PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS FOR 3-5 YEARS

Phonological awareness is hearing the sounds of language. Reading actually begins in children’s ears. Phonological awareness starts early as children play with words. They develop an awareness that words can sound the same or different or they can rhyme. Then they hear that words can be broken into parts like syllables, beginning and ends of words, then into individual sounds which is phonemic awareness.

This awareness is not automatic, it must be taught. Kids who have reading difficulties also have low levels of phonological development. Good reading skills and strong phonological skills are highly correlated. The good news is if your child didn’t get these skills early on for whatever reason, they can still learn them at any age. When we play with sounds, we are training the brain to read.

The wonderful part is that I bet you are already doing some of these things and didn’t know you were training phonological awareness. You’ll see you’re an expert in some areas, others need brushing up and hopefully there are new ideas for you to try. Remember to always have fun with any activity you choose to do. Let’s get going!!!.

IDEAS

1. PICTURE BOOKS
   Read a multiplicity of picture books. Talk about the pictures as well as read the story. Label or have your child label names of objects, actions, object whereabouts colors shapes, sizes as you point or he points to various pictures. Label using sentences, so your child gets a feel for the flow of language. Make your responses are varied. Don’t get stuck on colors. Check out my blog on how to read books to kids.

   Picture Book Lists – These are only suggestions, you might find something great.
   abcjesuslovesme.com
   preschoolrainbow.org
   silkysteps.com

2. RHYMING PICTURE BOOKS
   Read many books with lots of rhymes and rhythms which helps build early sound awareness. Children begin to learn likenesses and differences in sounds. Don’t forget to

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read with the rhythm of the book. Facial expressions and voice inflections count. Kids love it!!!

Rhyming Book Lists – Libraries are a great resource.
exodusbooks.com
htnotimeforflashcards.com

Read nursery rhymes and poems. Nursery rhymes like “Hey Diddle Diddle, Hickory Dickory Dock, Little Miss Muffet, Humpty Dumpty and Jack and Jill are just a few that should be in your child’s repertoire.

So you say you don’t remember any rhymes…the internet is the place for you.
nurseryrhymes4u.com
prekinders.com (printable posters with pictures and words)
state.lib.la.us (make mini books with your nursery rhymes)
dltk-teach.com (posters, pictures, and activities)

Favorite Books of Nursery Rhymes include:
Best Mother Goose Books
Favorite Nursery Rhymes from Mother Goose
Orchard Book of Nursery Rhymes

As you read rhyming books, point out the rhymes to kids. “Jack and Jill went up the hill. Listen Jill and hill, they rhyme.” After you have read the rhyme or book several times, say the first word that rhymes and leave off the second. See if your child can supply the word. “Jack and Jill went up the ____.” (remember, repetition, repetition, repetition)

**Rhyming Games**
Around 4 years, you can make some rhyming games.
Play match games turning over words that rhyme to make a match.
Make cards and play fish. Asks for word that rhymes with ___”
Which one doesn’t rhyme – 2 pictures that rhyme, one that doesn’t
prekinders.com (rhyming pictures and games)
readingrockets.org (rhyming pics and games)
pre-kpages.com (rhyming pictures and games)
resources.sparklebox.me.uk (Rhyming Bingo)
carlscorner.us.com Race for the Rhyme game
makinglearningfun.com (Rhyming Game)
carlscorner.us.com (Rhyming Game – which ones rhyme which ones don’t)

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When you’re waiting, or riding in the car, play rhyming games. “Let’s think of what rhymes with cat. “cat, bat, hat, wat, yat, zat” Yes, make up words as long as they rhyme.

