

Calgary Board of Education

Phonological Awareness

Activities

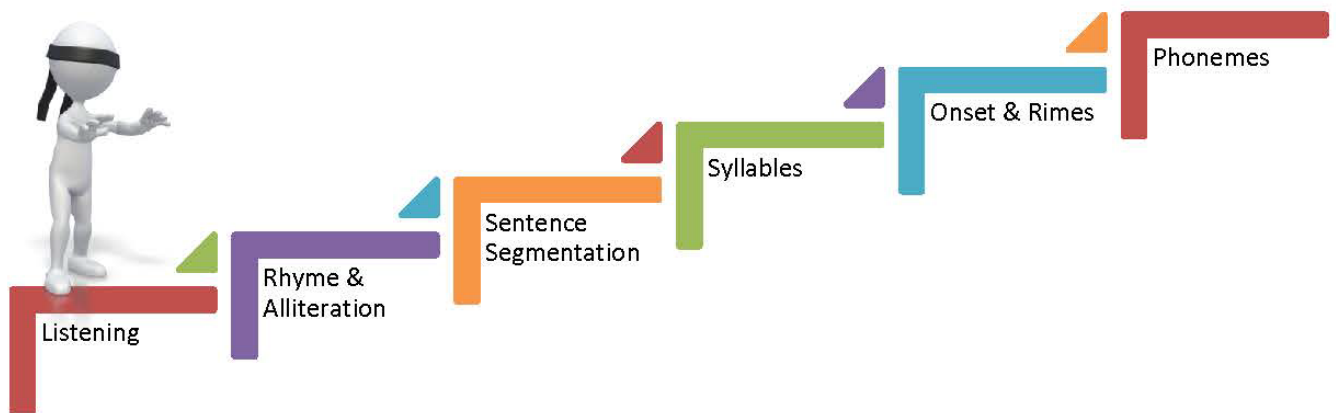


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Phonological Awareness Activities

Letter-sound knowledge: to introduce letter-sound correspondence

1. **Guess who: Introducing sounds and letters.**

With all of the children seated in a circle, say “I’m thinking of somebody’s name that begins with the letter _____. Raise your hand if you know whose.” (For names beginning with digraphs, such as “Sh-”, it is appropriate to display the digraph rather than the initial letter only.) Then display the initial letter while producing the initial phoneme of a child’s name, stretching or repeating it as necessary until most children have guessed the name.

After the children become familiar with the beginning sounds and letters of each others’ names, you may begin the game: “I’m thinking of someone’s name that begins with (letter-name)” while displaying the corresponding letter. The children pronounce the sound of the letter and then raise their hands when they have guessed the name of the child.

2. **Mystery Bag: Letter.**

Using a bag full of objects, say “Guess what’s in my bag. It begins with the letter “b” and it has two wheels.” Invite the children to say the sound the letter makes. Then, children make guesses based on clues. Invite the children to guess after each clue is given. Encourage them to exaggerate the initial sound when they are guessing. At the end of the game, the initial letter and sound of all objects are reviewed.

3. **Silly Soup: Letter.**

Tell the children that they are going to make Silly Soup. In the soup we need to put things that start with the letter _____. The children need to name items that start with that letter. Write the list of ingredients. Example: The silly soup today is going to have things that start with the letter “f”: “fan”, “fruit”, “fudge”, “flowers”.

4. **I’m going on vacation.**

Play “I’m going on vacation and I’m taking a _____.” Name items that start with the same letter. Each child takes a turn saying “I’m going on vacation and I’m taking a _____.” You can also practice memory, by having the children sit in a circle and try to remember each item that was said. Example: for the letter “g” - “I’m going on vacation and I’m taking a goat, girl, gate, gift.” Write a list of the items that you will be packing. OR they can bring items that start with the first letter in their name (e.g., Lisa is bringing lemonade.).

Rhyming:

1. **Rhyming poems, songs and jingles.** In introducing a new poem or chant, first read or recite it for the children, emphasizing its rhythm and exaggerating its rhymes. Then, rereading line by line, the children should repeat each line in unison. So that all can hear and learn the words, the pace should be **slow** and deliberate at first, gradually picking up speed as the children gain mastery.

