

Phonemic Awareness

Hearing Sounds in Words

When children are learning about words, they need to be able to hear all the sounds in a word and figure out what letters make those sounds. Then they need to learn what order the sounds are in. This means that they need to hear the sounds of letters in the word and then blend those sounds together to read the word. Teachers call this Phonemic Awareness.

Taking words apart and putting them back together helps children learn how to read and write. Children often need to practice these skills over and over before they get good at them.

Here are some fun games that help children practice phonemic awareness:

Going on a Trip

Tell your child that Lee is going on a trip. He is putting things in a suitcase to take with him. All the things he is packing start with the "L" sound (Make the "L" sound rather than reading the letter).

One thing Lee is taking is a lamp because it starts with the "L" sound. Find the drawing of the suitcase with the "L" on it. Write "lamp" on the suitcase. Have your child write other things on the suitcase that start with the "L" sound. It's okay if your child writes something silly - like "lizard," or if he doesn't spell the word right. The idea is to help him think about words that start with the "l" sound. If your child gets stuck, give him a suggestion, and then get him to think of more words that start with the "L" sound to write on the suitcase.

"L" lamb, lamp, lace, llama, lollipop, leaf, lemon, letter, light, lime, lizard, log

If your child makes a mistake and writes a word on the suitcase that does not start with the "L" sound, ask him to say the word and listen to see if it starts with the "L" sound. He can cross the word out if it doesn't start with the "L" sound.



Going on a Trip (continued)

Once your child gets good at thinking of words that start with the "L" sound, try packing the other suitcases. Each has a different sound written on it. Here are the sounds and some words to suggest if your child can't think of any.

- "W" wand, wagon, wolf, walrus, watch, water, wing, worm
- "K" carrot, cake, cat, cork, cracker, clock, coat, key, kite, koala, crayon
- "S" cellphone, circus, circle, city, sock, sail, salt, sand, saxophone, sun



Squirrel Search

Tell your child that you are going to play a fun game called Squirrel Search. Have your child cut out the pictures of nuts with words on them that end with a "p" or "t" sound. Cut out the large "p" and the large "t" and tape them to the side of a bowl or basket. Put the nuts with words on a floor or table so you and your child can see them. Put the baskets with "p" and "t" in front of your child.

Tell your child that Sally Squirrel is looking for nuts to put in her winter home. The only nuts she can pick today have a word on them that ends in a "p" sound (Make the "puh" sound rather than reading the letter) or a "t" sound. Again, make the "tuh" sound instead of reading the letter. You may need to show her one example, such as the nut with "chip" written on it. Have her put the nut with "chip" in the "p" basket. Then, have her go through the other nuts with words on them and put them in the "p" or "t" basket according to the sound at the end of the word. Have her say the words as she picks up the nuts and puts them in the basket.

If she makes a mistake, ask her to say the word and ask what sound is at the end of the word. Then find the basket with that sound and put the nut in that basket.



Words:

- p Chip, cap, hope, jump, pup, rope, tape, top
- t Ant, cat, hot, late, night, vote, wait, white

Squirrel Search (continued)

Once she has picked out all the words ending in the "p" or the "t" sound, cut out the nuts with words that end in "d" and "f." Cut out the large "d" and the large "f" and tape each to the outside of a bowl or basket. If she isn't too tired, play the game again with these new words. The "f" sound is a little tricky because it may be made by the letter "f" or the letters "ph" or "gh." Have her say each word as she picks up the word nut and puts it in the basket. Practice until she is good at finding words that end with these letters. You can make more nut game cards with words ending in other letters.

Words:

- d Said, wade, hid, head, ride, dad, proud, dude
- f Graph, fluff, cough, laugh, staff, calf, gulf, tough



Beginning Blends Bingo

This activity focuses on "sound blends" at the beginning of words. By a "sound blend" we mean when two or more consonants go together to make a unique sound, like the "ch" in chip or the "st" in step. Included with this Tip Sheet are 3 BINGO cards that each have 9 beginning sounds on them. There also are sheets of words with the beginning sounds that will need to be cut out. Have your child cut out the beginning sound blends words and put them in a hat, bag, or other container. Explain to your child that when he gets all 3 beginning sounds in a row or column on his BINGO card, it is called BINGO and he has won the game.



Ask your child to pick a word from the hat and have him read the word out loud. Then have him see if he has the beginning sound on his bingo card. Have him put the word on the sound. Keep doing this until your child gets BINGO.

Once your child gets good at BINGO, have him get all 9 beginning sounds on the sheet to win. This is called Blackout.

For a more challenging game, put 18 or all 27 beginning sound words in the hat. Have your child take a word from the hat and see if the same beginning sound is on his BINGO card. If so, have him put the word on the sound. Remember, the idea is to have fun with this activity, so invite other family members to join the game and play with all 3 BINGO cards

and all 27 words.

Grades 2-3

Ending Sounds Match

In this game, children learn about "sound blends" at the end of words. A sound blend is when two or more consonants go together to make a unique sound, like the "ch" in witch or the "st" in fist. In this activity, children look for matches of the ending sounds of words. Cut out the Ending Sounds Match picture cards pages by first cutting them down the middle. Give half of each page to you child and keep half for yourself. You will have two of each sound (dish, trash) and your child will have the other two (fish, brush). Cut out all of the cards and put a number 1 on the back of your cards and a number 2 on the back of your child's cards. This will make it easier to sort the cards when you play again. Shuffle the cards.



To play, each of you turns a picture card face up from your deck at the same time. If the pictures end with the same sound, the first person to recognize and say "match" gets the pair. For example, you might turn over the picture of a "brush" and she might turn over the picture of a "fish." Do they end in the same sound? Yes, both words end with the "sh" sound. The first person to recognize this would say "Match" and gets to keep the pair.

If the pictures do not match, each person puts the card back in their decks. Turn over another set until a match occurs. Keep playing until all the pictures have been matched by their ending sound. If your child likes this game, play it again another day.

Watch Families Doing Activities

To watch families doing these activities, please go to: www.schoolsuccesslibrary.com and click on the "Parents" link at the top of the page. Next, click on "Literacy Resources". Then, click on the button that matches your child's age group. Scroll down the page and click on the video that goes with this tip sheet. Other tip sheets and videos are there as well.

More Ideas

If you and your child enjoy these activities, tell your child's teacher. The teacher may have more ideas to share for learning fun at home. If your child is having a hard time with these activities, you also can talk to your child's teacher. There may be other activities to help.



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