if they read the words correctly. At first they say the sounds and blend them all through the word. However, in order to collect cards, they have to read the words repeatedly. Each time they repeat a word they have read before, they read it faster, and eventually automatically. Children are proud of reading words faster and faster.

Every time a child reads words in these decodable reading games they read the phonemes from left to right all through the word to build the word and read it. This is an excellent game for reading reinforcement as well as social skills.

### **Use it.**

Each player selects a card and reads the word in the centre. They then select a word from the edge of their card and read it sounding the phonemes and blending them all through the word, until they can read the word automatically. They then make up a sentence that begins with one of the words from the edge and incorporates the word in the centre. Pupils are encouraged to create sentences that develop their understanding of literacy and should be praised for their achievements.

# Systematic Synthetic Phonics resource for Key Stage 1, 2 & 3

Each stage has graded games to enable all age pupils to enjoy the entire structure.

## **Get it**      **decodable reading game**

This game contains the easiest words at each systematic synthetic phonics trugs Stage enabling all key stage pupils to access each and every stage.

Ideal for Key Stage 1 to begin to secure and practise the easiest words within the particular phonics stage.

Eg (Stage 7 vowel digraphs and trigraphs) words like **feed**

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## **Match it**      **decodable reading/spelling game**

This game contains slightly harder words within the same systematic synthetic phonics trugs stage. Pupils can feel they are developing their skills within the same phonics stage.

Ideal for Key Stage 1 pupils

Eg (Stage 7 vowel digraphs and trigraphs) words like **street**

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## **Take it**      **decodable reading/spelling game**

Words within this game really challenge the pupils.

Ideal for Key Stage 1 gifted and talented to secure high level word recognition.

Eg (Stage 7 vowel digraphs and trigraphs) words like **freedom**

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## **Use it**      **decodable reading/spelling/writing game**

Words within this game enable Key Stage 1 pupils to identify words to use in sentence construction and vocabulary development.

Eg (Stage 7 vowel digraphs and trigraphs) words like **sixteen**



# Get it

## A decodable reading game



**Using the master card (left) look at the 4 words in the corresponding colour or shape as the card below**

Pupils are then asked to select a word that they think is written on the reverse of the card.

They look at the four words, sounding out the phonemes in each word in order from left to right all through the word. They then select one and say it out loud.

The card is turned over to reveal **feed**

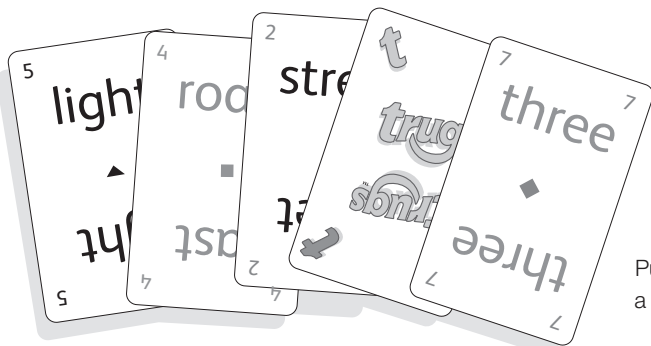
The only way the pupil knows whether or not they selected correctly is to read the word, sounding out the phonemes in order from left to right all through the word.

You can see when they have read the word by the reaction on their face.

Example taken from Stage 7

# Match it

A decodable reading/spelling game



Pupils (one to one or in groups) have a hand of cards each.



Pupils take it in turns to put a card on top of the one in the middle that is

either the same number or the same colour and read the word out loud, sounding the phonemes in order from left to right all through the word.

Pupils interact together, hear each other read, see words being read and read words out loud themselves. The perception they have is a matching colour and number game, when in fact they are reading and reinforcing phonic knowledge every time.

