

Understanding Phonological Awareness

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Phonological Awareness: A Definition *(cont.)*

Key Points About Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to attend to and manipulate the sounds of spoken language.

- Phonological awareness is about spoken language, not written language.
- Phonological awareness is about the sounds of spoken language, not the meaning of spoken language.
- Phonological awareness encompasses any size unit of sound, including syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes.
- Phonological awareness involves the ability to perform a variety of cognitive operations (such as matching, synthesis, and analysis) on sound units.

Sometimes there is confusion about the terms *phonological awareness*, *phoneme awareness*, and *phonics*. These terms are not synonymous and are not used interchangeably. Both phonological awareness and phoneme awareness refer to an insight about the sound structure of

spoken language. Phoneme awareness is a subset of phonological awareness; it is one type of phonological awareness. Phonics is a method of teaching reading that draws learners' attention to the relationship between sounds and the letters that represent them.

Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
phonological awareness	the ability to attend to and manipulate any size unit of sound in spoken language
phoneme awareness	the ability to attend to and manipulate the smallest unit of sound in spoken language, the phoneme
phonics	a method of teaching reading that focuses on the relationship between sounds and the letters that represent them

Phonological Awareness: A Definition *(cont.)*

Phonological Awareness Tasks

Task	Syllable	Onset-rime	Phoneme
Matching	Do these start the same? <i>sandwich,</i> <i>sandbag</i> (yes)	Do these start the same? <i>start, stand</i> (yes)	Do these start the same? <i>city, sunshine</i> (yes—both words start with the /s/ sound)
Blending	What word would we have if we put these parts together? <i>/pŭmp/—/kĭn/</i> (<i>pumpkin</i>)	What word would we have if we put these parts together? <i>/pl/—/āne/</i> (<i>plane</i>)	What word would we have if we put these parts (or sounds) together? <i>/f/—/r/—/ŏ/—/g/</i> (<i>frog</i>)
Isolating/ Identifying (partial segmentation)	What do you hear at the beginning of <i>under</i> ? <i>(ŭn/)</i>	What do you hear at the beginning of <i>black</i> ? <i>(bl/)</i>	What do you hear at the beginning of <i>bug</i> ? <i>(b/)</i>
Segmentation	What are the parts (beats or syllables) you hear in this word: <i>table</i> ? <i>(tā/—/bəl/)</i>	What are the parts you hear in this word: <i>spoon</i> ? <i>(sp/—/ōn/)</i>	What are all the sounds you hear in this word: <i>dog</i> ? <i>(d/—/ŏ/—/g/)</i>
Deletion	Say <i>napkin</i> without the /kĭn/. (<i>nap</i>)	Say <i>grin</i> without the /gr/. (<i>in</i>)	Say <i>meat</i> without the /m/. (<i>eat</i>)
Substitution	What word would we have if we changed the /bā/ in <i>baby</i> to /mā/? (<i>maybe</i>)	What word would we have if we changed the /bl/ in <i>black</i> to /cr/? (<i>crack</i>)	What word would we have if we changed the /ch/ in <i>chain</i> to /r/? (<i>rain</i>)

Tips for Success

Phonological awareness is a crucial foundation of literacy and those who work with young children have a key role in promoting its development. Addressing phonological awareness development should be an enjoyable, positive and purposeful endeavor. As you implement the activities in this book, please keep the following in mind.

1. Be playful.

- Young children embrace and learn much through play. In the early childhood setting, phonological awareness instruction should be playful. As you engage children with the activities in this book, smile and laugh. Capitalize on children's interest in fun. Children are more likely to engage in activities that they find enjoyable.
- Be creative and encourage children's creativity. Use your imagination and prompt children to experiment with sounds in many ways throughout the day.

2. Be explicit.

- Draw children's attention to the sound play and talk about the sounds and the sound manipulations in the activities. Explain and model. Provide plenty of examples and guidance. Do not assume that children will grasp the phonological manipulations in the activities without your direct input.
- Be attentive to children's responses and provide appropriate and specific feedback, affirming or gently correcting children's responses and providing additional explanations, examples, and support as needed.

3. Ensure rich exposure.

- Engage children in the activities more than once. They can be enjoyed repeatedly over the course of weeks.
- Be sensitive to individual differences and consider which activities are most appropriate for which children, but do not assume that children who are quieter are not benefitting from the exposure. Do not demand mastery of one activity before sharing another.
- Recognize that phonological awareness can be fostered throughout the day in a variety of contexts. Continue to play with sounds after the children have enjoyed an activity.

4. Pronounce sounds with care.

- If you are unsure of the pronunciation of a sound, check with a friend or colleague.
- Avoid adding /ŭ/ to the end of sounds. The phoneme /h/, not the syllable /hŭ/, is what we hear at the beginning of *hot*. Think about the confusion that is created when a child is told that the sounds /hŭ/-/ŏ/-/tŭ/ make the word *hot*. Actually, they make the nonsense word *huhotuh*. Use the same care with the pronunciation of any size sound unit. For example, the onset /st/ (as in *stop*) should not be pronounced /stŭ/.
- When stretching a sound (such as /mmmm/), avoid changing the pitch. A sing-song like presentation of a sound can be confusing.

