

# What is

# PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS?

*Phonological awareness* is the ability to recognize and work with sounds in spoken language. It is the foundation for learning to read.

Students with strong phonological awareness can:

- rhyme;
- count syllables;
- recognize sounds alone and in words;
- add, remove, and substitute sounds in words;
- break words into their different sounds and blend them back together; and
- isolate sounds.

# Phonological Awareness Activities

## Rhyming Activities

- Using the most common word families, play a game where you and your child take turns thinking of rhyming words. Whoever comes up with the most for each word family wins!

Example: "What words can you think of that rhyme with -at?"

"Cat!" "Hat!"

"Rat!" "Fat!" "Gnat!"

- Using magazines, newspapers, and store advertisements, have your child look for pictures of objects that rhyme and cut them out. He/She can paste the pictures onto paper to create rhyme collages.
- Create picture cards with pairs of rhyming words. Separate the cards into two separate piles with one word from each pair in opposing piles. Take turns picking a card from each of the piles. If the words rhyme, say "rhyme time!" and keep those cards. If they don't rhyme, replace the cards in their original pile and keep playing.

Example:

<https://youtu.be/BXiWuB6XMfg>

### *The 37 most common word families in English are:*

#### **A**

ack, ain, ake, ale, all, ame, an, ank, ap, ash, at, ate, aw, ay

#### **E**

eat, ell, est

#### **I**

ice, ick, ide, ight, ill, in, ine, ing, ink, ip, it

#### **O**

ock, oke, op, ore, ot

#### **U**

- Play “I Spy” with your child, but instead of naming a color, say, “I spy something that rhymes with\_\_\_\_\_.” Take turns with your child playing the game. Encourage the use of nonsense words as rhyming clues.
- Give your child a list of three words where only two rhyme. Ask them to identify which word does not belong.
- Read a rhyming picture book aloud to your child. Pause at the end of the sentences to let your child guess the rhyming word that finishes the phrase. Talk about which words rhyme.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/hYKzgymUoJs>
- Help your child read a simple rhyming passage. Start by asking your child to read a list of rhyming words, and then incorporate them into a sentence.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/Qs4YuoAxrsI>
- Sing rhyming echo songs, such as “Boom Chicka Boom.” Come up with a motion for each rhyme you create and act it out.

# Alliteration Activities

- If your child struggles to hear the alliteration in a phrase or sentence, practice with words beginning with the following sounds: /f/, /h/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /s/, /v/, /z/. These sounds can be drawn out to emphasize their placement at the beginning of each word. Come up with simple phrases where the words all begin with the same sound. Say the phrase and have your child repeat it back, drawing out the beginning sound.  
Example: “Sssneaky sssnakes ssslide and ssslither.”
  
- Ask your child to think of words to describe the objects they see. Tell your child the word used has to start with the same sound as the word they are describing.  
Examples: “delicious donut,” “bouncy ball,” “green grass”
  
- Play a game where you and your child take turns finding objects around the house to use in silly alliteration sentences. See who can use the most words beginning with the same sound in their sentence.  
Example: “Sister’s stinky sock smells sour.”
  
- Have your child think of silly names for themselves, family, and friends. The new names must be at least three words long, and all of the words in the name must begin with the same sound as the person’s regular name.  
Examples: “audible Audrey Octopus,” “hairy helpful Henry,”  
“creative character Kim,” and “picky pal Parker”
  
- Practice tongue twisters.  
Familiar tongue twisters:
  - Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
  - He sells seashells by the seashore.
  - How much wood would a woodchuck chuck?

# Sentence Segmentation

- Recite a nursery rhyme line by line to your child. After each line, ask your child how many words were heard in that line.

Example: "Do you know the Muffin Man,"

"6 words!"

"Who lives on Drury Lane?"

"5 words!"

*Alternate version:* Recite a favorite poem verse or song lyric to your child. Have your child clap for each word heard in each line.

- Use any board game and pieces you have available at home (Candyland, Chutes and Ladders, Life, Monopoly, etc.). Tell your child you will take turns saying a sentence. For every word in the sentence, the other player will move one space. Take turns giving the sentences and moving pieces. The first player to the end wins.