3. **FINGER PLAYS**
Finger plays are short poems or stories that add actions to words. Young children love to participate in the story. Actions help children focus their attention and increase their understanding of the words they are using. Even parents can have fun. Finger plays include 5 Little Monkeys, Going on a Bear Hunt,

Finger Play Internet sites
[mdpls.org](http://mdpls.org)  
[rif.org](http://rif.org)  
[piercecountylibrary.org](http://piercecountylibrary.org)

4. **SONGS**
Sing songs even if your voice isn’t normal and doesn’t carry a tune. “Singing is a celebration of sound.” Most children love singing, dancing and listening to music. Singing is a naturally fun activity, that allows you to play with the sounds of language. You can sing nonsense words, animal sounds, rhyming words, words that begin with the same sound or you can manipulate sounds within words. Since you sing songs over and over, you repeat patterns over and over again. Itsy Bitsy Spider. Old MacDonald [scholastic.com](http://scholastic.com)

Song Internet Sites
[theteachersguide.com](http://theteachersguide.com) (includes youtube video)
[gardenofsong.com](http://gardenofsong.com)
[mightybook.com](http://mightybook.com)
[youtube.com](http://youtube.com) (Christian Songs)

5. **SOUND AWARENESS AND SOUND DISCRIMINATION**

Around 2 years you can create listening games to help improve sound awareness. Play the game of identifying what sounds they can hear when you say stop. “I hear the timer beeping. I hear water running. Do you hear the TV?” Create your own listening games. Have your child close his eyes and listen while you make a sound. Have him identify what sound that is. Some ideas include

Banging on the table       opening a door       hammering  
Blowing a whistle         ringing a bell         whistling

Our website:  [fourseedlings.com](http://fourseedlings.com)
Blowing your nose       clapping       clicking tongue

Print animal pictures and lay them out on the floor. Your child must find the animal when you make the sound. sparklebox.co.uk

You can also add sounds to any book you are reading. If the story has a truck in it, you’ll create delight if you add truck sounds as you read.

Around 4 years, you can say two words, then ask your child if they are the same or different. Make them single syllable words. Start off with totally different words like “car hat”. Then make the words closer “car/cat” You can play this game anywhere. Make sure you say the same word occasionally so you keep them honest.

locutour.com - Here are some word lists, but I recommend you just think of words on your own.

6. SOUNDS IN SENTENCES
About 4 years you can begin teaching a young child that sentences are made up of words. It’s easiest for a child to hear single syllable words first. You can play this game anywhere – waiting in the doctor’s office, riding in the car. Say the sentence and clap the words. “I like hot dogs. Where’s the dog food?” Clap the words then count how many words your child heard. You may need to spread the words apart initially. You can have fun with this by jumping the words, or climb stairs as you say the words, then count how many stairs. Don’t worry if your child doesn’t get it at first. Repetition. Repetition. Repetition. (Don’t be afraid of that word.)

7. SOUNDS IN SYLLABLES
Again around 4, after they hear how many words are in a sentence, we move to a smaller segment of the word, the syllable. Play the game anywhere. Say the word and clap the syllables. “dog, cookie, shoe, table.” Start with one or two syllables until your child gets the idea, then move to three, then four. After four, they are usually experts. You can then have fun clapping longer words.

Make the game personal – clap family names, clap body parts, clap star war characters or princesses or clap words from a book you are reading. As always don’t panic when they don’t get it at first. Don’t give up. Never give up. Brain in training here.”

8. AUDITORY SEQUENTIAL MEMORY

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Auditory sequential memory is the ability to remember specific information in the correct order to solve a problem. This involves mostly short term memory. So you say, “How can this relate to reading?” In order for a child to sound out a word, he must remember the sounds in order, “/d/ /o/ /g/ dog could become /g/ /o/ /d/ god without sequential memory. Obviously for /d/ /a/ /d/ sequential memory wouldn’t matter.

Hide objects around your house. Have your child follow two step directions to find the objects. “It’s hiding in your bedroom under the bed. Look behind the couch in the family room.” Have them follow silly directions – “Stand up and jump up and down. Touch your nose and then your toes. Clap your hands and turn around.”

9. AUDITORY BLENDING
Words are made up of individual Sounds. This is the process of putting those sounds together to form words. /c/ /a/ /t/ blends together to form the word “cat.” We are going to start simple at this age. Being able to blend individual sounds together comes in around age 5, but around 4, we can start the process.

Lay out pictures of familiar 3 letter words. Ask your child to find the right picture. Say the first sound, then the rest of the word. /c/ /at/. When your child is getting these easily, move to longer words. If your child doesn’t get it, repeat the question and you find the picture. “ /c/ /at/. Yes /c/ /at/ says cat.” http://kellyskindergarten.com/ (printable pictures)

HAVE FUN

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