Variations:

- recite the poem in whispers, but saying the rhyming words aloud or vice versa.
- sit the children in a circle and ask them to recite successive lines (or words) of the poem, one at a time, in turn.

2. **“One potato, two potato.”** Multisensory play is, in general, a valuable means of capturing young children’s attention. The traditional children’s rhyme, “One potato, two potato, three potato, four” offers an excellent framework for tying physical movement to rhyme. The children are to sit in a circle with both fists before them. While all the children chant the rhyme, the person who is “it” moves around the circle and gently pounds out the stressed syllables, fist on the right fist then on the left fist of each child. A child whose fist is pounded on the last or rhyming word of each line (i.e., on one of the “magic” words: four, more) must put that fist behind her or

his back. As soon as any child loses both hands, she or he is out. The last child remaining with one fist still in front becomes the new "it". In "One Potato, two potato" the stressed syllables are the number words:

"**One** potato, **two** potato, **three** potato, **four**" "**Five** potato, **six** potato, **seven** potato, **more**"

Variations - Other rhyme suggestions:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| ■ "Eeny Meeny Miney Mo" | Magic words: Mo, toe, go, Mo |
| ■ "Pease Porridge Hot" | Magic words: cold, old, hot, pot |
| ■ "Hickory, Dickory Dock" | Magic words: dock, clock |
| ■ "Baa Baa Black Sheep" | Magic words: wool, full |
| ■ "One, Two, Buckle my Shoe" | Magic words: two, shoe; four, door; and so forth |

3. **Can you rhyme?** To introduce this game, read several rhyme phrases aloud, emphasizing the rhyming words. Then, challenge the children to complete each rhyme aloud. Following are examples of phrases that can be used:

A cat wearing a ____ (hat).
A mouse that lives in a ____ (house).
A moose with a tooth that is ____ (loose).
Some kittens wearing some ____ (mittens).
A sheep that is sound ____ (asleep).
A bear with long, brown ____ (hair).
A bug crawled under the ____ (rug).
A goat that is sailing a ____ (boat).
A duck that is driving a ____ (truck).
Smell the rose with your ____ (nose).

4. **Sorting rhyming pairs.**

Collect objects which can be sorted into rhyming families (sock, lock, clock; fan, can, pan; etc.). Use hula-hoops placed on the floor, yarn circles or baskets to put items from a given family. Ask children to sort the objects and put those that rhyme in each circle/basket.

5. **I Spy a Rhyme.**

Collect a variety of objects or picture cards that rhyme. Place them in a circle, or around the room. Play "I Spy" by spotting the objects that rhyme. For example: "I Spy a bear and a chair.", "I Spy a hat and a bat.", "I Spy a frog on a log."



Sound awareness: To introduce how phonemes (sounds) sound when spoken in isolation and that phonemes are parts of words

1. **Guess who.**

With all of the children seated in a circle, say "Guess whose name I'm going to say now." Then secretly choose the name of one of the children and distinctly pronounce its first sound only. For names beginning with a short consonant, such as Peter, the sound should be clearly repeated over and over: /p, p, p, p/. Longer consonants should be stretched as well as repeated (e.g., /sssss/, /sssss/, /sssss/). If more than one child's name has the same initial sound, encourage the children to guess all of the possibilities. This introduces the point that every phoneme shows up in lots of different words.

Once the game is familiar, you may pass control to the children. After a given child's name is guessed, she or he may give the hint for the next name: "I'm thinking of someone's name that begins with ____."

2. **Same sound name-game.**

Have each child identify the first sound in their name. Then have them name something that they like that starts with the same sound. Example: "My name is Kate and I like kittens." The children can draw a picture of the item they like and this can be made into a class book.

3. **Listening for sounds: name-game.**

Have each child listen to a name spoken by the teacher. Tell the children to stand up if their name starts the same as the name spoken. Example: "Stand up if your name starts the same as Rosa's."