## Syllable Activities

### **Familiar Nursery Rhymes:**

Mary Had a Little Lamb  
Baa, Baa, Black Sheep  
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star  
Hey, Diddle, Diddle  
Jack and Jill  
I'm a Little Teapot  
The Muffin Man  
This Little Piggy  
Three Blind  
Mice Itsy Bitsy

- Show your child pictures of family members and friends. Ask your child to say the name of the person, then to count the number of syllables in each name. If your child has trouble identifying syllables, have him/her wrap their hands around their neck under the jaw and say the name again. Each time the chin drops, it is a syllable!
- Play "Jumping Syllables" with your child. Model how to play the game by giving them a two-syllable word. As you say each syllable, open your right hand, then your left hand. Then cross your hands, showing how you are jumping the syllables to make a new, silly word.

Example: "pen/cil" becomes  
"cil/pen"

- Read a picture book aloud to your child. Pause throughout the story and ask your child to identify how many syllables are in a certain word. Help them clap out the syllables for extra practice.

Example: <https://youtu.be/n1C4L8y95kM>

- Practice counting syllables for different household objects. Help your child count the syllables in a word by clapping once for each syllable.

Example: <https://youtu.be/pcTDCoR-NsY>

- Roll a dice. Take turns brainstorming words with as many syllables as the number rolled.

- A vowel-r syllable pattern has a vowel followed by an r (like doctor or farm). Create a chart to practice these words by writing the word on one side followed by empty columns for the word sounds. Help your child write the letter sounds in the columns and underline the vowel r-syllable patterns. Next, help your child draw a connecting curve under the syllables of the word.

Example: <https://youtu.be/hPyzxqa8VcQ>

- The floss rule means that when a single syllable word ends in f, l, or s, then double the final letter. (Example: fall, floss, ball). Create a chart that is titled floss rule words on one side and exceptions to the rule on the other side. Say a word and ask your child to determine if the floss rule applies to the word. Ask your child to write the word in the appropriate column.

Example: <https://youtu.be/N0SftHCxTIU>

# Onset and Rime Activities

- Play a word guessing game with your child. Give your child clues one at a time, describing the onset and rime. Once your child understands how to play, take turns giving the clues.

Examples: "It begins with the /r/ sound and rhymes with 'bug'." (rug)

"It begins like 'bed' and ends like 'rest'." (best)

"It ends with /op/ and begins like 'tool'." (top)

- Help your child say the individual sounds in simple words. Ask your child to say the first, middle, and last sound in different words.

Example: [https://youtu.be/SPKRN\\_sXcVs](https://youtu.be/SPKRN_sXcVs)

- Create flashcards with pictures representing simple words (like car or lamp). Cut each flashcard in half vertically. Ask your child to name each card, then mix up the halves. When your child picks up the first half of any card, have them name the beginning sound of that word. Ask them to find the matching half and name the ending sound of the word. Then, ask them to say the word altogether.

Example: [https://youtu.be/xb8hJSG\\_YYU](https://youtu.be/xb8hJSG_YYU)

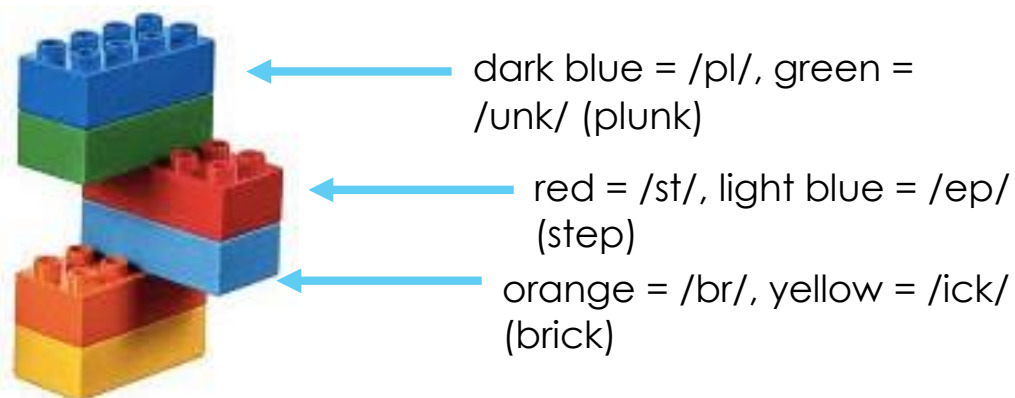
- Turn words into a math problem. Ask your child to solve the equation to build words, using onset and rime.

