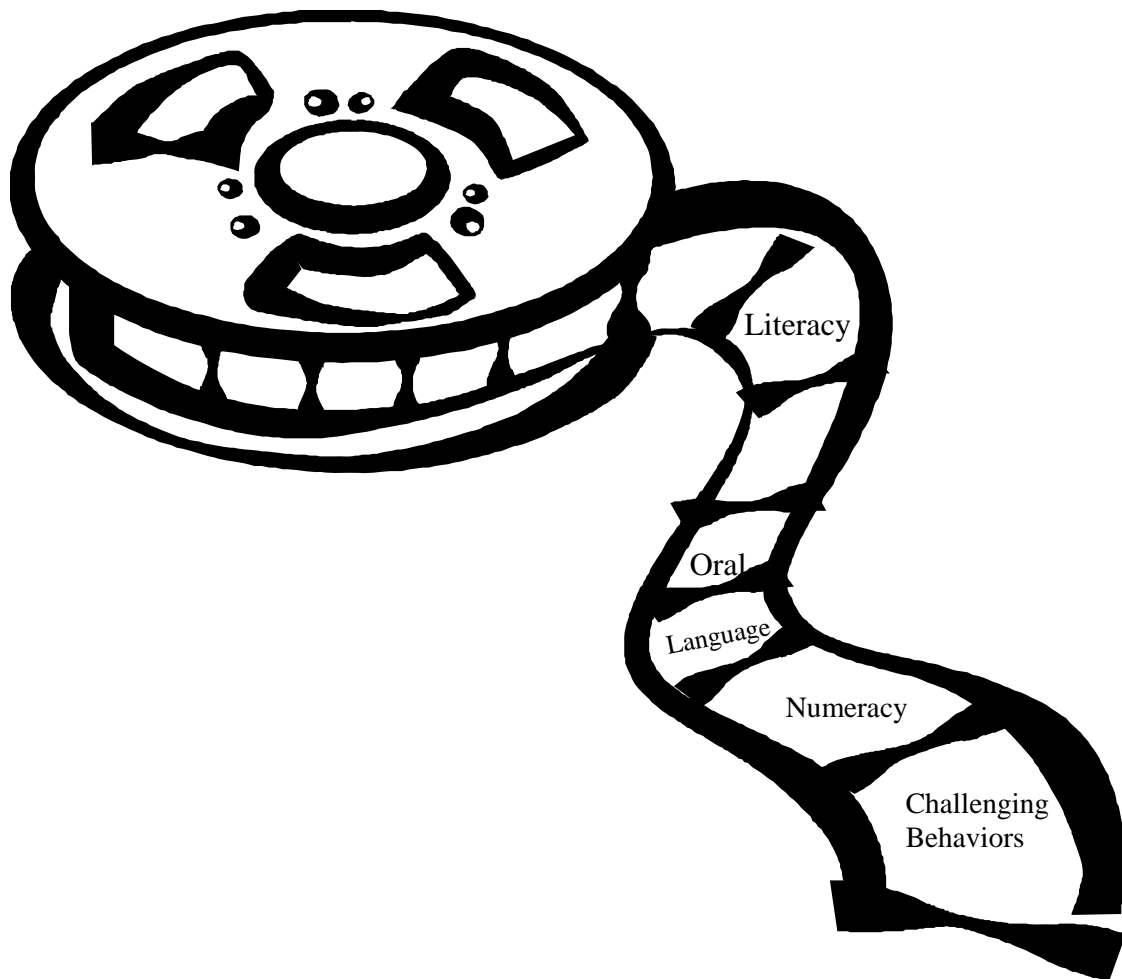


Project REEL



Resources for Early Educator Learning

FIVE BIG, FAT IDEAS

to remember about young children's learning:

1. Children learn best in a social setting.

Therefore, avoid independent seat work.

2. Children learn best through play.

Therefore, immerse them in a richly active play and avoid worksheets.

3. Children learn best when they are allowed to approximate adult behaviors.

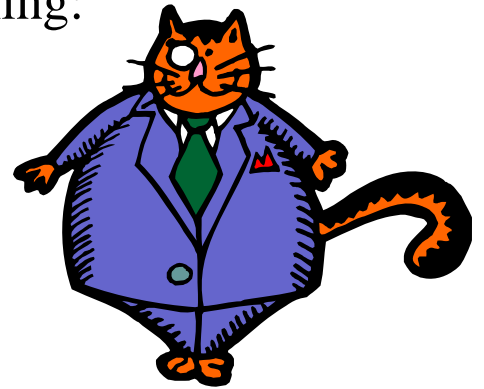
Therefore, demonstrate adult practices and accept children's attempts at those adult practices **as if** they were already conventional efforts.

4. Children learn best in an atmosphere of respect where their dignity is protected.

Therefore, establish appropriately high expectations for children, focusing on positive guidance instead of punishment.

5. Children learn best when they have daily opportunities to use diverse social, language, literacy, and numeracy practices and receive extensive feedback from the caring adults in their classroom.

Therefore, offer children time to use new ideas and respond to them in ways that enriches their understandings.



Project REEL: Workshop 3

A FOCUS ON PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

“Learning to talk is just a start. When a child learns to talk, she has to combine the separate sounds, or phonemes, that make up words to pronounce them. But she’s not conscious of what she’s doing when she says a word. Reading requires that the child become conscious of the fact that written words are made up pieces of sound (phonemes). It requires a deeper level of awareness of language—phonological awareness” (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 2003, p. 106).



“Before children enter formal reading instruction, an important precursory ability that helps them to succeed in that instruction is phonological awareness . . . [which] requires children to focus on the sound structure of a word or syllable rather than attending to its [alphabetic or meaning-based] attributes. . . . From birth, children begin to learn the sounds that constitute speech, and phonological awareness emerges sometime in the period between birth and kindergarten for most children” (Justice & Pence, 2005, p. 40).

“Children’s achievements in phonological awareness are highly contingent upon children’s high-quality and sensitive exposure to explicit, phonology-focused interactions with more capable peers, such as parents and teachers. These interactions might include listening to nursery rhymes, playing sound games, or being read books that feature salient phonological patterns” (Justice & Pence, 2005, p. 41).

This workshop will focus specifically on children’s **awareness of the sounds & structure of language (not print related)**, helping children recognize the sounds, rhythm, and rhyme of spoken words--not written words or letter names. Hearing the sounds within words and similarities/differences among words will help children use sound-symbol relationships in their future reading and writing.

Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (Birth to Age Three)

[see highlighted standards for those related to phonological awareness]

Section 2: Early Literacy
Component: Book Handling Skills
Component: Looking and Recognition Skills
Component: Picture and Story Comprehension Skills
Component: Early Writing Behaviors and Skills

LEARNING EXPECTATIONS:

Eyes focus on simple pictures in books or drawings (0-4 mos.)

Begins to explore the physical properties of a book (5-8 mos.)

Holds a board, cloth, or plastic book and manipulates the pages (5-8 mos.)

Shows increased involvement and enjoyment with books (9-12 mos.)

Begins to interact with story and recognize pictures of everyday familiar objects (9-12 mos.)

