



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words such as beginning and ending sounds, rhyming, sentences, words and syllables

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Spoken Language: Practical Ideas for Parents

by Texas Education Agency (1996)

Preschoolers who are getting ready to read expand their knowledge of the building blocks of oral and written language, and their use and appreciation of language. Learn activities parents can use at home to support children's growth in each of these areas.

Children can learn that spoken sentences are made up of words and that words are made up of separate sounds.

They can learn that many words can be separated into syllables (for example, /bu/ /cket/ in *bucket* and /te/ /le/ /phone/ in *telephone*). Children can also learn that syllables can be separated into sounds (for example, /b/ /u/ and /k/ /e/ /t/ in *bucket*) and that words can be separated into sounds (for example, /k/ /a/ /t/ in *cat*).

Later children will be able to connect the sounds in spoken words with the letters in printed words. Most children will benefit from much practice at playing with the sounds of words.

Beginning and ending sounds

- Help your children learn to identify the sounds at the beginning of words (for example, the sound /t/ in *top* and the sound /b/ in *big*). Practice with other words and their beginning sounds.
- Help your children learn to separate sounds at the beginning of words (for example, ask what would be left if you took the /r/ sound out of "run" or if you took the /s/ sound away from *sat*). Continue with other sounds and words.

- Help your children learn to blend the separated sounds of spoken words. Ask your children to tell you what they would have if they put these sounds together: /m/ and /other/ (mother); /k/ and /andy/ (candy); and /s/, /a/, and /t/ (sat). Continue with other words.
- Ask your children which one of these words – *bag*, *cat*, *bike*, *boat* – starts with a different sound. Practice with other words.
- Say four words that have the same beginning sound. Ask your children to listen and say the beginning sound (for example, the beginning sound is /h/ in *hat*, *hop*, *hit*, *hand*).
- Say four words that have the same ending sound. Ask your children to listen and tell you what the ending sound is (for example, the ending sound is /p/ in *stop*, *pop*, *cop*, and *top*).
- Have your children take an imaginary shopping trip. Give each child a paper sack and an old magazine. Point out pictures of objects in their magazines. If your children can tell you what sounds the names of the objects begin with, let them cut out the pictures and put them into their sack. After the shopping trip is over, look at the pictures with your children and let them say the beginning sound of each object's name.

Rhyming

- Teach your children to pick out rhyming words. Have your children find household objects which have names that rhyme, such as *bread* and *thread*.
- Sing songs and read rhyming books with your children.
- Using old magazines, have your children look for pictures that have names that rhyme. For example, choose a picture of a cat and find other pictures with names that rhyme with *cat* such as *hat*, *mat*, and

bat. Have your children cut out the pictures and paste them on a sheet of paper. Have them say all the rhyming words on their sheet of paper.

Sentences, words, and syllables

- Say a sentence and have your children clap out the number of words in the sentence (for example, they will clap five times after hearing the sentence, "The boy ran very fast," and only four times after hearing "The boy ran fast").
- Choose a word that is made up of two words (for example, *sunshine* is made up of *sun* and *shine*). Tell your children that you are going to say the word and then you will say it again, leaving off part of the word (for example, say *sunshine* and then say *shine*). Ask what part of the word was left off. (The *sun* was left off.) Practice with many different two-part words.
- Say a word and have your children clap out the number of syllables (for example, the word *personal* has three syllables: per – son – al. Your children will clap three times). You may want to use a dictionary for help with syllables.

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