Examples: "What plus 'et' makes the word *net*?" (/n/)

"/h/ plus what makes the word *hippo*?" (ippo)

- Use different colored building blocks to represent onset sounds and rime sounds. Lock different block combinations together, and say what word is represented. Change the onset blocks to make rhyming words, change the rime block to make new words.

Examples:



*Note: Phoneme Activities should be done in the order listed. Follow the arrow to move down the phoneme mastery progression.*

# Phoneme Activities

- Give your child a list of three words and ask him/her to identify which two begin with the same sound.  
Example: "Which words begin with the same sound: *paper*, *pickle*, or *dish*?"
- While out, name different items you see. Ask your child to tell you the first sound heard in each word you give. After your child can successfully tell you the beginning sound, have him/her tell you the last sound.  
Examples: "What is the first sound in *road*?" "/r/"  
"What is the ending sound in *road*?" "/d/"
- Create a list of words that can be changed by adding a letter sound. Example: ice becomes nice when you add "n". Read a word from the list and ask your child to repeat the word. Then, ask your child to add the new letter sound to the word and say the word altogether.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/RPlxbRF52rM>
- Read "There's a Wocket in My Pocket" aloud to your child. While reading, pause to talk about how the first sound of different words is changed to make a silly word in the book.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/NjP0k9p0MpE>
- Ask your child to write a simple word, like cat. Then, ask them to change the first letter to form a new word, like bat. Keep changing letters to form new words. Each time you change a letter, ask your child to write the new word.  
Example: [https://youtu.be/j\\_8DJLn0aPQ](https://youtu.be/j_8DJLn0aPQ)
- Write letters on individual pieces of paper. Write a word family like "ig" or "all" on a separate piece of paper. Leave space for your child to put new letters in front of the word family in order to form new words. Ask your child to form a new word and use it in a sentence.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/5K6WicXvYGs>
- Create picture cards of different words that are at your child's skill level. Ask your child to identify each sound for two words at a time. Help them identify whether the words are alike on the first sound, middle sound, or last sound.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/dJFO1kikdNM>
- Practice changing letters in a simple word in order to create a new word. (Example: hat to cat, bug to mug) Help your child write the old word and circle the letter that needs to change in order to create the new word. Then, ask your child to write the new word.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/KqK5T9jkbK8>
- Create flashcards of words containing /th/, /ch/, /sh/ at the beginning or end. You can also include some words that don't contain those sounds. Hold up the flashcards and ask your child to identify which spelling pattern the word contains.  
Example: <https://youtu.be/mPXlqyT3LSg>
- Brainstorm simple words and ask your child to tell you what middle sound is heard.  
Examples: "What is the middle sound in *sun*?" "/u/"  
"What is the middle sound in *hatch*?" "/a/"



- Turn words into a cheer. Use the following cheer to practice breaking words into their sounds. Replace the words you use each time you cheer.

Cheer: "Listen to my cheer, then shout the sounds you hear.

*Cat! Cat! Cat!* (Note: These are the words you will change.)

Give me the beginning sound! /c/

Give me the middle sound! /a/

Give me the ending sound! /t/

That's right!

*/c/ /a/ /t/ - Cat! Cat! Cat!*

- Using pennies, pom-poms, different colored blocks, or other similar materials, push an object toward your child for each sound in the word you are thinking of while making the sound. Ask your child to put the sounds together and tell you what word you just said. After he/she can successfully blend the sounds together, ask your child to break words apart into their separate sounds.

Examples: "What word am I saying? /ch/ /a/ /t/" "*Chat.*"

"What are the sounds in *chat*?" "/ch/ /a/ /t/."

- Play a word ladder game with your child. See how many words you can make by changing one sound at a time. Add sounds to the beginning or end of the word. Once your child can successfully add sounds, change the sounds to make new words.

Example 1: "Say *top*. What word do you have if you add /s/ to the beginning?"

*"Stop."*

"Say *stop*. What word do you have if you add /t/ to the end?"

*"Stopped."*

Example 2: "Say *dog*. Change the /d/ to /f/. What is your new word?"

*"Fog."*

"Say *fog*. Change the /g/ to /l/. What is your new word?"

*"Fall."*

- Play Robot Talk with your child. Tell your child you will say a word like a robot, and he/she need to guess what you are saying. To sound like a robot, break the word into individual sounds. Say the word in a silly robot voice to make it more fun.