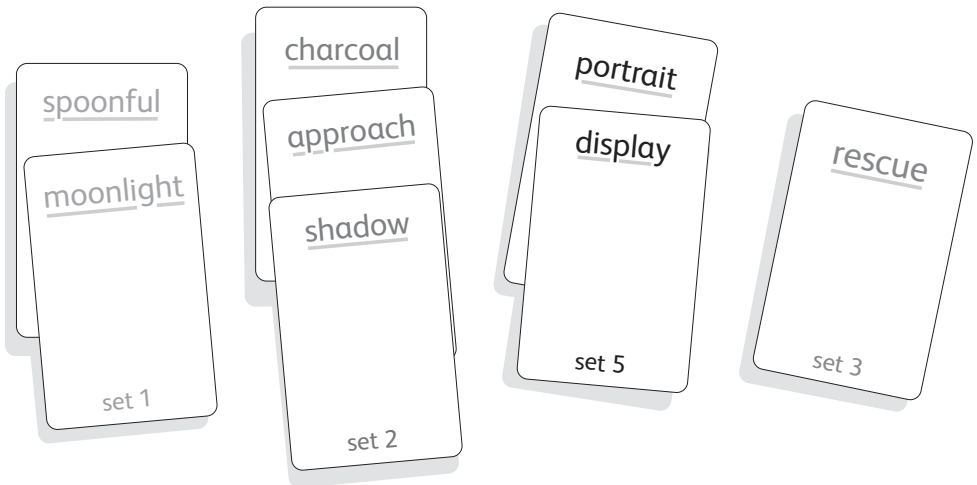


For spelling practise pupils read a word in their hand and another pupil spells it before the card is placed on the top of the deck in the middle.

Example taken from Stage 7

# Take it

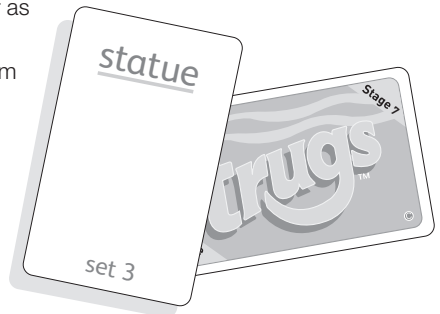
## A decodable reading/spelling game



Pupils (one to one or in groups) take it in turns to pick a card from the pile and place it in front of them and say the word.

When a pupil picks up a card that is the same colour as another pupil's cards, they take their cards and then read all the words reading the phonemes in order from left to right all through the word.

This is a game that pupils ask to play - the laughter that is generated demonstrates this. They listen intently to words being read by other pupils because they soon learn that it is to their advantage to do so. A multi-sensory approach to practising reading.



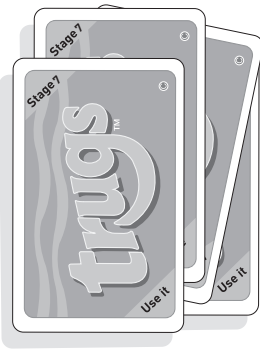
For spelling, pupils read the word before placing it down for another pupil in the group to spell it. Then they put the word down.

Example taken from Stage 7

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# Use it

## A decodable reading/spelling game

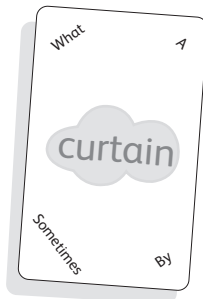


Pupils (one to one or in groups) select a card and read the high frequency words in black round the outside. They read the target word in the centre (sounding phonemes in order from left to right all through the word every time). They then make up a sentence beginning with one of the high frequency words and incorporate the target word.

Pupils are encouraged to develop their literacy skills considering connectives, adjectives and vocabulary. As a reading game they say the sentence. As a spelling/writing game they write the sentence down.

Teachers support and develop pupils' language skills at precisely their correct phonics stage having selected it previously.

Example taken from Stage 7



## Using trugs for practising spelling and writing

It is important to realise that the **trugs** card games are reversible games. So where the games can be used as reading games, they can also be used as spelling games. Ensure that the pupils understand that spelling is the reverse of reading. For reading we look at a written word and blend sounds; for spelling we listen to a spoken word and segment it to identify the sounds.

Teachers can use these games in a variety of different ways for spelling reinforcement. An article in NASEN Special Extra cited over four different ways of interpreting the card games for specific use in spelling practise. See Issue 1, April 2011 – A Games Lesson by Emma Thomas.

One example is when playing Match it, just before you put down a word you ask a child to spell the word on the card. So if you have 'cat' you ask them to spell 'cat'.

**In addition, the Use it game can be used for spelling and writing.**

- To practise spelling, ask pupils to write the target word before making up a sentence - this will not only give them handwriting practise but it will also give them an opportunity to practise spelling skills, realising that spelling is the reverse of reading.
- To practise handwriting skills, write down the sentence made up by the pupils and ask them to copy the sentence.
- To reinforce the reading of high-frequency decodable words and tricky words, use the black words around the outside of the Use it game and ask the pupils to read the words.
- To reinforce the spelling of high-frequency decodable words and tricky words use the black words around the outside of the Use it game and ask them to spell the words.