Begins to make associations about familiar objects (9-12 mos.)
Begins to recognize symbols for objects (9-12 mos.)
Begins to show interest in exploring writing tools (9-12 mos.)
Begins to show interest in exploring books (13-18 mos.)
Begins to show awareness and interest in familiar pictures (13-18 mos.)
Begins to recognize “favorite books” and repeatedly requests to read them (13-18 mos.)
Pretends to read books (13-18 mos.)
Shows increased interest in exploring writing tools (13-18 mos.)
Shows interest in exploring books (19-24 mos.)
Shows awareness and interest in familiar pictures (19-24 mos.)
Begins to interact with story through familiar hand motions and expression of emotions (19-24 mos.)
Enjoys books that relate to personal experience (19-24 mos.)
Enjoys looking at book by self, while sitting by peers or when being read to by an adult; begins to connect familiar books to play experiences (19-24 mos.)
Begins to use writing tools to make marks on paper (19-24 mos.)
Begins to understand the connection between books and personal experiences (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Recognizes and enjoys reading familiar books (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Uses a variety of writing tools to make scribbles (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Scribbles and draws intentionally (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Begins to distinguish between words with similar phonemes, such as <i>pat</i> and <i>path</i> (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Engages in and enjoys word play with silly sounds and real and nonsense words (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Begins to recite from memory familiar books (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Is aware of and can identify many sounds in the environment (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Continues to distinguish between words with similar phonemes, such as <i>pat</i> and <i>path</i> (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Discriminates among sounds based on volume and pitch—loud vs. soft, high vs. low, long vs. short (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Engages in and enjoys word play with silly sounds and real and nonsense words (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)

Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (ages 3-5) Aligned with The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5	
Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (ages 3-5)	The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5
Section 2: Early Literacy Component: Phonological Awareness	
LEARNING EXPECTATIONS:	
Initiates word play and likes rhymes and silly sounds & words	See #38
Completes a rhyme and recites at least three rhymes	See #38
Begins to detect the syllable structure (rhythm) of oral words	See #38
Begins to combine (blend) parts of compound words to make a whole word	See #38
Develops increasing sense of syllable structure in oral words (ages 4-5)	See #38
Produces rhyming words (ages 4-5)	See #38
Starts to develop an awareness of beginning sounds in words (ages 4-5)	See #38
Continues to increase awareness of the syllable structure of oral words (ages 4-5)	See #38

Training Objectives

Early Childhood Educators will be able to:

- ✓ Define phonological awareness
- ✓ Explain why phonological awareness is critical for children’s future reading and writing
- ✓ Describe at least three general types of strategies they can use to support young children’s phonological awareness (sharing rhyming/rhythmic/alliterative texts, counting words in a sentence, counting syllables in names and familiar words, listening to/producing onset-rime patterns)
- ✓ List the sequence of developmentally-appropriate experiences that teachers use to support children’s phonological awareness
- ✓ Explain why a focus on the individual phonemes of words are not developmentally appropriate for many preschoolers
- ✓ Demonstrate a focus on rhyming/rhythmic/alliterative songs, fingerplays, poems, and books with infants and young toddlers
- ✓ Demonstrate multiple activities that support young children’s knowledge of rhyming words
- ✓ Demonstrate multiple activities that support young children’s knowledge and use of the concept of “word” and counting words in sentences
- ✓ Demonstrate multiple activities that support young children’s knowledge and use of syllables in words
- ✓ Demonstrate multiple activities that support young children’s knowledge and use of onsets and rime patterns

List of training materials:

- Training manual for Project REEL Specialists
- Workshop manual for ECEs
- Project REEL children’s literature (books from the first shipment of 29 texts)
- Picture cards of rhyming words (fox and socks, mice and rice, bees and sneeze) for the “Concentration” game
- Picture cards of rhyming words for “Sing Along With Me”
- Picture cards of animals and objects for “Syllable Puzzles”
- Picture cards for “Mail a Postcard”

WHAT IS PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS?

Children need to become aware of the sounds and structure of the English language. The technical term for this is “phonological awareness,” which includes children’s understandings of the ideas of “sound,” “letter,” “word,” and “sentence.” Phonological awareness in children means that they can recognize the sounds, rhythm, and rhyme of spoken words. A child who is phonologically aware knows that her name, Rachel, has two “beats” (syllables): “RA—CHEL,” that the words *fish* and *dish* rhyme, and that the sentence, “I like cookies,” is composed of three words.



“Phonemic awareness” is a part of phonological awareness and involves children’s ability to hear the phonemes, or individual sounds, of the language. A child is phonemically aware if she would hear the four sounds in the word “frog:” /f/ /r/ /o/ /g/. Many children do not become phonemically aware until kindergarten, first grade, or later.

Hearing the sounds within words and similarities/differences among words will help children use sound-symbol relationships in their future reading and writing.



WHY DO WE NEED TO HELP YOUNG CHILDREN DEVELOP PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN?

- ❖ “Studies have demonstrated that children’s early phonological sensitivity is predictive of beginning reading and spelling” (Lonigan, Burgess, & Anthony, 2000).
- ❖ “Individual differences in phonological sensitivity are related to the rate of acquisition of reading skills” (National Research Council, 2001, p. 189).
- ❖ “Children who are better at detecting syllables, rhymes, or phonemes are quicker to learn to read (i.e., decode words), and this relation is present even after variability in reading skill due to intelligence, receptive vocabulary, memory skills, and social class is removed statistically” (National Research Council, 2001, p. 189).
- ❖ “Before young children can become aware of phonemes, they first must master phonological awareness and learn to recognize larger units of oral language, including words and syllables (Vukelich & Christie, 2004, p. 12).
- ❖ “Teaching children about sounds is appropriate at the very early stages; emphasizing morphemes [units of meaning, like prefixes, suffixes, root words] is appropriate later on. At every level, teachers need to connect the teaching of these skills with the joy of reading and writing, using read-alouds and the motivating activities popularized by the whole-language movement” (Moats, 1999, p. 19).
- ❖ “The single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills eventually required for reading appears to be reading aloud to children” (Cowen, 2003, p. 43).

HOWEVER: “Although much attention has been directed in recent years to phonological awareness as a particularly crucial reading-readiness skill, other aspects of children’s development are just as important for enabling their early success as readers. These include, for instance, children’s vocabulary repertoire, or word knowledge, and their knowledge of people, places, and events in our world, or world knowledge. Early educators, including teachers and parents, must help children develop a solid foundation for language, literacy, and knowledge of the world around them” (Justice & Pence, 2005, p. 3).

WHAT DO WE DO TO HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS?

We can help support children's development of a broader awareness of the sounds and structure of language by:

- sharing books so that children can listen to rhythmic, rhyming, and alliterative language
- calling children's attention to rhyming words in books
- clapping out the beat of words and sentences
- playing sound and language games and singing songs to give children extensive rehearsal in hearing the elements of our language
- deleting syllables or phonemes from spoken words to form a new word
- counting the number of phonemes

Important points for teachers to remember:

- Assess the knowledge that the children have and plan instruction accordingly
- Focus on one or two skills at a time
- Working with small groups of three to four children to teach phonological awareness may be more effective than one-on-one tutoring
- Use letters when teaching about phonemes (for preschoolers and older)
- Connect phonemic awareness instruction to reading and writing (for preschoolers and older)
- Use manipulatives to help students acquire phonemic awareness (for preschoolers and older)

(National Institute for Child Health & Human Development, 2000)

WHAT DO WE DO TO HELP OLDER CHILDREN DEVELOP PHONEMIC AWARENESS?

We can help support children's development of phonemic awareness in five ways;

- match words with sounds in rhymes
- isolate a sound in a word
- blend individual sounds to form a word
- substitute sounds in a word
- segment a word into its sequenced sounds (Yopp, 1992)

AT WHAT BROAD AGE RANGES CAN WE EXPECT CHILDREN TO ACCOMPLISH CERTAIN PHONOLOGICAL TASKS?

- ☛ “Phonological awareness progresses from an understanding of larger units of sound, such as whole words and syllables, to an understanding of small units of sound, such as phonemes (Justice & Pence, 2005, p. 41).
- ☛ “Around **2 years of age**, many children begin to understand that the sound structures of words are separate from their meanings. Many children are even able to detect and produce patterns of rhyme, as evidenced by their understanding of nursery rhymes.”
- ☛ “By the time children are **3 years of age**, they also may become sensitive to alliteration, or the sharing of an initial phoneme across words and syllables.”

- ☛ “Around **4 years of age**, children may be able to understand that words are composed of syllables, and many are able to manipulate these syllables based on onset-rime distinctions [onsets are the letter(s) that precede the vowel, and the rime is from the first vowel to the end of the word]” (Justice & Pence, 2005, p. 41).
- ☛ Eventually children are able to represent words and syllables as comprising a series of discrete phonemes, at which point they are exhibiting *phonemic awareness*” (Justice & Pence, 2005, p. 41).

