

Phonological Awareness Activities

What is Phonological Awareness?

The awareness of all of the sounds of language. It is the ability to hear and distinguish sounds.

Phonological awareness skills develop with age and are required for children to be able to make letters and sounds go together in words.

These skills are intrinsic to reading and writing.

For children with speech sound difficulties, phonological awareness skills need to be in place before we can expect them to use new sounds in words.

Developmental Progression of Phonological Awareness

Age	Developmental progression of phonological skills	Print experience		
4 (Nursery and Reception)	Nursery rhymes			
	Rhyme recognition			
	Syllable blending			
	Syllable recognition			
5 (Reception and Year 1)	Alliteration	Learning Letters		
	Beginning sound matching			
	Onset-rime segmentation			
	Rhyme production			
5 ½ (Year 1)	Syllable manipulation		Building sight vocabulary	Developing decoding skills
	Identification of beginning and end phonemes			
	Phoneme blending			
	Phoneme segmentation			
6 (Year 1 to Year 2)	Phoneme addition			
	Phoneme deletion			
	Phoneme substitution			

To develop phonological awareness skills it is important to begin with more general types of listening skills and bigger 'chunks' and gradually move to smaller 'chunks' until children learn to listen to and use individual sounds of language.

Ref: Muter (2003) Early Reading Development and Dyslexia. London. Whurr.

Nursery Rhymes

Activity Ideas

- Sing nursery rhymes together
- Sit facing the child so they can see your mouth moving
- Be animated and make it fun! Use gestures and use different voices to make it exciting
- 'chunk' the parts together, leaving gaps between phrases
- Emphasise the rhyming words

- When the child is familiar with a nursery rhyme, try leaving out a rhyming word to see if the child can remember it

Twinkle Twinkle Chocolate Bar

***Twinkle Twinkle Chocolate Bar,
My daddy drives a rusty car.
Pull the lever, push the choke,
Off we go in a puff of smoke.
Twinkle, Twinkle Chocolate Bar,
My dad drives a rusty car.***

Teddy bear, Teddy bear

***Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch your nose,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, point to your toes;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light,
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say goodnight.***

Rhyme Recognition

Important:

Make sure the child understands the concepts “same” and “different” before starting!

Remember that the focus is on the child being able to HEAR the rhyming words, so don't worry if they can't say them properly.

Activity Ideas

- Use a selection of objects / pictures or ready-made age appropriate rhyming games
- Make it fun. You could pull 2 objects out of a feely bag / magic box, or play 'pairs' where the pictures are all facing down and you take turns to turn them over
- Sit facing each other so you can see and hear each other properly
- Make sure you have the child's full attention before saying the words
- The adult says two words and the child decides if they rhyme or not

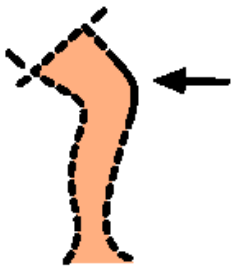
e.g. 'dog' and 'frog' – do they sound the same?

- ✓ If the child says 'yes' and gets it right, give them lots of praise and repeat the words.. “yes dog and frog sound the same”
- × If the child says 'no' and gets it wrong, then say the words again putting emphasis on the rhyming section...”listen again, dog, frog, are they the same?”

Rhyming Pairs

Pictures to cut out:

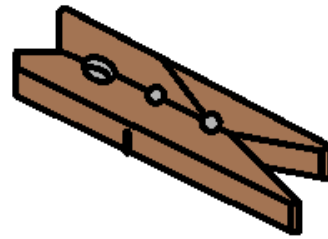
knee



bee



peg



leg



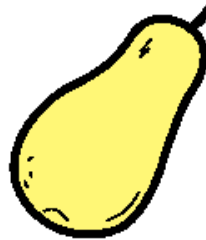
frog



dog



pear



bear



socks



fox



eye



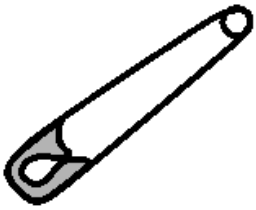
tie



Rhyming Pairs

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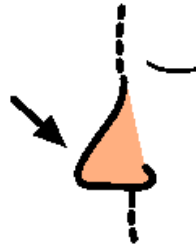
pin