Tips for Success (cont.)

Each section begins with a descriptive overview of the objectives. Then, a chart of all the activities is included to show the target skill for each activity.

Word Awareness

Word awareness—the awareness that sentences, phrases, and compounds consist of individual words—is more of a meaning-based understanding than an appreciation of the phonological structure of spoken language. However, word awareness activities do demand that children know their attention on components of their language. This word-awareness instruction may support children's ability to notice and manipulate phonological units. In this section we include eight activities that focus on word awareness. You may wish to review the comments about word awareness in the introduction of this book.

Activity	Primary Task			
	blend	segment	delete	substitution
Hopping Game		x		
Moving Blocks		x		
Words Around a Circle		x		
Robot Speak	x	x		
Guess My Word	x			
Don't Say It!			x	
Five Little Monkeys			x	
	x			x

Every activity includes the standard(s) addressed, a description of its purpose, and a brief overview.

Hide It

Standard: Children know that words are made up of sounds and syllables.

Purpose
To segment words into syllables; to delete the first or final syllable from words.

Overview
In this activity pictures are cut into pieces for each syllable in the word to help children delete syllables from words. Use this activity after children have played Cut It Apart (pages 72–73).

Home Connection
Invite children to take cut cards home to show their families. Some children will wish to share the picture parts and put them together like a puzzle as they say the object names. Others may wish to engage their families in the deletion activity. Encourage children to bring pictures from home to share, cut apart, and use in a deletion game with you.

Materials
picture cards that have been cut into pieces (one piece for each syllable in the word)

Procedure

- Review the Cut It Apart activity with children. Select one picture and display its separate parts. Ask children to identify the picture and say its name, breaking the word into syllables. For example, display a picture you say the syllables. For example, display a picture of an elephant that has been cut into three parts. Point to one part at a time as you say each syllable: /el/—/e/—/fant/. Repeat this several times.
- Tell children that you will turn one of the parts face down and together you will say only the parts that remain face up. Begin by turning the first syllable remain face up. Begin by turning the first syllable remain face down. Point to the other two cards as you (fant) face down. When you point to the say the syllables /el/ and /e/. When you point to the overturned card, cover your mouth and say nothing.
- Repeat this several times with other picture cards, encouraging children to join you.

Modify or Extend

- When appropriate, repeat the activity, but delete the first syllable instead of the final syllable.
- Make the cards available for independent play.

The materials needed are shown (including whether they are available on the Teacher Resource CD), and a simple step-by-step procedure is provided. In addition, ways to modify or extend the activity to accommodate diverse learners are included.


The Home Connection shows you how to empower families to reinforce these skills.


We provide a sample of the activity materials or we offer suggested sentences or words for each activity to help you prepare.

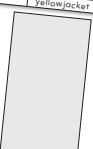
Hide It (cont.)

Sample Words

Two Syllables		Three or More Syllables	
apple	mitten	applesauce	porcupine
baby	peapod	banana	radio
butter	pencil	bananaburg	raspberry
cactus	pizza	dinosaur	referee
candle	rabbit	elephant	restaurant
candy	raccoon	firefighter	storybook
carrot	sandwich	hamburger	strawberry
chicken	sweater	tiger	sunflower
crayon	tiger	topfibruah	telephone
doctor	turtle	lollipop	thermometer
donkey	water	magazine	tornado
bucket	yo-yo	newspaper	umbrella
ladder	zebra	octopus	vehicle
marker	zipper	octopus	xylophone
		pajamas	yellowjacket


el

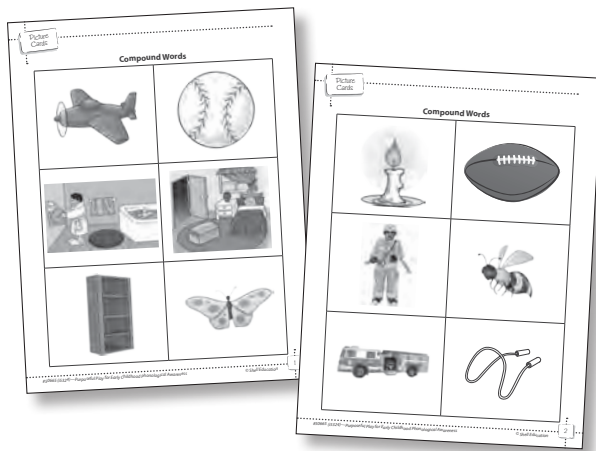

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phant

Tips for Success *(cont.)*

Picture Cards

Many of the activities recommend using picture cards. Download pictures from the Internet, find them in magazines or other print sources, or borrow pictures from existing materials in your class. Sample picture cards are included with many activities, and more are available on the Teacher Resource CD.

