



Getting Ready to Read

The Importance of Phonological Awareness



As you prepare your child for school, research tells us that one of the best things you can do is help develop their phonological awareness.

Phonological awareness is the awareness of the sound structure in our language. Children need to tune in to speech sounds and have strong phonological awareness skills in order to lay the foundations for phonics instruction when they start school.

The skills involved in phonological awareness include children's ability to rhyme, segment or break sentences into words and words into syllables, and recognise onset and rimes.

As children continue to develop the focus turns to phonemic awareness, which is an important sub-skill of phonological awareness. Before children learn how to read and write they need to understand how the sounds in words work. It is critical that they understand that we speak in syllables and that words are made up of speech sounds.

Activities to try at home with your child

Try these fun and easy activities to support your child's phonological development:

Listen to sounds

Listen to sounds in the environment, in songs, stories, in words and in speech.

Make sounds

Talk about how sounds are made with your mouth and practise making different sounds in front of the mirror. For example say, "A snake makes a 'sssss' sound."

Alphabet

Look at alphabet books and sing alphabet songs.

Identify sounds in words

Talk about sounds in words. You might focus on the sound at the start of words. For example say, "Listen, snake starts with the /s/ sound. Let's find more words that start with the /s/ sound".

Play Games like I Spy

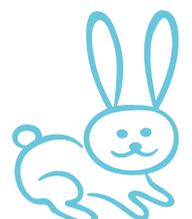
Play games like 'I Spy' and take turns to find objects that begin with a specific sound.

Syllables

Model and encourage your child to identify the number of syllables in a word by clapping, drumming or stamping their feet. For example say, "butterfly" - but - ter - fly." Ask your child to clap out their name as well as the names of siblings, pets, family members and friends.

Syllable Mystery bag

Add mystery objects to a bag and take turns pulling out objects. Get your child to take out an object, say the word and work out how many syllables it has. Variations for the game can include: Rhyme Mystery Bag - Put pairs of items into the bag. If the two objects rhyme they can keep the pair.





Sing nursery rhymes and songs

Emphasise rhythm and rhyme in songs and simple rhymes. Good examples are 'Incy Wincy Spider' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'. Nursery rhymes teach your child language, rhyme, repetition and rhythm.

Nursery Rhyme Book Recommendations:

'**Animal Crackers: Nursery Rhymes**'
by Jane Dyer

'**The Arnold Lobel Book of Mother Goose**'
by Arnold Lobel

'**Here Comes Mother Goose**'
by Iona Opie

'**Hickory Dickory Dock**'
by Keith Baker

'**Hickory, Dickory, Dock & Other Mother Goose Rhymes**'
by James Marshall

'**The Movable Mother Goose**'
by Robert Sabuda

'**The Neighborhood Mother Goose**'
by Nina Crews

'**Pocketful of Posies: A Treasury of Nursery Rhymes**'
by Salley Mavor

'**Tomie dePaola's Mother Goose**'
by Tomie dePaola

Read books together

Select books to read together that have an emphasis on sound play. That could be books with rhyme or words that start with the same sound. Explain that rhyming words sound the same because they have the same endings. For example 'top' and 'hop' both have an 'op' sound at the end. Books by Dr Seuss and Pamela Allen are a hit with many children. Try 'The Cat in the Hat' or 'Doodledum Dancing'. Re-read your favourite books as many times as possible as this is great for early language development.

Rhyming Book Recommendations:

'**Llama Llama Red Pajama**'
by Anna Dewdney

'**Barnyard Dance**'
by Sandra Boynton

'**Edward the Emu**'
by Sheena Knowles

'**The Pout-Pout Fish**'
by Deborah Diesen

'**Rhyming Dust Bunnies**'
by Jan Thomas

'**The Gruffalo**'
by Julia Donaldson

'**How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?**'
by Jane Yolen

'**Ada Twist Scientist**'
by Andrea Beaty

'**Over in the Meadow**'
by Olive A. Wadsworth



Silly sentences

Make up silly sentences where words begin with the same sound. This can be so much fun!

Silly Sentence Ideas:

- Come and clean the chaos in your closet.
- The big, bad bear scared all the baby bunnies by the bushes.
- Go and gather the green leaves on the grass.
- Please put away your paints and practice the piano.
- The boy buzzed around as busy as a bee.
- Garry grumpily gathered the garbage.
- Those lazy lizards are lying like lumps in the leaves.
- Paula planted the pretty pink poppies in the pot.
- Bake a big cake with lots of butter and bring it to the birthday bash.
- Little Larry likes licking the sticky lollipop.

For more information about enrolments or to book a tour:

St Peter's Woodlands
ELC – Yr 7

Jo Gray,
Enrolments Manager

spw.sa.edu.au

jgray@spw.sa.edu.au

T 08 7221 6217