The pupils listen to the spoken word and segment it to identify the separate phonemes/graphemes. They identify the sounds in the word. They could be asked to write the word to make the activity more multi-sensory and develop their writing skills.

All this, of course, depends on the teacher ensuring that the child is at the correct Stage – see assessment material to monitor progress on page 12.

There is a **Story Booklet** and a **Pupil Record Booklet** within the **trugs** schools boxes. Within these booklets there are two decodable stories at each of the 15 **trugs** reading Stages.

## Pupil Record Booklet for Monitoring and Assessing Pupil Progress READING

Teachers select the appropriate story according to the Stage the pupil is at and use story (i) to measure reading:

- fluency
- percentage accuracy
- and identify specific difficulties in order to inform each Stage of progression in phonic knowledge and skills

From these three different types of assessment the teacher can evaluate the overall reading progress of an individual.

Within the assessment material there are high-frequency and tricky words that will need to be learned. They should not be taught as whole words, without using phonic knowledge. Teachers should help students to identify the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they know and learn how to pronounce the ones they do not know. Then they use a phonic approach and blend sounds all through the word as usual, until they can read the words automatically.

## Pupil Record Booklet for Monitoring and Assessing Pupil Progress SPELLING/WRITING

Teachers select the appropriate story according to the Stage the pupil is on and use story (ii) to assess a pupil's spelling and writing progress within the **trugs** boxes for schools. The teacher reads story (ii) at the relevant Stage for a pupil to track spelling and writing progress:

- dictation
- handwriting
- spelling

The pupil writes on a separate sheet of paper. The teacher then evaluates the overall progress of an individual, recording the results in the **Pupil Record Booklet** at the relevant Stage.

This gives teachers the opportunity to track progress in spelling skills.

Within the assessment material there are high-frequency and tricky words. These can be assessed alongside the staged progression. They should not be learned in isolation but a phonic first approach should be adopted as explained on page 14.

## Some essential high frequency and tricky words

The words below appear within the stories in The Story Booklet at the particular Stages. Pupils need to practise these words slowly and systematically throughout the trugs resource. They should not be taught as whole words, without using phonic knowledge first. Teachers should help students to identify the letter-sounds they know and learn how to pronounce the ones they do not know. Then they use a phonic approach and blend sounds all through the word as usual, until they can read the words automatically.

- With decodable words like 'got', letters are translated into sounds and the sounds are blended from left to right all through the word as usual.
- With tricky words like 'said' the first letter sound 's' is known and can be sounded out. The 'ai' is the tricky part and has to be learned, but then the last sound, 'd', is known.
- **Stage 6** – 'when' and 'hours'
- **Stage 7** – 'by', 'could' and 'almost'
- **Stage 8** – 'heard' and 'where'
- **Stage 9** – 'before'
- **Stage 10** – 'grandmother'

## Additional high frequency words can be found within:

**trugs Tricky Words 1 and 2 (TW1 & TW2)** in two separate decks.

**trugs Tricky Words** includes regular words that can be decoded easily and those that have 'tricky' parts.

**TW 1** – 66 words have been selected from the list of the 100 high-frequency words within Letters and Sounds Appendix 1 page 193. The other 34 regular decodable words are within **trugs Box 1** and **Box 2**.

**TW 2** – 66 words have been selected from the list of the 200 high-frequency words within Letters and Sounds Appendix 1 page 195. The other 134 regular decodable words are within **trugs Box 1** and **Box 2**.

These words can then be practised having been put into three card games for the children and students. This allows them the opportunity to practise, reinforce and consolidate in a hugely fun and engaging way.

Designed to be introduced slowly and systematically during the progression of the decodable words within **trugs Box 1, 2 and 3** and **trugs at home Box 1, 2 and 3**.

**trugs Box 1** – introduce TW1 Get it and Match it

**trugs Box 2** – introduce TW1 Take it and TW 2 Get it

**trugs Box 3** – introduce TW2 Match it and Take it



The Government has defined its core criteria for assuring high-quality systematic synthetic phonics work in England.

**trugs** decodable card games conform with these criteria.

By using **trugs** you can practise, reinforce and consolidate reading, safe in the knowledge that by playing the games and having fun, the most effective teaching methods are being followed.

Laugh, play and improve reading effectively.

Email: [trugs@readsuccessfully.com](mailto:trugs@readsuccessfully.com)  
[www.readsuccessfully.com](http://www.readsuccessfully.com)