IN WHAT ORDER DO WE PROVIDE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS EXPERIENCES?

- ⇒ First focus on rhyming words (“Time for bed, Little **Calf**, Little **Calf**, What happened today that made you **laugh**?” –from Mem Fox’s *Time for Bed*)
- ⇒ Then we move to identifying the number of words in a short sentence (“I like candy. I hear three words!”)
- ⇒ Then move to the largest units in words--the syllable--as in “me—ow” or “foot—ball”
- ⇒ Next focus on onsets and rimes (“c” plus “at” equals “cat”; “cl” plus “own” equals “clown”)
- ⇒ Finally, focus on phonemes (*Whose name begins with the /g/ sound?*)

Note: Teachers should avoid rigid adherence to a sequence. Phonological awareness development in children is not a result of a linear, sequential teaching methods. Many children do not become phonologically aware until the early elementary grades.

WHAT SHOULD WE REMEMBER WHEN TEACHING PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS ACTIVITIES?

Yopp (2000) offers these suggestions for phonological awareness activities:

- ❖ Make sure that activities are child appropriate and that we maintain a sense of playfulness and fun
- ❖ Instruction should be deliberate and purposeful, but not rely on “skill and drill” and rote memorization
- ❖ Phonological awareness must be viewed as only one part of a much broader literacy program
- ❖ Use small group settings (over one-on-one instruction) that encourage children’s interactions
- ❖ Encourage children’s curiosity about language and their experimentation with it
- ❖ Allow for and be responsive to individual differences
- ❖ Make sure that the tone of the activity is not evaluative, but rather fun and informal
- ❖ Activities must be placed in a context of real reading and writing

Remember: “Every single moment is a teachable moment. Pre-K teachers cannot allow ‘dead’ time in their [settings]. . . . Use transition times and routines like meals, dressing, and hand washing as opportunities to emphasize a wide range of language and literacy experiences, including songs, rhymes, dramatic play, storytelling, retellings of familiar stories and informational texts, and one-to-one conversations.”

(<http://www.preknow.org/educators/resource/bestpractices.cfm>)

HOW MUCH TIME DO WE SPEND EVERY DAY IN PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS EXPERIENCES?

Yopp (2000) does not recommend a particular amount of time to be devoted to phonological awareness activities. Phonological awareness experiences can be embedded in the rich daily contexts of reading aloud, shared reading, writing experiences, talking, singing and music experiences, fingerplays and movement experiences, etc.

II. Activities and Strategies to Support Children’s Development of Phonological/Phonemic Awareness:

Activities and Strategies to support all children:

Singing, sharing the rhythm of poems, and doing finger plays all prepare young children as language users and literacy participants. Even when infants and young toddlers are too young to verbally participate in the song or poem, or too young to physically participate without help in finger plays, they are still learning language and learning about how language “works.”

Appropriate age group: All

Phonological focus: general sound discrimination)

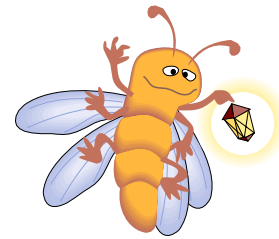
Zzzz! Zzzz! Snort! Snort!, by Pam Schiller (2000) (to the tune of “The Wheels on the Bus”)

Here’s a song that you can sing with your infants and toddlers, introducing them to sounds that animals and insects make (onomatopoeia).

The firefly at night goes zzzz, zzzz, zzzz,
Zzzz, zzzz, zzzz, zzzz, zzzz, zzzz,
The firefly at night goes zzzz, zzzz, zzzz,
All around my yard.

Other verses:

The bees in the flowers go buzz, buzz, buzz
The birds in the trees go tweet, tweet, tweet
The cat on the porch goes meow, meow, meow
The dog by the door goes bark, bark, bark
The pig in the pen goes oink, oink, oink
The cow in the barn goes moo, moo, moo
Etc., Etc., Etc.



(Appropriate age group: All

Phonological focus: sound discrimination)

Sound Representations

This activity helps support the development of awareness of sound and the relationship between sound and meaning.

1. Identify a book that has animals or objects in the text that make interesting sounds.
2. Read the book aloud and model the sounds that the animals make. Their sounds may or may not be represented in the text.
3. Ask children to join in, if they can (“What sound does the cat make?”), or just continue to model the sounds that animals (“The cow makes a *moooooo* sound.”) or objects make (“I bet when the barn door fell it made a *BOOOOOM* sound!”)
4. You may reverse the process and give the animal or object sound first (“Baaaaa!”), and then ask the children to identify the sound (“What animal makes that sound?”)

(from Notari-Syverson, O’Connor, & Vadasy, 1998)

*(Appropriate age group: All
Phonological focus: sound discrimination)*

Match that sound!

This is an activity for children that will promote active listening.



1. Find 8 to 10 small containers (film canisters will do) made of opaque plastic (so that children cannot see the contents).
2. Fill two containers with the same item (Cheerios, rice, metal keys, pebbles, popping corn, etc., so that you have 4 or 5 pairs of “shakers.”
3. Model the activity by shaking one canister and describing what it sounds like, then shaking another and describing what it sounds like.
4. Repeat until you find two canisters that make the same sound. Describe the sound to the children.
5. Ask the children to try the activity. Encourage them to describe what is heard as the canisters are shaken.

(from www.getreadytoread.org)

*(Appropriate age group: All
Phonological focus: rhyming)*

Finger plays

Caregivers can simply model or can assist infants and young toddlers in these movements, and older children enjoy the combination of singing and movement. Tell the children that you heard some rhyming words, and then repeat playfully the words that rhyme.

Tea Time

Here’s a cup (cup one hand)
And here’s a cup (cup the other hand)
And here’s a pot of tea (make a teapot with palm toward you, 3 middle fingers curled, with thumb curled and pinky out for spout and handle)
Pour a cup (motion of pouring)
And pour a cup (motion of pouring)
And have a drink with me. (motion of drinking from the cup)



The Bee Hive

Here is the bee hive (fingers bent into the palm of the hand)
Where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees.
Watch and you’ll see them
Come out of the hive
One, two, three, four, five.
BUZZ-Z-Z-Z-ZI!!! (flutter fingers)



*(Appropriate age group: All
Phonological focus: rhyming)*

**Sing a Song of Rhymes (adapted from Pam Schiller's "Sing a Song of Opposites") (2000)
(to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")**

Singing this song (either you alone or with children joining in) while holding up or pointing to pictures for visual clues will help children begin to hear rhyming words. You might wish to take Baby's hand and use it to point at the proper picture as you sing.

This is dog and this is frog,
This is dog; this is frog.
This is dog and this is frog,
Now sing along with me.



Other rhyme combinations:
duck, truck
chair, hair
Cat, hat
mouse, house
door, floor
etc., etc.

*(Appropriate age group: All
Phonological focus: rhyming)*

One of our childhood favorites was "**This Old Man**," although I'm not sure that any of us knew what playing "knick-knack" was all about!

This old man, he played one. He played knick-knack on his thumb.

Refrain: With a knick-knack, paddy-wack, give your dog a bone. This old man came rolling home.

This old man, he played two.
This old man, he played three.
This old man, he played four.
This old man, he played five.
This old man, he played six.
This old man, he played seven.
This old man, he played eight.
This old man, he played nine.
This old man, he played ten.

He played knick-knack on his shoe.
He played knick-knack on his knee.
He played knick-knack on his door.
He played knick-knack on his hive.
He played knick-knack on his sticks.
He played knick-knack up to heaven.
He played knick-knack on his gate.
He played knick-knack on his spine.
He played knick-knack once again.



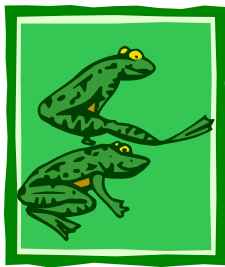
(Appropriate age group: All
Phonological focus: rhyming)

Poems are a wonderful way to expose children to the rhyming sounds of the language and also to introduce them to metaphoric language that inspires rich “mental pictures.” Here are some favorite poems from a book entitled Read-aloud rhymes for the very young, selected by Jack Prelutsky, that use a consistent rhyme scheme in brief lines:

Jump or Jiggle

Frogs jump
Caterpillars hump
Worms wiggle
Bugs jiggle
Rabbits hop
Horses clop
Snakes slide
Sea gulls glide
Mice creep
Deer leap
Puppies bounce
Kittens pounce
Lions stalk—
But—
I walk!

(by Evelyn Beyer)



Mice

I think mice
Are rather nice.
Their tails are long,
Their faces small,
They haven't any
Chins at all.
Their ears are pink,
Their teeth are white,
They run about
The house at night.
They nibble things
They shouldn't touch
And no one seems
To like them much.
But I think mice
Are nice.

(by Rose Fyleman)



Five Little Monsters

Five little monsters
By the light of the moon
Stirring pudding with
A wooden pudding spoon.
The first one says,
“It musn't be runny.
The second one says,
That would make it taste funny.”
The third one says,
“It musn't be lumpy.”
The fourth one says,
“That would make me grumpy.”
The fifth one smiles,
Hums a little tune,
And licks all the drippings
From the wooden pudding spoon.
(by Eve Merriam)



*(Appropriate age group: All
Phonological focus: alliteration)*

A Ram Sam Sam (as stolen from Pam Schiller [2000] who probably stole it from someone else)

Here is a fun song that involves alliteration (the same beginning sounds in a series of words) in the subsequent verses. Gently move the hands of infants and young toddlers who are too young to follow the movements.

A ram sam sam (hit one fist on top of the other)
A ram sam sam (hit opposite fist on top of the other)
Goolie goolie goolie goolie (roll hand over hand)
Ram sam sam (hit fists again)
A raffy, a raffy (arms in the air)
Goolie, goolie, goolie (roll hands again)
And a RAM SAM SAM!

Here is another verse:

A dancing dog
A dancing dog
Goolie, goolie, goolie, goolie,
Dancing dog
A dancer, a dancer
Goolie, goolie, goolie,
and a dancing dog.



Other verses (alliterative variations by Sandefur [2006]):

Purple pig . . . A piggie
Coughing cow . . . A cougher
Munching moose . . . A muncher
Giggling goose . . . A giggler
Sneezing snake . . . A sneezer

Etc., Etc.

Activities and Strategies most appropriate for younger children (infants and young toddlers):

Oral language and infants:

“Even very young infants are able to recognize a familiar caregiver’s voice. Infants love to listen to voices and prefer speech to other sounds. Infants love to hear the different sounds, pitches, and tonal characteristics of speech which adults tend to use naturally with babies. It is through hearing your words over and over in early conversations that an infant’s language capacity grows. Engaging infants in communication begins to provide a solid basis for later success in learning. This pathway to literacy starts with everyday adult behaviors as simple as talking to an infant about what you are doing while changing his diaper, dressing him, or fixing a bottle. Hearing your familiar voice also reassures an infant of your closeness and love.”

“In the fast-paced world, providing infants with experiences that promote early language and literacy does not have to require more work or extra time. In fact, talking, singing songs, and communicating with infants throughout the day can make caregiving more enjoyable and sometimes easier. Young infants often settle down to the rhythm of rhymes, chants, and songs. Infants become especially vocal when in a good mood, such as after being fed, and they often respond positively to social interaction at this time.”

“By focusing on the importance of the first years of life, we give new meaning to the interactions young children have with books and stories. Looking at early literacy development as a dynamic developmental process, we can see the connection (and meaning) between an infant mouthing a book, the book handling behavior of a two year old, and the page turning of a five year old. We can see that the first three years of exploring and playing with books, singing nursery rhymes, listening to stories, recognizing words, and scribbling are truly the building blocks for language and literacy development.” (<http://www.zerotothree.org/brainwonders/earlyliteracy/recognize.html>)

Oral language

The second and third workshops of the Project REEL series focused on oral language as the basis for young children’s learning, particularly their literacy learning. A careful review of the strategies described in the oral language workshops will support teachers’ work with infants and toddlers in preparing them for current and future literacy experiences.

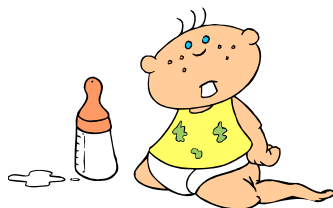
Spontaneous Rhyming Opportunities

The Project REEL workshops on oral language emphasized the importance of talking with infants and toddlers during the routines of diapering, hand washing, feeding, preparing for naps, etc. One way to incorporate phonological awareness experiences in daily routines is to make up rhymes, remembering that infants in particular enjoy the higher, “sing-song” of child-directed speech (“mother-ese”).

For example:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Diapering: | “Look at those little toes! Little rows of little toes!”
“One, two, three, four, five! Goodness sakes alive!” |
| Feeding: | “When you’ve had your milk and you’re done with your feeding,
We’ll get a good book and do some reading!” |
| Changing clothes: | “We’re going to change, change, change your clothes,
Your shirt comes up, up, over your nose!” |

These rhymes don’t have to be Shakespeare! They just have to be playful and fun, and done in the spirit of “bathing a child in literacy.”



Fingerplays

The National Network for Child Care (www.nncc.org/curriculum/fingerplay.html) has an extensive list of finger plays that are just perfect for language use during diapering, dressing, feeding, play time, etc. Many of those listed are very brief, easy to memorize, and use rhyming words that call children’s attention to the sounds of our language. In addition to the old standards of “This Little Piggie,” “Where is Thumbkin?,” and “Itsy Bitsy Spider,” here are just a few from the NNCC website (there are many others; just Google “fingerplays” and explore all the opportunities):

The little mice are creeping, creeping, creeping
 The little mice are creeping, through the house.
 The little mice are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping,
 The little mice are sleeping, through the house.

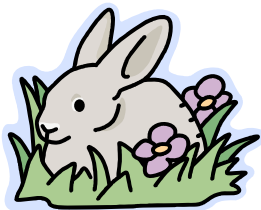
The old gray cat comes creeping, creeping, creeping,
 The old gray cat comes creeping, through the house.
 And the little mice run away.

(One hand represents the mice, the other hand the cat. One hand creeps, while the other comes slowly down from the air. Hands meet and one scampers behind the child's back)

(each finger in turn)

Peter Pointer
 Toby Tall
 Ruby Ring
 Baby Finger

Finger Family - here we are.



Here's a bunny
(raise two fingers)
 With ears so funny
 And here's a hole in the ground.
(make hole with fingers of other hand)
 At the first sound she hears
 She pricks up her ears
(straighten fingers)
 And pops right into the ground.
(put into hole)

Five rabbits were hiding
(clenched fist)
 In the woods one day.
 1-2-3-4-5 jumped out
(fingers come out as they count)
 And then they ran away.
(imitate running with fingers.)



We are little pussy cats
 Walking round and round.
 We have cushions on our feet
 And never make a sound.
(walking on cushions of fingers)
 or *(crawling quietly like a cat)*



Five little kittens
(hand made into a fist)
 All black and white
 Sleeping very soundly
 All through the night.

Meow, meow, meow, meow
(each finger raised in turn to "Meow")
 It's time to get up now.

Tommy Thumb,
 Tommy Thumb
 Where are you?
 Here I am, here I am,
 How do you do?

Reading Aloud With Phonological Awareness Objectives for Infants and Young Toddlers

The next workshops on “Concepts about Books and Print” will focus more heavily on strategies for effective read alouds. In working with infants and young toddlers in phonological awareness, the focus of our efforts is not on story comprehension or gathering information from text, but much more on L.E.A.Ding conversations with children. The letters LEAD stand for, “Label, Explain, Ask Questions, and Describe” (Sandefur, 2005). In general, we want to engage children in a conversation about books (even if the caregiver is the only one talking!), in which caregivers label animals and objects in the book, explain objects or processes or situations in illustrations, ask questions that inspire thinking and responses, and describe the appearance of animals/objects in the book.

When we focus on LEADing in a phonological sense, we can use rhyming words as a focus, for example:

- Labeling: “This is a fish; look at his shiny scales. Do you see this dish? The fish is running away from the dish. (pointing) This is a fish; this is a dish. Can you say fish? Dish?”
- Explaining: “Look, Jack is jumping over the candlestick He’s got to be quick to jump over the candlestick. He’s got to jump high so he doesn’t knock it over. He’s got to be quick to jump over the stick!”
- Asking questions: “Moon and spoon; can you show me the moon? Where is the moon? Do you see the spoon? Where’s that spoon going? (in a sing-songy voice and pointing)” There’s the moon; there’s the spoon.”
- Describing: “Ahh, this is a pretty kitty. (pointing) Look at the pink bow she has in her hair and the diamond collar. See how it sparkles? She’s a pretty kitty with her bow and collar.”

Mother Goose rhymes, Dr. Seuss books, and poems and books that have rhyming text will offer rich opportunities for caregivers not to “stop and smell the roses,” but to “stop and hear the rhymes.”

Strategies most appropriate for older children (older toddlers through pre-K):

(Appropriate age group: Older children

Phonological focus: rhyming)

It’s much fun to change words in a familiar rhyme and ask children to determine the rhyming word. For example:

Hey, diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle. The cow jumped over the house.

The little dog laughed to see such sport, and the dish ran away with the _____ (mouse)!

Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of juice

Jack fell down and broke his crown and Jill bumped into a big brown hairy _____ (moose)!

Mary had a little lamb; its fleece was soft like silk

And everywhere that Mary went, the lamb wanted to drink some _____ (milk)!

(developed from Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp, 2000)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: rhyming)*

Find the rhymes!

This activity will help children match the sounds of words, which is an important developmental reading skill.

1. Go on Google.com and click on “images” on the toolbar. Print off pictures that represent *bear/hair, fox/socks, mouse/house, dog/hog, toy/boy*, etc. Tape the images to 3x5 or 5x7 cards.
2. Spread the pictures out on the table or floor. Explain to the small group that words that rhyme end with the same sound. Give several examples and model the game.
3. Let a child choose one of the pictures. Find the picture that rhymes with the chosen picture and ask the child to determine if the words rhyme. Say the words together to emphasize the rhyming parts of the word.
4. Play until all rhyming pairs have been identified. Do a review with the children of all the rhyming pairs.

(from www.getreadytoread.org)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: rhyming)*

Jump for the Rhyme

Here’s another rhyming activity:



1. Use a rhyming book or go on www.rhymezone.com to find list of pairs of rhyming words. Make a list of non-rhyming words, as well.
2. Model the activity for your children. While you are standing (the neutral position for this game), say a pair of words that rhyme. Show that you get to “jump for the rhyme!”
3. Say a pair of words that do not rhyme and say, “Those words don’t rhyme, so I’ll have to sit down.”
4. Continue as long as the children are engaged and having fun.
- 5.

(from www.getreadytoread.org)

Play “**One of these words is not like the other,**” a word game that will support children’s sound discrimination. Think of two or three words that rhyme and then one word that does not rhyme. Ask children to identify the word that does not sound like the other words. For example:

Teacher: I’d bet that you can hear the word that doesn’t sound like the other words:
“pot, hot, cot, duck”

Children: Duck!!

Teacher: I’d bet that you can hear the word that doesn’t sound like the other words:
“shoe, rag, tag, bag”

Children: Shoe!!

Teacher: I’d bet that you can hear the word that doesn’t sound like the other words:
“moose, goose, tree, loose”

Children: Tree!!

Keep changing the position of the different word so that children cannot predict that the last word will always be the odd word out.

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: rhyming)*

Children love to **guess at words that rhyme**. Find some fun rhyming poetry or nursery rhymes, and read the entire poem to them. Now reread the poem, leaving out the second rhyming word, and let the children “fill in the blank:”

Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall.

Humpty Dumpty had a great _____.

*Mary had a little lamb. Its fleece was white as snow,
and everywhere that Mary went the lamb was sure to _____.*



**Feel free to make up rhymes that include the children’s names:

*Tamara is a friend of mine. She’s sitting in a chair.
I’d like to get a brush and comb and braid her pretty _____.*

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: concept of word)*

How many words?

This is an activity for older children in small group that will help them learn to segment sentences and give them opportunities to count.

1. Read some very simple 2-6 word sentences from a favorite book. Tell the children that sentences in a story are made up of words and that you’re going to help them learn to count the words in some sentences.
2. Read some simple sentences (“Mouse jumped up.” “Mouse ate the strawberry.”). Show how you use counters (dry lima beans or small plastic counting bears) to count the words in the sentences.
3. Give children counters and help them count out the words in the same sentences and then new ones. Use longer sentences when the children are ready.

(from www.getreadytoread.org)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: concept of word)*

Be the Word

This game will help children grow to understand that sentences in poems and books are made up of individual words.

1. You will need to use lines from nursery rhymes or other poems that the children know VERY well.
2. Sit or stand facing a child or a small group of children.
3. Take turns saying the words from the line of the poem. As you or the child say each word, pass a ball or beanbag back and forth until you have said the whole sentence. If you are working with a small group, which is best, the children can pass the ball or beanbag around the group with each word identified.

(from www.getreadytoread.org)



*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: concept of word; word segments)*



Find the Compound Word

Children need to listen for the smaller segments of language that are often contained in words.

1. Collect a list of compound words and pictures that represent the two different words within that compound word (*cow + boy = cowboy; cat + fish = catfish; finger + nail = fingernail*, etc.) Other compound words familiar to children might include armchair, bathroom, bullfrog, playground, fireman, snowball, dishpan, jellyfish, cupcake, grasshopper, raincoat, football, haircut, motorcycle, and many more.
2. Spread the pictures out on a table or the floor. Tell the children that some words are made up of two shorter words put together and that you are going to use some of those words to play a game.
3. Say a compound word and ask the small group to repeat it.
4. Help the child select the two pictures that make up the compound word (jelly + fish). Say the word again while looking at the pictures.
5. As children gain more experience, you may wish to print the names of the pictures on the bottom of the cards.
6. To add complexity to this game, tell children to say *cowboy* without the *cow-*, or say *jellyfish* without the *-fish*.

(from www.getreadytoread.org)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: concept of word; comprehension)*

Scrambled Sentences! Children need practice in listening to the word order of sentences. If children are able to ask the question about an oral sentence, “Did that make sense?”, then they may be better able to ask that question when they have mis-read a sentence in a text. Good readers are regularly asking themselves: “Did what I just read make sense?” You can make up sentences that involve the children or objects/people in the classroom, or you could easily mix-up sentences from books you just read to the children. For example, some of the sentences you ask the children to vote on--“Does this sentence make sense?”--might be as follows:

Teacher: “‘Jack and Jill hill pail went the up fetch to of water.’ Did that make sense?”

Teacher: “‘pink wore today sweater Maggie new her.’ Did that sentence make sense?”

Teacher: “‘I am hoping for another snow day in February.’ Did that sentence make sense?”

Teacher: “‘three Goldilocks the and bears is story mine a of favorite.’ Did that sentence make sense?”



Make sure that you include sentences that DO make sense so you can talk about the meaning of language and sentences.

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: syllables)*

Humpty Dumpty

1. Make sure that each child has five cubes that snap together. Find a text with which the children are familiar.
2. Tell the children that just as Humpty Dumpty broke when he fell off the wall, you have some words that are broken, and the children need to help put them together again.
3. Demonstrate by saying a word, then repeating it in syllables, picking up a cube for each syllable as it is said. For example, you will pick up a cube for *pop*, then connect another one for *si*, and then another one to connect on for *cle*, then say the whole word: *popsicle*.
4. Repeat the process with other “broken” words from the book.

(from Yopp & Yopp, 2000)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: syllables)*



Syllable Self-Portraits

This activity will help children learn to hear the number of syllables in words, specifically their names, that will lead to understanding word “chunks,” a necessary strategy for decoding words in reading.

1. Have the children draw themselves on a piece of construction paper.
2. Have several small squares of paper for them to glue by their self-portrait; these will represent the number of syllables, or “beats,” in the child’s name.
3. Either the child (if he or she is able) or the teacher will write the child’s name by the portrait.
4. The children will share their portraits with others and “read” the beat markers for their names. The self-portraits can be displayed on a wall at the children’s eye level.
5. The teacher should “read” the beats of the children’s names several times a day over several weeks, until all children know the number of beats in each child’s name.

(from Yopp & Yopp, 2000)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: syllables; phonemes)*

Play “I’m thinking of . . .” Begin with distinct, clearly separated sounds, and then begin blending faster and faster until children guess the word. You might begin with children’s names and then move on to objects in the room or other concepts that children know:

- “I’m thinking of one of my preschool friends who has blue barrettes in her hair today, and the sounds of her name are /Mar/ /qui/ /ta/.” Who is it?
- “I’m thinking of one of my preschool friends who loves 18-wheelers, and the sounds of his name are /Bron/ /te/.” Who is it?
- “I’m thinking of a piece of furniture that we sit on, and the sounds of the word are /ch/ /ai/ /r/. What is it?”
- “I’m thinking of an animal that has four legs, has fur, and barks, and the sounds of the word are /d/ /o/ /g/. What is it?”
- “I’m thinking of a something we find in a kitchen AND a bathroom, and the sounds of the word are /s/ /in/ /k/. What is it?”

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: rhyming; syllables; phonemes)*



Magic Password

This transition strategy will help children develop a range of phonological skills: rhyming, syllables, and phoneme blending.

- Try to tie this pretend play into a recently read text or play scenario. For example, if you have recently read a fairy tale, perhaps you are the guardian to the Giant's castle and the children are all "Jack."
- The children are called to learning centers or to wash hands or to go the table for snack based on their contributing the "Magic Password," which may be the teacher asking for a rhyming word, or to clap out the syllables of a word, or to think of a word that begins with the "ch" sound.

Examples: "Jose, what is the Magic Password that rhymes with *cake*?" (any rhyming response is celebrated)
 "Ja'nay, what is the Magic Password that has two beats in the word and is from our insect unit?" (any two syllable word will suffice that is related to insects)
 "Darnell, what is the Magic Password that begins with the /f/ sound?"

(from Notari-Syverson, O'Connor, & Vadasy, 1998)

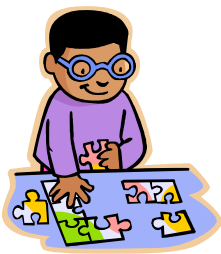
*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: syllables)*

Syllable Puzzles

This activity helps children understand that words can be conceptualized as a collection of parts.

1. Have children draw or prepare in advance pictures of objects or animals with names that are multisyllabic words or compound words. Cut the pictures (like large puzzle pieces) into the number of parts that corresponds to the number of syllables.
2. The children take apart and put together the images as they segment or blend the word ("el-e-phant").
3. Repeat with multiple word puzzles.

(from Notari-Syverson, O'Connor, & Vadasy, 1998)



*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: syllables; phonemes)*

The Store

This pretend activity will help children grow to understand that words are a collection of parts (syllables or phonemes, if children are developmentally ready for this detailed focus).

1. Set up a grocery or other store pretend play center. Let children take turns at being the owner of the store. The teacher plays the customer, who asks for items by pronouncing their names segmented into syllables or (later) with phonemes.
2. The teacher explains that she is going to “speak in a funny way.” “I’m going to break up my words in to little pieces. What do you have to do to guess the words?”
3. The children guess the items.
4. Example: The teacher walks into the “store” and asks the “owner” for some “spa—ghet—ti” or some “ce—re—al”, and the children must guess what the “customer” wants.
5. For those children who are already phonemically aware, the children could ask for an item saying each phoneme: “I would like to buy a b-a-n-a-n-a, please.”



(from Notari-Syverson, et al., 1998, p. 190)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: beginning sounds)*

Willoughby Wallaby Woo

This is a great word game that involves children substituting different beginning sounds for children’s names, which creates an opportunity to rhyme their names with a nonsense word. Go around the small group until each child’s name has been played.

Willoughby wallaby wee,
an elephant sat on me.

Willoughby wallaby woo,
an elephant sat on you.

Willoughby wallaby wathew,
an elephant sat on Matthew.

Willoughby wallaby warniece,
an elephant sat on Charniece.
Etc., etc.

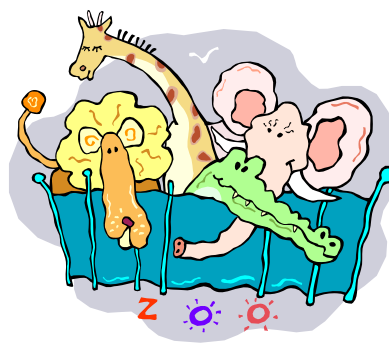
Willoughby wallaby woo,
a kangaroo hopped on me.
Etc.

Willoughby wallaby woo,
a monkey climbed on me.

Etc.

Willoughby wallaby woo,
a gerbil crawled on me.
Etc.

(Prompt the children to suggest names of animals they like.)



*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: phonemic awareness)*

Stretched-out Story

This “listen, then say” activity will help hear the phonemes in words, which will lead to supporting both their reading and their writing.

1. Tell the children that you are going to tell or read them a story, but that some words will sound a little different. “I’m going to stretch out some words so that you can hear all the sounds in the word. Your job is to put back together each word that I stretch. Let’s try a word for practice: ssssss-k-oooo-lllllll. What word am I stretching?”
2. Read or tell the story, rhyme, or poem to your child. When you get to an important place, character, or object in the story, say that word stretched out sound by sound. Example: “One day, Shaniqua went to the ssssss-t-oooo-re. She had to buy some mmmmm-iiii-lllll-k for her baby sister.”
3. As you tell the story or read the text, pause for the children to help say the word that you stretched out.

(from www.getreadytoread.org)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: phonemes)*

Raffi, the children’s musician, has created a fun song that plays with long vowel sounds that children will love:



I like to eat eat eat apples and bananas.
I like to eat eat eat apples and bananas.

I like to ate ate ate appuls and baynaynays.
I like to ate ate ate appuls and baynaynays.

I like to eet eet eet eeples and beeneenees.
I like to eet eet eet eeples and beeneenees.

I like to ote ote ote oopples and bononos.
I like to ote ote ote oopples and bononos.

I like to ute ute ute uupples and bununus.
I like to ute ute ute uupples and bununus.

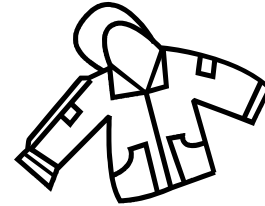


from “Raffi in Concert with the Rise and Shine Band” (1988).
A&M Video, PO Box 118, Hollywood, CA 90028

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: phonemes)*

Sing the “**Segmentation Song**” to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”:

Listen, listen
To my word
Then tell me all the sounds you heard: (slowly and repeat: “coat”)
(Children identify the segment sounds)
/k/ is one sound
/o/ is two
/t/ is last in coat, it’s true.
Thanks for listening to my word
And telling all the sounds you heard!

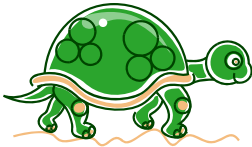


You will think of many other one-syllable words to use in this song: chair, desk, floor, sink, etc., etc.

from Yopp (1992) in Tompkins, (2001), p. 169

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: phonemes)*

Play “Turtle Talk” to extend children’s ability to hear the sounds of words. How would turtles talk? Very, very slowly. Ask the children to say words like a turtle would say them. You would say the word at regular speed: “house,” and then demonstrate saying the word drawn out in slow motion: “hhhhooousssse.” Children will quickly catch on. If you use animal names for this exercise, perhaps the children could move in slow motion as that animal would move.



*from Richard Allington conference presentation at the Mid-South Reading and Writing Institute, Birmingham, AL (2003)

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: beginning sounds; phonemes)*

Phoneme Switch-a-roo

This activity will help children substitute beginning sounds of words from familiar songs, which will increase the likelihood that children will recognize onsets and rimes as they develop as readers.

1. Choose a familiar song that the children enjoy.
2. Have the children suggest a beginning sound for the new “silly” version of the known song.
3. Sing the song with all typical beginning sounds having been replaced by the new phoneme.

Example: Tune selected by the children: “Happy Birthday”
 Phoneme selected by Petra: /p/

The song would be sung like this:

“Pappy pirthday po pou!
 Pappy pirthday po pou!
 Pappy pirthday pear Petra,
 Pappy pirthday po pou!”
 (Note: the “poo, poo” sound will please your 4- and 5-year-olds!)



Example: Tune selected by the children: “Twinkle twinkle little star”
 Phoneme selected by Martray: /m/

“Minkle minkle mittle mtar,
 Mow I monder mhat moo mare,
 Mup mabove mhe morld mo migh,
 Mike a miamond min mhe mky.



Etc.

Note: Don't worry about accuracy here. Having fun while playing with words is the objective!

(Appropriate age group: Older children

Phonological focus: beginning sounds)

Sing to the tune of “Old MacDonald”:



“What is the sound that begins these words? Chin and chicken and cheek?
 (Children respond with /ch/).

/Ch/ is the sound that begins these words: chin and chicken and cheek.

With a /ch/ /ch/ here, and a /ch/ /ch/ there,

Here a /ch/, there a /ch/, everywhere a /ch/ /ch/

/Ch/ is the sound that begins these words: chin and chicken and cheek.”

****Work your way through the alphabet:**

“What is the sound that begins the words? Dog and Danny and doughnut?”

“What is the sound that begins these words? Egg and Eddie and elephant?”

“What is the sound that begins these words? Frog and finger and fly?”

Etc.

****When your children are ready, change the song to reflect your focus on middle and ending sounds:**

“What’s the sound in the middle of these words? Whale and game and rain.”

“What’s the sound at the end of these words? Leaf and cough and beef.”

(Yopp, 1992, in Tompkins, 2001, p. 167)

(Appropriate age group: Older children

Phonological focus: beginning sounds)

Another **sound-changing song** can be done with “**Old MacDonald**”: Instead of singing “Ee-igh, ee-igh, oh!”, have the children manipulate the beginning sounds with different consonants. For example, if the children choose “pig” to be the animal for that verse, then they can sing, “Pee-pigh, pe-pigh, poh!” If the children choose a “sheep” for the verse, then they can sing, “She-shigh, she-shigh, shoh!” The entire song would go something like this:

Old MacDonald had a farm
 Ee-igh, ee-igh, oh!
 And on that farm he had a _____ (children’s choice: goat)
 Gee-gigh, gee-gigh, goh!
 With a Maa-maa here and a Maa-maa there,
 Here a Maa, there a Maa, everywhere a Maa-maa.
 Old MacDonald had a goat,
 Gee-gigh, gee-gigh, goh!



*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: beginning sounds)*

Sing **the fun name song** that changes the name to nonsense sounds (but teaches children how to manipulate beginning sounds!). For example:

Anne, Anne, bo-ban, fanana-fana, fo-fan
Me, my, mo-man . . . Anne!

Daniel, Daniel, bo-baniel, fanana-fana, fo-faniel
Me, my, mo-maniel . . . Daniel!

Shakita, Shakita, bo-bitita, fanana-fana, fo-fita,
Me, my, mo-mita . . . Shakita!

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: beginning sounds)*

Use **letter boxes** in your reading or writing center. Shoeboxes are marked with an upper case & lower case letter, and items are in the box that begin with that letter. If your children are ready they can then use the paper and pencils nearby to use temporary spelling to write out the names of the objects in the box.

- For example, in the “Aa” box there is a small wooden apple, a plastic ant, a picture of an alligator, a doll apron, and a plastic armadillo.
- In the “Bb” box there is a ball, a small box, a baby’s bib, a plastic baby, a bottle, a plastic banana, and a small bowl.
Etc.



*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: beginning sounds)*

Make “**sounding boards**” for children to use. Place colorful pictures of animals and objects and even the children’s pictures on a piece of foam board. Preferably with a small group, have children identify pictures that begin with the “mmmm” sound or the “sssss” sound or the “pppppp” sound.

*(Appropriate age group: Older children
Phonological focus: onsets-rimes)*

Mail a Postcard

This game will help children focus on beginning sounds and word patterns (called onsets and rimes). Beginning letter/sounds are critical for word identification in reading, and knowledge of rimes (or word families).



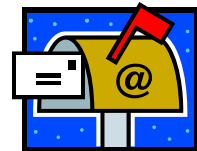
The following represent 37 rime patterns that make up over 500 frequently appearing words:

-ack -ain -ake -ale -all -ame -an
 -ank -ap -ash -at -ate -aw -ay
 -eat -ell -est -ice -ick -ide -ight
 -ill -in -ine -ing -ink -ip -ir
 -ock -oke -op -or -ore -uck -ug
 -ump -unk

So . . . b+ ack = back and sn + ack = snack and bl + ack = black, etc.

1. Use a large box with a lid that will serve as a mailbox. Cut a slit in the top through which 3x5 cards can be deposited.
2. Give children picture cards of objects that have one syllable: cup, clock, duck, ring, flag, brick, door, etc. To make sure that the children are familiar with the picture, have each child show the picture to the small group and name the item.
3. The teacher divides the word into onsets (the beginning consonant) and rimes (from the vowel to the end of the word). For example, the teacher calls out, “c-up,” or “r-ing,” or “fl-ag,” or “br-ick.” The child who has the picture that represents the word will hold up the card, blend the word together, and then “mail the postcard” into the mailbox slot.
4. As the child walks to the mailbox, the rest of the children can chant:
 “A postcard! A postcard!
 What can it be?
 A postcard! A postcard!
 I hope it’s for me!”

(from Yopp & Yopp, 2000)



Strategies for supporting children with special needs:

“Some children have considerable difficulty attending to any level of sounds in words. Clapping names is a good activity for informal screening of such difficulties. After several lessons, notice which children still seem to have difficulty. Find a quiet place and spend a brief time with them one-on-one. You may find that these children are confused by all the clapping or do not understand the directions. They may have problems listening attentively or separating syllables. They may be confused because they are mispronouncing a word. try to determine where the problem lies. Children may need to work one-on-one with a teacher several times before they fully understand the activity” (Strickland & Schickedanz, 2004, p. 57).

- ✓ Children who have been diagnosed as having specific early language impairments or hearing impairments may be at greater risks for reading difficulties than children from the general population (National Research Council, 1998). If a child has received a diagnosis of a specific productive language or hearing impairment from a trained professional, then teachers should be extra attentive to that child's progress in learning to read. The medical and/or social services community will assist teachers in providing the appropriate interventions for children younger than three; after age three the school system is responsible for providing special services.
- ✓ Children with special needs may face challenges in developing literacy skills. They may miss valuable opportunities that come naturally for typical children. Children who have no means to express themselves through play will not benefit from opportunities that arise in the dramatic play area. Children who have difficulty manipulating books will need assistance in order to take advantage of them.

We should integrate phonological awareness in meaningful contexts for all children. Activities should be based around the classroom theme, book being read, classroom environment, or field trip. For children with special needs teachers should observe and use multiple strategies to see what works best for that individual child.

Teachers should use a multisensory approach to teach skills. Use pictures, verbal language, body movement, and manipulatives whenever possible to teach children phonological awareness.

Rhyming difficulties: With nonverbal children the teacher could present rhyming pairs and non-rhyming pairs. Children could have happy faces to hold up if the pairs rhyme and sad faces for non-rhyming pairs. If children are verbal, the teacher should always have them verbally repeat the pairs that rhyme. Teachers should also use visual cues of the words. They can also show three pictures and ask the child to point out the two that rhyme (http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/cld_hownow.html).

- ⊙ **Sound recognition:** Teachers can present speech sounds by associating them with a creature, action or object that is familiar to the child. For example, the phoneme /s/ can be associated with the hissing sound a snake makes-sssssss. The /s/ could then be the "Sammy snake sound." Other suggestions are:

- /m/ humming or /mmmmm...mmmm/ good sound from the Campbell's soup song
- /p/ quiet motor boat or motor scooter sound
- /b/ babbling brook, blowing bubbles, or baa, baa sheep sound
- /w/ ceiling fan or "wee, wee, wee" little pig sound
- /wh/ blowing sound
- /h/ "ha, ha, ha" laughing or big sigh sound
- /t/ ticking clock
- /d/ pecking woodpecker or noisy tugboat engine sound
- /n/ neighing horse
- /ng/ ringing bell sound (ding dong)
- /k/ coughing sound
- /g/ emptying water jug or gurgling baby sound
- /y/ yelping puppy
- /f/ mad cat
- /v/ big black fly sound
- /sh/ "be quiet" sound
- /zh/ electric razor, or vacuum cleaner sound
- /l/ "la-la-la" singing sound
- /r/ crowing rooster, fire engine or roaring lion sound
- /z/ bussing bee sound
- /ch/chugging choo choo train sound
- /j/ large diesel train or Jack and Jill sound

- ⊙ Draw pictures to go with the sound associations and post in the classroom (http://www.ldonline.org/ld/indepth/teaching_techniques/cld_hownow.html)
- ⊙ Use chips, cards, or other manipulatives to model and demonstrate how sentences are made up of different words. Let the children use a chip or card to represent each word.
- ⊙ Let children clap, tap desk, jump, or march in place to show the different syllables in words (<http://www.pbrookes.com/email/archive/may02/May02EC3.htm>).

Strategies for Children Learning English as a Second Language:




🌐 Remember that ALL children from birth through age five and for the rest of their lives, are language learners. Young children who are speaking a language other than English in their home environments simply need even richer opportunities in early childhood settings for listening to and producing oral language, hearing books read aloud, reading with experienced language users in shared readings, developing vocabulary, etc.

🌐 Remind parents who speak English as a second language that it will be to their child's benefit to speak their native language at home. Children who must learn to read in English before they have become fluent in English as an oral language may be more likely to experience difficulties in learning to read (National Research Council, 1998). Learning to speak

English is, to some degree, associated with the connections they can make to their native language. Therefore, it is important that parents and children speak their native language in their homes and share the richness of their cultures and values in their language of greatest proficiency and comfort. Some well-meaning parents insist on their children speaking English in the home, in the mistaken impression that this practice will help their children become competent in English more quickly.



Strategies for Working With Parents:

- 🏠 Have an **open house** at a time that is convenient for many of your parents, perhaps at the end of the day. Invite parents to come to your center so that you may demonstrate with their children the strategies that you would like them to try at home. If the children have been rhyming, counting words, clapping out syllables, and using other word games for some time, then they will be able to help their parents remember what to do.
- 🏠 It will be beneficial to families if you photocopy a sheet of the **children's favorite rhyming poems** and send it home with the children for family sharing. Suggest that parents read the poems to their children, stopping before the rhyming word and having the children fill in the blank with the missing rhyme.
- 🏠 Remind parents that working toward their child's ability to hear the sounds of the language is not enough. They must also **examine and explore the letters that make up words**. But the most important preparation that parents can contribute to their child's future is to **read aloud to him/her**. Reading aloud by caregivers helps the child develop an understanding of alphabet, the forms, and the functions of print in the lives of literate peoples.
- 🏠 **Send home books** with children that have rhyming text and other interesting word play so that parents and children can enjoy the books together.

 Suggest that **parents play language games with children** to develop their ability to hear the sounds of the language (which will support their reading competence).

- Think up four words with two rhymes: “sink, fork, plate, drink,” and then ask your child to identify the words that rhymed.
- Think up different words, asking your child to repeat the words without certain parts of them. For example, “say butterfly without the ‘but,’ say basketball without the ‘ball,’ say cheeseburger with the ‘ch,’” etc.
- Think of different words, asking your child to identify the beginning sounds of those words. For example, “What sound begins the word ‘table?’ What sound begins the word ‘chair?’ What sound begins the word ‘rug?’ etc.
- Ask you child to switch the beginning sounds of words. “What word would I have if I switched the /m/ sound of the word ‘match’ to the /k/ sound of ‘cat?’” “What word would I have if I switched the /b/ sound of the word ‘ball’ to the /f/ sound of the word ‘fall?’” etc.

Suggestions for evaluation:

-  See Creative Curriculum® for Literacy for a Phonological Awareness Observation Form.
-  You can track a child’s progress in developing phonological awareness by taking brief notes on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. You may wish to take notes on 2-3 children per day; one easy way to do this is to record your notes and the date on Post-its. Then you only have to place that note in the child’s folder. You may wish to record information about whether a child can:
 - hear and pronounce the sounds of English
 - “stretch” a word out to hear the sounds
 - hear the distinctions between words in continuous speech.

developed from Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp (2000)

Supporting Research for Trainers:

- 📖 Cowen, J. E. (2003). *A balanced approach to beginning reading instruction*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- 📖 Heroman, C., & Jones, C. (2004). *Literacy: The Creative Curriculum® Approach*. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies.
- 📖 Justice, L.M., & Pence, K.L. (2005). *Scaffolding with storybooks: A guide for enhancing young children's language and literacy achievement*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- 📖 Lonigan, C.J., Burgess, S.R., & Anthony, J.L. (2000). Development of emergent literacy and early reading skills in preschool children: Evidence from a latent variable longitudinal study. *Developmental Psychology* 36, 596-613.
- 📖 Moats, L. (1999). *Teaching reading IS rocket science: What expert teaches of reading should know and be able to do*. Retrieved on July 5, 2006, from www.aft.org/pubs-reports/downloads/teachers/rocketsci.pdf
- 📖 Morrow, L.L. (2001). *Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write (4th ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- 📖 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups* (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- 📖 National Research Council. (2001). *Eager to learn: Educating our preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- 📖 National Research Council. (1999). *Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- 📖 Neuman, S.B., Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (2000). *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- 📖 Notari-Syverson, A., O'Connor, R.E., & Vadasy, P.F. (1998). *Ladders to literacy: A preschool activity book*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- 📖 Schickedanz, J.A. (1999). *Much more than the ABCs: The early stages of reading and writing*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- 📖 Schiller, P. (2000). *Creating readers*. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House.
- 📖 Strickland, D.S., & Schickedanz, J.A. (2004). *Learning about print in preschool: Working with letters, words, and beginning links with phonemic awareness*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- 📖 Vukelich, C., & Christie, J. (2004). *Building a foundation for preschool literacy: Effective instruction for children's reading and writing development*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- 📖 Yopp, H.K. (1992). Developing phonemic awareness in young children. *Reading Teacher* 45(9), 696-703.
- 📖 Yopp, H.K. (1995). A test for assessing phonemic awareness in young children. *Reading Teacher* 49(1), 20-29.
- 📖 Yopp, H.K., & Yopp, R.H. (2000). Supporting phonemic awareness development in the classroom. *Reading Teacher* 54(2), 130-143.