Thomas A' Becket Glossary of Phonic Terms

Term	Meaning
Vowel	a e i o u
Consonant	All other alphabet letters.
Long Vowel sounds	The sound that is like the name of the vowel sound – (make, see, mice, bone, glue, spoon, light, sleigh) Often the vowel sounds are represented in more than one way with digraphs, trigraphs and quadgraphs).
Short Vowel sounds	The sound the vowel makes in words like cat, bed, tin, cot, bus,
Phoneme	The sounds we use to make words. There are 44 phonemes – 20 are vowel phonemes and 24 are consonant phonemes.
Grapheme	The combination of letters that represent a phoneme. It is the written representation of a phoneme.
GPC (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences)	The skill of being able to hear phonemes and write the corresponding grapheme and conversely, seeing a grapheme and knowing what sound it makes.
Graph	Where one letter makes one sound.
Digraph	Where two letters make one sound ('sh' 'ch' 'th' 'ng').
Trigraph	Where three letters make one sound ('igh').
Quadgraph	Where four letters make one sound ('eigh' 'ough').
Split digraph	A digraph that is split by another letter ('a-e' 'i-e').
Double digraph	The same letter in a word where only one is pronounced ('ll' 'nn').
Consonant blend	Two letters that make one sound where both are consonants ('ph' 'ch').
Decode	The practice of reading – turning graphemes into phonemes.
Encode	The practice of writing – turning phonemes into graphemes.
Oral blending	Hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.
Blending	Looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using their GPC to merge them together to make a word.
Oral segmenting	Hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.
Segment	The opposite of blending. Hearing a word then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it, working out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing them in the correct order – used when spelling and writing.
Sound Talk	The process of segmenting or breaking a word down (child speak).
Common Exception Words	Words that break the phonics rules and often used regularly in texts. Such as the, as, is
Tricky Words	This is what we call our common exception words.
Pure Sounds	The production of each letter sound clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end 'f' and not 'fuh' (See below)
Schwaring	A schwa is an unstressed syllable where a vowel does not make it's long or short vowel sound. It makes an 'u' sound, such as 'teacher' where we do not stress the 'er' sound. Or, 'problem' where the 'e' makes an 'u' sound. The schwa is also important when teaching children correct pronounciation, e.g. when teaching them to say the sound 'g' or 'm' the emphasis is on the sound only, rather than making an 'u' sound after the letter as this can hinder children when learning to blend.
CVC words	A word made up with a consonant followed by a vowel, followed by a consonant (sat, pin) Other combinations such as CCVC (chip) or CVCC (bank).
Catchphrase	A device for memorising and recalling the GPC.