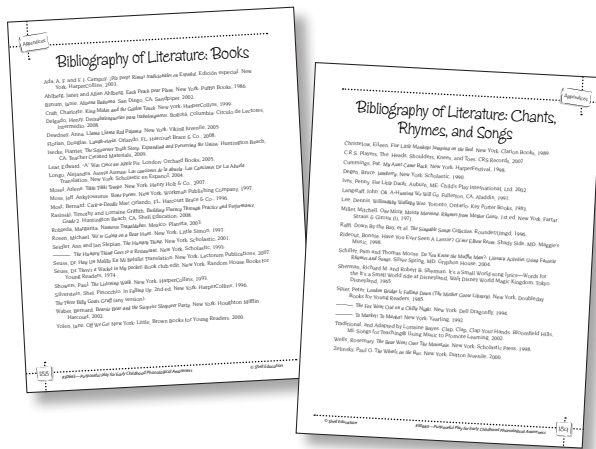


Letter to Families

A sample letter is provided (in English and Spanish) on pages 30–31, and also on the Teacher Resource CD, to show how you can introduce families to the kinds of activities being used in class and to begin building a relationship for a strong home connection.

Children's Literature

Some of the activities in this book rely on children's literature, chants, poems, and songs. We list the books and titles in a bibliography section at the end of the book (pages 188–189). Take time to gather these materials and become familiar with them in advance.



Hide It

Purpose

To segment words into syllables; to delete the first or final syllable from words

Overview

In this activity pictures are cut into pieces (one piece for each syllable in the word) to help children delete syllables from words. Use this activity after children have played Cut It Apart (pages 72–73).

Materials

picture cards that have been cut into pieces (one piece for each syllable in the word)

Procedure

1. Review the Cut It Apart activity with children. Select one picture and display its separate parts. Ask children to identify the picture and say its name, breaking the word into syllables. Point to parts as you say the syllables. For example, display a picture of an elephant that has been cut into three parts. Point to one part at a time as you say each syllable: /ěl/—/ə/—/fənt/. Repeat this several times.
2. Tell children that you will turn one of the parts face down and together you will say only the parts that remain face up. Begin by turning the final syllable (fənt) face down. Point to the other two cards as you say the syllables /ěl/ and /ə/. When you point to the overturned card, cover your mouth and say nothing.
3. Repeat this several times with other picture cards, encouraging children to join you.

Home Connection

Invite children to take cut cards home to show their families. Some children will wish to share the picture parts and put them together like a puzzle as they say the object names. Others may wish to engage their families in the deletion activity. Encourage children to bring pictures from home to share, cut apart, and use in a deletion game with you.

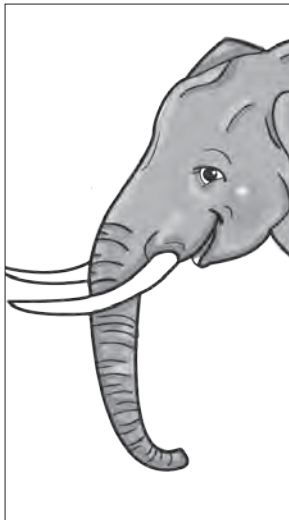
Modify or Extend

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- Make the cards available for independent play.

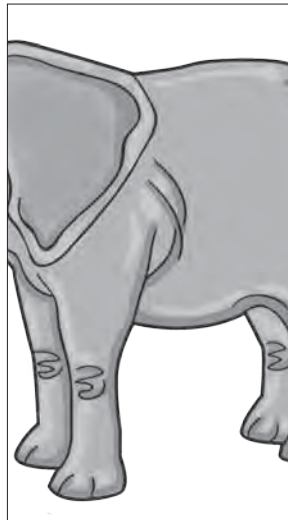
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Sample Words

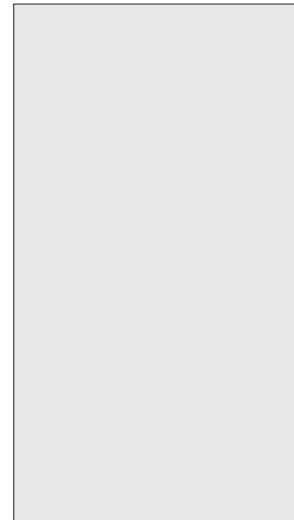
Two Syllables		Three or More Syllables	
apple	mitten	applesauce	porcupine
baby	peapod	banana	radio
butter	pencil	cantaloupe	raspberry
cactus	pizza	dinosaur	referee
candle	rabbit	elephant	restaurant
candy	raccoon	firefighter	storybook
carrot	sandwich	grocery	strawberry
chicken	sweater	hamburger	sunflower
crayon	tiger	kangaroo	telephone
doctor	toothbrush	lollipop	thermometer
donkey	turtle	magazine	tornado
jacket	water	newspaper	umbrella
ladder	yo-yo	octagon	vehicle
lemon	zebra	octopus	xylophone
marker	zipper	pajamas	yellowjacket



el



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