bin



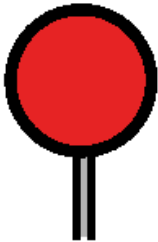
nose



toes



lolly



dolly



cat



rat



dig



pig



dark



park



Syllable Recognition and Syllable Blending

NOTE - for children finding it difficult to listen and count at the same time a 'syllable counting board' could be used to help. The child moves their finger along a board with numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 on, when it is time to answer they look which number they are on.

Activity Ideas

- It might be easier to use the word 'claps' or 'taps' when introducing syllables to the child e.g. "how many claps are in it?"
- You need to model syllables first for the child to begin to understand how you are breaking up words:
 - Try clapping out people's names e.g. 'Char-lotte'
 - Tap on the table the number of syllables in objects around you e.g. 'pen' 'pen-cil' 'ruler'
 - Point out items in books/ catalogues and identify the syllables e.g. 'aero-plane' 'sun-shine'
- When the child is ready to start identifying the syllables themselves you could try any of the ideas above or use ready made pictures to:
 - Put pictures in appropriate boxes labelled 1/2/3/4 for the number of syllables
 - Adult could say either 1,2,3 or 4 and child finds a picture with that amount of syllables
 - Use a large sized colouring in picture of an object e.g. elephant. Identify the number of syllables then let the child cut the picture into the same number of pieces
- The child will be aware of how the syllables blend together if the adult repeats the whole words back after recognising the syllables.
- For another blending task, the adult could say a word with 2 or 3 syllables leaving big gaps between them, then the child says the word e.g. 'cow.....boy' = 'cowboy'

1-Syllable Words

Pictures to cut out:

ball



hat



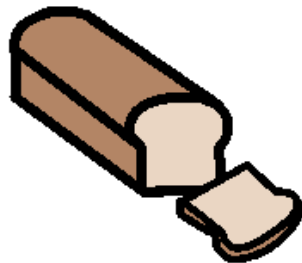
cat



cow



bread



car



boy



milk

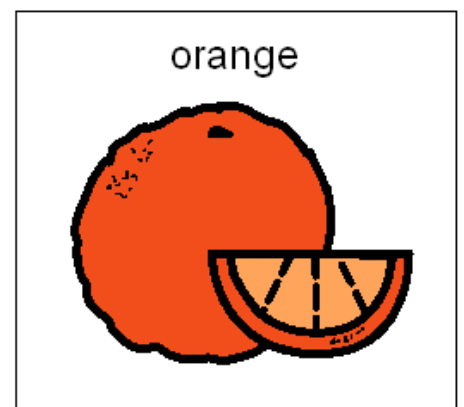
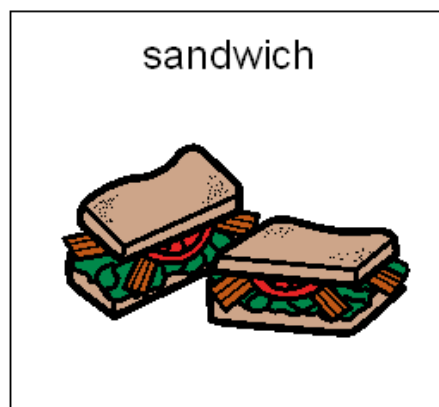
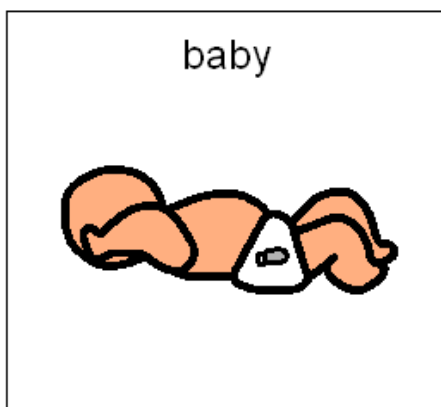
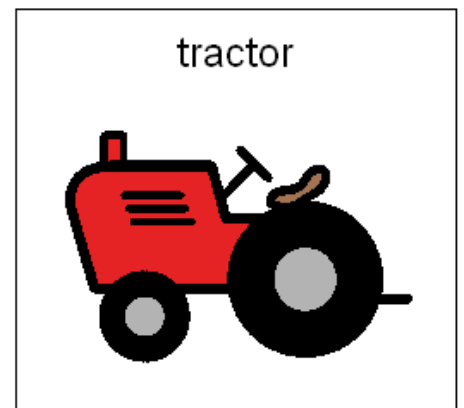
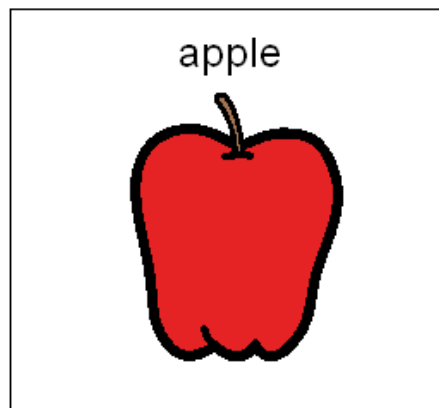
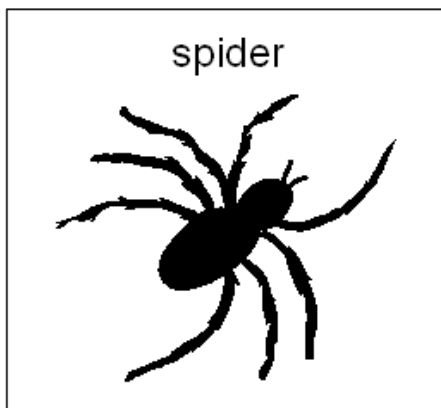
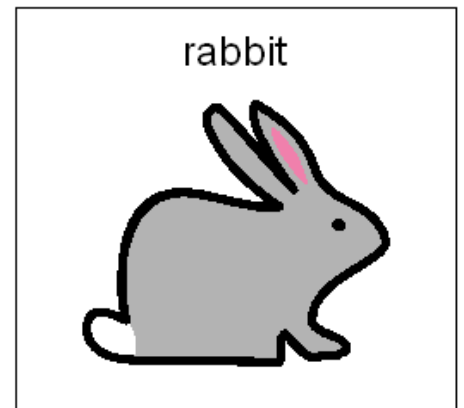
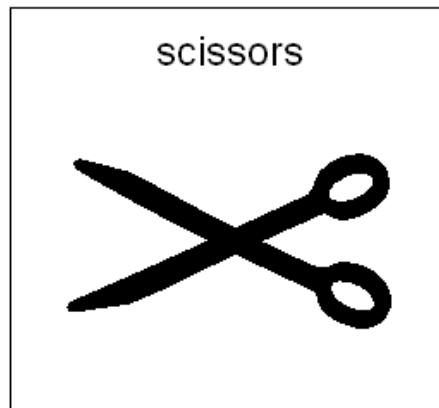
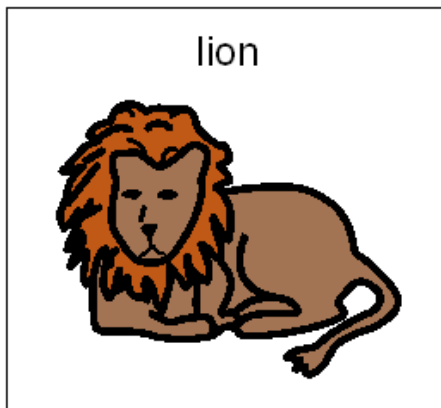


dog



2-Syllable Words

Pictures to cut out:



3-Syllable Words

Pictures to cut out:

computer



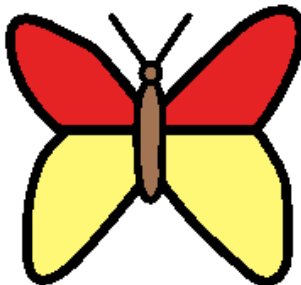
crocodile



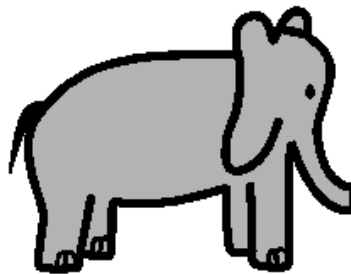
banana



butterfly



elephant



strawberry



tomato



fire engine



telephone



4-Syllable Words

Pictures to cut out:

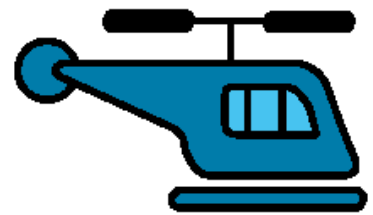
caterpillar



supermarket



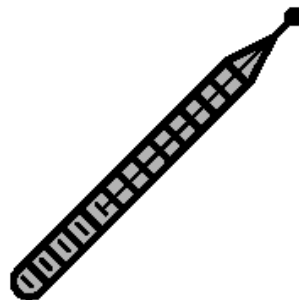
helicopter



television



thermometer



certificate



ballerina



crocodile



cauliflower



Syllable Counter:

1 2 3 4

Grapheme to Phoneme (Letter to Sound) Awareness

Important:

When working at this level it is vital to use the letter **SOUND**, not the letter **NAME**,

e.g. 's' is produced 'sssssssss', not 'ess'.

Activity Ideas For Phonics Flashcards

- **Pairs** (using 2 copies)
- **Snap** (using 2 copies)
- **Hide pictures around the room** - make a sound and the child needs to find the right picture. You could make the sound louder as the child is getting nearer to the picture
- **Stepping stones** - put the pictures on the floor. The adult says a sequence of sounds and the child steps on the correct pictures
- **Posting game** - adult says a sound, the child needs to find it and post it in a box or put it in the bag
- **Feely bag** - adult puts a selection of pictures in a bag. The child pulls a picture out without looking and the adult makes the sound
- **Sound maker** - the child could point to a sequence of sounds and the adult makes the sounds that are pointed to, each picture could be touched more than once e.g. 'p...p...k...t...b...s...s...sh...f...h'

Alliteration and Beginning Sound Matching

NOTE - children will need to have some letter-sound awareness at this stage in order to carry out alliteration activities. Make sure that the child knows what individual sounds **LOOK** like and **SOUND** like. Phonics books, pictures and flashcards can be used to develop this.

Activity Ideas

Picture games

- Use pairs of words, put the words on the table, take turns to find 2 pictures that start with the same sound.
- You could give the child 2 pictures that start with the same letter, ask them to identify the first sound, then come up with another word of their own. E.g. show them 'pig' 'pan', they think of another word e.g. 'pen'
- You could play odd-one-out games e.g. child looks at 3 pictures... 'boy' 'bear' 'cow' and decides 'cow' is the odd one out

Other games

- "I went to market..." play this game but only thinking of words that start with one sound e.g. 'bin' 'bed' 'box'
- "I spy"- people take turns to guess what the leader is thinking of by using only the first letter
- Put a selection of written letters in a box, take turns to pull one out then say as many words as you can think of starting with that letter.

Same First Sound Pairs

Pictures to cut out:

