

How to Build Your Child's Phonological Awareness Skills

Phonological awareness is your child's ability to think about the sounds that make up words rather than just the meaning of the words. Phonemes are the smallest unit of sound in spoken words and helps your child learn to read and spell.

/m/	/a/	/n/
1 st phoneme	2 nd phoneme	3 rd phoneme

Try these activities:

Beginning Letter Sounds.

- Use magnetic letters to match the initial sounds of words on an ABC chart.
- Play “/b/ is a sound that starts these words-Ball, bounce, bear and b_____.”

Syllable Games. Help your child focus on the parts or syllables that make up words by playing with words.

- Clap, stomp, or click your tongue at the number of syllables in family member names (Sarah has two parts “Sar-ah”).
- As you read to your child, stop at a favorite words and count the number of syllables.

Rhyming. Tell your child that rhyming words have a different beginning but they sound the same at the end. Share that the words “cat” and “mat” rhyme.

- Read nursery rhymes and rhyming books with your child. Pause at the end of a sentence to let him say what the rhyming word is (*The cat sat on the _____(mat)*).
- Play rhyming games with your child. Pick a word and then tell her all the words you can think of that rhyme with it. She can include nonsense or silly rhyming words (**bat-hat, sat, mat, cat, wat, zat**).

Alliteration. Alliteration is the repetition of the same beginning sounds in words (Miss Mary Mack).

- Share tongue twister (She sells seashells by the seashore).
- Make up your own alliteration phrases (Mommy munches mushrooms or Sidney sat smiling).

Playing with Sounds. You can help your child play with sounds by providing the following three types of games and activities:

1. Isolate the beginning or ending sounds in words.
 - “Tell me the sound you hear at the beginning of the word... (van = /v/)”
 - “Tell me the sound you hear at the end of the word...(dig = /g/)
2. Segment or blend sounds in a word.
 - “I’m going to say a silly word and you tell me the real word [tooth] [brush]=toothbrush” or [t] [oy]=toy.”
3. Change a sound in a word to make a new word in familiar games and songs.
 - Add /s/ to beginning of *pin=spin*
 - Delete /t/ at beginning of *trap=rap*
 - Substitute /i/ in *lip* with /a/=lap

Printable Phonological Awareness Games:

The Florida Center for Reading Research (PA skills)

http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/PDF/G2-3/2-3PA_1.pdf

http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/PDF/G2-3/2-3PA_3.pdf

<http://www1.lpssonline.com/uploads/PhonicsPart2.pdf>

Source: Involving Parents in Their Child’s Reading Development: A Guide for Teachers by Bruce Johnson (2008).