

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 say the sounds of each letter 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 learn phonemic awareness:

Do You Have a Hat?

Tell your child that you are going to make a sound and he has to think of something around the house that ENDS with that sound. For example, if you give him the -t- sound, he might think of a hat, a pet, a plate or anything else that ends with the -t- sound. Once he has thought of something that ends with the -t- sound, pick a different letter sound and see if he can think of something in the house that ends with that sound. Be sure to say the sound and not the letter. A few examples are provided.

For more fun, you also can try this activity while driving in the car or while at the grocery store.



Sound

-t-
-sh-
-p-
-m-
-r-
-k-
-l-
-n-
-g-
-b-
-s-
-d-
-ch-
-f-
-v-
-i-
-e-
-a-
-th-

Examples

hat, cat, plate, carpet
dish, fish, brush, trash
cup, mop, clip, ketchup
thumb, arm, broom, room
door, chair, car, marker
book, fork, bike, truck
bowl, table, oil, ball
can, pan, phone, chin
egg, rug, dog, flag
knob, tub, bulb, crib
dress, bus, bags, grass
bed, bread, dad, food
couch, bleach, peach, lunch
leaf, roof, scarf, shelf
stove, love, hive, wave
fly, tie, pie, sky
tree, baby, tea, me
tray, clay, hay, play
bath, mouth, tooth, cloth

Can You Match the Beginning Sounds?

Included with this Tip Sheet are some sheets with Can you Match the Beginning Sounds at the top of the page. Find the Beginning Sounds 1 sheet and help your child cut out all of the pictures and put them in a bowl. Have her reach into the bowl and pick out one picture. Ask her what it is and what sound it starts with. Have her find a picture on the Beginning Sounds 2 sheet with the same BEGINNING sound. For example, if she picks out the picture of the hat, ask her "what sound does hat start with?" See if she can find the picture on sheet 2 that also starts with the -h- sound, the hand.

If she has trouble finding the matching sound, ask her to point to the first picture on the Beginning Sound 2 Sheet, the mouse. Have her say the beginning sound -m- and ask her if that picture starts with the -h- sound. Have her point to each picture and say the beginning sound until she has found a match. When she has found a match, she can put the pictures together. Do this until she has matched all 6 pictures. There is a separate sheet for parents with answers for this game.



Can You Match the Ending Sounds?

When she has matched all of the beginning sounds, help her cut out the pictures on the Ending Sounds 1 sheet. Again, put these 6 pictures into a bowl. Have her pick out one picture. Then ask her what it is and what sound it ENDS with. She may say the beginning sound instead of the ending sound. If she needs help, say the word slowly with her. For example, if she picks out the picture of the cat, say the sounds together slowly -c- -a- -t-, then ask her what sound comes at the END. Some children have a difficult time knowing what sound comes at the end so you may have to tell her that the -t- sound comes at the end. Then ask her to find the picture that also ends with the -t- sound on the Ending Sounds 2 sheet, the boat. Give her as much help as she needs until she can do this activity on her own.



Sound Boxes

Attached to this Tip Sheet are the Sound Box Letter Sheets and Picture Sheets. Start with Letter Sheet 1 and help your child cut out the letters one row at a time. Mix up the letters for the first word, bat, and put them on the table. Show him the picture of the bat on Picture Sheet 1, and ask him what sounds are in the word. Say -b- -a- -t- to him slowly, saying each sound before going on to the next sound in the word. Ask him to find the letters that go with the sounds he hears and put them in the right order in the boxes next to the picture. If your child needs help, ask him what the first sound is that he hears and then repeat just the first sound. See if he can find the letter that goes with this first sound. Do the same with the middle and ending sounds until he finds the right letters.

Once he has put the -b-, -a-, and -t- in the right boxes, have him cut out the next row of letters and do the same thing with the next picture on Picture Sheet 1. When he can do all three words without help, try spreading all of the letters from Letter Sheet 1 out on the table and see if he can find the right letters for each picture.

Try this with Letter Sheet 2 and Picture Sheet 2.



Kindergarten and 1st Grade

Once your child is ready for a more difficult activity, try this one:

Make Your Own Words

Find the *Make Your Own Word* sheet included with this Tip Sheet. Help your child cut out just the first two rows of letters and put each row on the table. Ask her to put some letters together to make a word. Once she has put together a word, ask her to read the word to you.

If she is having problems, show her how to put 3 or 4 letters together to form a word. Then read the word together. Now, have her try again to make a word on her own.

Ask "what would happen if you took the first letter away and put a new letter there instead? Can you make a new word?" For example, if she puts the "c", "a", and "t" together to make the word cat, have her take away the "c". What happens if she puts the letter "p" there (p-a-t) or the "h" (h-a-t) instead? Did she make a new word? Have her try this a few times with different words until she can make new words by switching the first letter.

What if she takes away the last letter? Are there any other letters that work to make a new word? If she makes the word cat, what happens if she takes away the "t", and puts the letter "n" there (c-a-n), or the "p" (c-a-p) instead? What other words can she make with the letters?

After she is able to make new words by switching the last letter, cut out the rest of the letters. Put out all of the letters and see what words she can make. It is okay if she spells words wrong as she puts letters together, such as "shu" for "shoe.". The activity is to help her learn about sounds in words. She will get better at spelling as she has more practice.

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.



STRIVING READERS



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