

There's More to Reading Than ABCs

Rhyming (Sound Patterns)

Children hear, identify, and match similar word patterns. *Rhyming* is when each word ends with the same group of sounds as in “tea, bee, key, knee, we”.



Play with rhymes – make up a silly sentence about your child's name by adding a word that rhymes with your child's name (i.e. Sam likes to eat jam) and then do other people you know



Read nursery rhymes and challenge your child to listen for the rhyming words

Blending (Joining the Parts Together)

Children learn to blend syllables and sounds to form spoken words.



See if your child can figure out which word you are making when you say the two words separately (e.g. if I have “hot” and I add “dog” to it, what word did I make? “hotdog”)



Read a story and randomly choose words to break down, saying the initial sound, then pausing before the rest of the word. Children must then blend the word together before you continue with the story.



Play with words and sounds - what new word do you make when you join “bay” and “bee” = *baby*, “b” and “oat” = “boat”, “b” and “oh” and “t” = “boat”

Sequence of Sounds

(Beginning and Ending Sounds or Matching)

Children must learn to direct their attention to specific positions of sounds within a word (i.e. beginning, middle, and ending sounds).



Talk to your child about the beginnings of words (i.e. engine sounds) and sounds at the ends of words (i.e. caboose sounds). For example, each word begins or ends with the same sound as in “Lucy loves lollipops” or “soap, shop, grape”.



At breakfast time, ask your child to try and find all the things that start with the same beginning sound as “t-oast” (e.g. table, top, teeth, etc.)



Play the mystery trip game where you pack your suitcase with a variety of items that begin (or end) with the same letter. The child must guess what the letter is that they have in common.

Segmenting (Separation of Sounds)

Children must learn to divide words into separate sounds. This skill is reverse of blending, where “sound units” are combined.



Play with *words* (what little words are in “cowboy”? – “cow” and “boy”), *syllables* (what parts do you hear in “banana”? – clap with each part “ba – na – na”), and *all the sounds* (what sounds do you hear in “mouse”? – “m” – “ow” – “sss”)



Play the “I Spy” game – have your child identify “spied” objects by listening to your sound clues. For example, “I spy an object with three sounds in its name”, “I spy an object with three sounds in its name and the first is /b/, “I spy an object with three sounds in its name, the first sound is /b/, the last is /k/, etc....and it rhymes with ‘look’. Have your child try and guess after each clue.



Count the sounds – say a word and have your child hold up the number of fingers that correspond to the number of sounds they heard in each word. Use rhythm sticks to tap out the number of sounds in an objects’ name.

Manipulation of Sounds (Playing with Sounds)

This is the highest level of phonological awareness. Children manipulate sounds within words – adding, dropping, or moving sounds to form new words.



Try *adding* a sound to make a new word (adding “t” to “bow” = “boat”), *dropping* a sound to make a new word (taking away “b” from “bring” = “ring”), *substituting* different sounds to make a new word (changing “bat” to “hat” or “bat” to “back”) and *creating “silly words”* by using rhymes (changing “puppy” to “luppy”)



Draw a house with a roof that holds a variety of alphabet letters and three windows in a row below the roof. Bring down three letters, placing one in each window to spell a word. Have your child isolate and blend the sounds together to say the word. Show him/her how to substitute and take away sounds to create new words (For example: ‘bat’ to ‘cat’ or ‘at’)