4. **Two-sound words.** Materials needed: blocks or squares of heavy paper

Give each child two ordinary blocks, interlocking cubes, or squares of heavy paper, which they will use to represent the sounds in a word that you produce - one block for each sound. Model the required thought process for the children, showing them how to repeat your word to themselves sound by sound with clear pauses between each (e.g., "bow" = /b/ /o/). Also encourage the children to arrange the blocks from left to right so that they begin to establish directionality.

After arranging their blocks, the group or a designated individual should be asked to repeat your word, pointing to each block while saying the sound it represents. Then everyone repeats the word while pointing to each of their blocks.

At first, start with a variety of two-sound words. Once the children have become comfortable with the activity, however, longer words may be introduced as the children should be led to observe that longer words have more sounds.

The following are examples of two-sound words :

day	bee	bye	chew
may	guy	go	do
say	knee	pie	shoe
two	zoo	tie	she
each	eat	ice	eight
at	is	off	up

5. **Mystery Bag: Sound.**

Using a bag full of objects, say "Guess what's in my bag. It begins with /d,d,d,d,d/ and it swims." Children make guesses based on clues. Invite the children to guess after each clue is given. Encourage them to exaggerate the initial sound when they are guessing. At the end of the game, the initial sounds of all objects are reviewed.

6. **Troll Talk: Sounds.**

Invite everyone to sit in a circle and engage them in a story:

Once upon a time there was a kind, little troll who loved to give people presents. The only catch was that the troll always wanted people to know what their present was before giving it to them. The problem was that the little troll had a very strange way of talking. If he was going to tell a child that the present was a bike, he would say /b -i -k/. Not until the child had guessed what the present was would he be completely happy.

Now, pretend to be the troll and move through the group, presenting a "present" to each child, pronouncing the name of the present sound by sound. When the child guesses the word, she or he is to name a present for somebody else. You may use picture cards of "presents" to help the children think of something. Here are examples of gifts to pronounce:

ape	dog	pen	soap
book	cat	phone	shoe
bow	ice	tie	ball
hat	cake	bat	doll

7. **Sound chips.**

Give each child a piece of paper with three adjacent squares arranged in a row (or a train with separate compartments; a caterpillar with separate circles; etc.). Say a word with three phonemes (sounds). Ask the child to place a chip or marker in each box as he says the individual sounds. For example, ask the child to say the sounds in the word mouse. The child should place a chip in each box as he says each sound /m/, /o/, /s/.

8. **Silly Sound Soup**

Tell the children that they are going to make Silly Soup. In the soup we need to put things that start with the ____ sound. The children need to name items that start with that sound. Example: The silly soup today is going to have things that start with the sound /f/: “fan”, “fruit”, “fudge”, “flowers”.

9. **I’m going on vacation.**

Play “I’m going on vacation and I’m taking a ____.” Name items that start with the same sound. Each child takes a turn saying “I’m going on vacation and I’m taking a ____.” You can also practice memory, by having the children sit in a circle and try to remember each item that was said. Example: for the /g/ sound - “I’m going on vacation and I’m taking a goat, girl, gate, gift.”

10. **What is it?**

Give each child a picture. Then have them give a sound clue to have the other children guess. (e.g., “pail” – it begins with a /p/ sound and it rhymes with tail). Children can give clues individually or work in pairs, if they need more assistance.

11. **Where’s that sound?**

Show a picture of a train with 3 distinct sections (engine, car, caboose). Say a word and have the children identify whether the target sound is at the beginning, middle or end of the word. They can use the train to point to beginning, middle or end. (e.g., target sound /p/. Where do we hear /p/ in pet? In grape? In zipper?)

12. **Pop-up people.**

Have three volunteers sit in front of class. Secretly tell each one a beginning, middle and ending sound of a word (e.g., /b/, /a/, /t/). Sitting in sequence, have the volunteers “pop up” one at a time, saying their sounds. Ask the rest of the class to blend the sounds and guess the word. Repeat with other volunteers and words.

Syllables: To reinforce the children’s ability to analyze words into syllables by asking them to clap and count the syllables in a variety of different words.

1. **Caterpillar walk.**

Line up the children in single file with their hands on the hips or shoulders of the child in front of them in order to form a caterpillar. When given the stimulus word, the caterpillar moves forward one step for each syllable.

2. **Take one thing from the box.** Materials needed: A box of small objects or pictures of objects
Collect a number of objects in a box or basket. Make sure to include objects that differ from one another in the number of syllables in their name.

Invite one child to close her or his eyes, choose an object from the container, and name it (e.g., “This is a pencil”). All of the children should repeat the chosen object’s name as they clap out its syllables. Then ask how many syllables were heard, taking care not to let anyone call out the answer too soon.

Gradually, as the children get better at the game, you can make it more difficult by using items with names that are longer and collectively more varied in length. Happily, children tend to find very long words delightfully amusing.

Variations:

- Use physical movements other than clapping.
- To get double duty out of the activity, you may prefer to use pictures that are tied to focus of inquiry in your classroom. For example, if studying winter, you might include pictures of boots, mittens, snowmen, December.
- Using the top row of a pocket chart, arrange number cards to display the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, from left to right. Have a child take a picture card and clap and count the number of syllables. The child must then place the picture card beneath the correct number card in the pocket chart. Review the pictures, from left to right, once the row has been completed.

3. **Troll Talk: Syllables.**

Invite everyone to sit in a circle and engage them in a story:

Once upon a time there was a kind, little troll who loved to give people presents. The only catch was that the troll always wanted people to know what their present was before giving it to them. The problem was that the little troll had a very strange way of talking. If he was going to tell a child that the present was a bicycle, he would say “bi-cy-cle”. Not until the child had guessed what the present was would he be completely happy.

Now, pretend to be the troll and go around the room, presenting a “present” to each child, pronouncing the name of the present syllable by syllable. When the child guesses the word, she or he is to name a present for somebody else. You may use picture cards of “presents” to help the children think of something. Here are examples of gifts to pronounce:

Barbie	bubble bath	guitar	roller blades
baseball	camera	hippopotamus	television
basketball	chocolate	peppermint	trampoline
bicycle	computer	rhinoceros	watermelon

4. **Bippity Boppity Bumble Bee.**

This is such a fun game. First, you get the kids clapping out names. As they get used to the game, you can start using other words with more syllables.

How to play: Sit in a circle with your children. I have a little stuffed bee that the kids love to hold. You could also use a printable bumble bee. The teacher begins the chant and walks around to a child:

Teacher: “Bippity Boppity Bumble Bee, Will You Say Your Name For Me?”

The child responds, “Jennifer.”

Teacher: “Let’s all say it.” And the class says her name out loud, while clapping once for each syllable.

Teacher: “Let’s all whisper it.” And the class whispers her name, while quiet-clapping the syllables again, once per syllable.

Teacher and class: “Bippity Boppity Bumble Bee, Thank You For Saying Your Name For Me!”

Repeat with another child and his/her name. As children become familiar with the game, you can allow children to take on the “teacher” role.

Word awareness: To strengthen the children’s awareness of words within sentences.

1. **Hearing words in sentences.** Materials needed: blocks or squares of heavy paper
Give each child six or seven ordinary blocks, interlocking cubes, or squares of heavy paper, which they will use to represent the words in a sentence that you produce – one block for each word. Model the required thought process for the children, showing them how to repeat your sentences to themselves word by word with clear pauses between each. Also encourage the children to arrange the blocks from left to right so that they begin to establish directionality.

After arranging their blocks, the group or a designated individual should be asked to repeat your sentence, pointing to each block while saying the word it represents. Then everyone repeats the sentence while pointing to each of their blocks.

At first, all sentences should be short (two or three words). Once the children have become comfortable with the activity, however, longer sentences should be introduced as the children should be led to observe that longer sentences have more words.

Again, care should be taken to use one-syllable words until after they have learned about syllables. This activity should then be revisited to reinforce their ability to distinguish syllables from words.

Example of sentences:

The cow eats.

The mouse can jump.

The boy is hurt.

The girl will dance.

She runs fast.

The spoon is on the floor.

2. **Giant Steps.**
Line up the children side-by-side. Read a stimulus sentence of 3 to 6 words in length. Each child in turn takes one giant step toward a designated goal for each word as he repeats the sentence.