

# Phonological Awareness

**Phonological Awareness is one of the early literacy skills that researchers say is important for children to have in order to learn to read.**

**Phonological Awareness is the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.**



**Here are some ways you can develop or strengthen your child's ability to hear and play with sounds...**

# Babies...

**Music and movement:** Singing songs and moving to the rhythm of the music helps Baby begin to hear small sounds.

**Activity:** Put Baby on your lap or in her infant seat. Sing and use Baby's body to do the actions to the song.

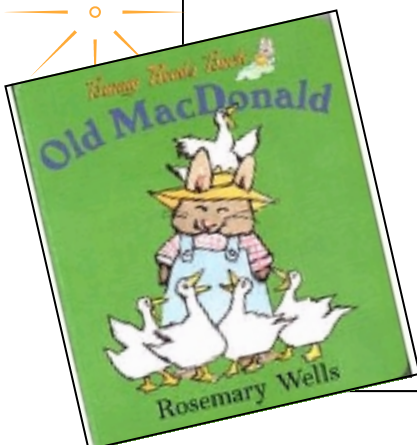
*(Sing to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush")*

This is the way we clap our hands,  
*(Clap baby's hands.)*

Clap our hands, clap our hands.  
This is the way we clap our hands,  
So early in the morning.

Additional verses:

Tap our toes  
Touch our nose  
Stomp our feet



# Babies...

## Nursery Rhymes:

Being able to hear the beginning and ending sounds that make up words will help children sound out words when they begin to read. One of the best — and most enjoyable — ways is to say nursery rhymes and sing songs.

**Activity:** Babies love to bounce! Try this rhyme with Baby while you bounce her on your lap or on your knees:

**Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John  
Went to bed with his trousers on.**

**One shoe off, one shoe on**

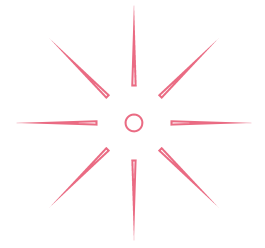
**Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John!**

*(Hold up Baby's feet one at a time as you say "one shoe off, one shoe on.")*

*Your library has lots of nursery rhyme books to read with your child!*



# Toddlers...



**Music and movement:** Singing songs with your toddler will help him hear words being broken up into smaller sounds. Don't worry about having perfect pitch!

**Activity:** Sit facing your toddler.

*(Suit actions to match words)*

## "Wheels on the Bus"

The wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round,  
'Round and 'round, round and round.

The wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round,  
All through the town.

### *Additional verses:*

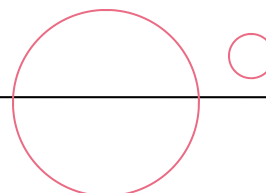
People on the bus go up and down

Doors on the bus go open and shut

Money on the bus goes clink, clink, clink

Babies on the bus go cry, cry, cry

Mommies on the bus go shh, shh, shh



# Toddlers...

## Nursery Rhymes:

Being able to hear the beginning and ending sounds that make up words will help children sound out words when they begin to read. One of the best — and most enjoyable — ways is to say nursery rhymes and sing songs.

**Activity:** Try this fingerplay with your toddler:

One, two, buckle my shoe. *(touch shoe)*

Three, four, shut the door.

*(bring hands together)*

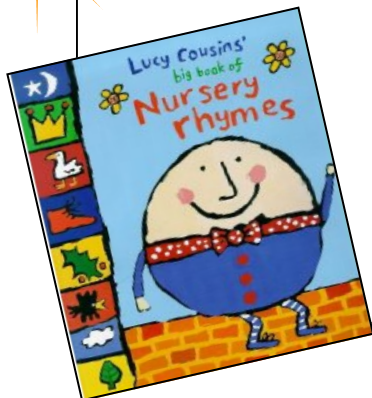
Five, six, pick up sticks.

*(pretend to pick up sticks)*

Seven, eight, lay them straight.

*(pretend to lay objects in a row)*

Nine, ten, do it again! *(repeat once)*



*Your library has lots of  
nursery rhyme books to  
read with your child!*

# Preschoolers...

**Music and movement:** Songs help children hear words broken down into syllables because usually there is a different note for each syllable. Without knowing it, they are learning to break words into parts.

**Activity:** Clap or use a musical instrument to sing this or other songs with your child:

There was a farmer had a dog,  
And Bingo was his name-o.

B-I-N-G-O!

B-I-N-G-O!

B-I-N-G-O!

And Bingo was his name-o!

There was a farmer had a dog,  
And Bingo was his name-o.

(Clap)-I-N-G-O!

(Clap)-I-N-G-O!

(Clap)-I-N-G-O!

And Bingo was his name-o!

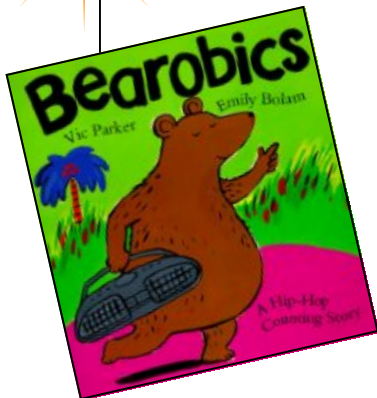
*Additional verses:*

(Clap, clap)-N-G-O!

(Clap, clap, clap)-G-O!

(Clap, clap, clap, clap)-O!

(Clap, clap, clap, clap, clap)



# Preschoolers...

## Rhyme Time:

Rhymes help children develop an ear for language. They can introduce children to the structure of a story; their predictable patterns help children when they start to read; and they are fun for young children to play with!

**Activity 1: Ask your child to find the rhyming words in each phrase:**

- Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet.
- Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep.
- Is your mama a llama?
- I saw a frog in a bog, sitting on a log.

**Activity 2: How many rhyming words can you and your child find for these words?  
(Nonsense and silly words are okay!)**

bug  
song  
pop





# Preschoolers...

## Playing with sounds

**Activity 1:** Here is a listening game to play with your child to help him hear the beginning sound in a word.

Say, "This is a listening game. I'm going to say a sound. When you hear it, clap your hands."

Say, "I hear with my little ear the sound /f/.

*Slowly* say, "Ball. Hat. Foot." If your child does not clap for "foot," help her to hear the sound again and you can clap. You can also reverse the roles.

**Activity 2:** Here is a game to help your child learn to break words into smaller parts:

Say your child's name. Clap for each syllable. (*Jeff* has one clap, while *Sar-ah* has two claps.)

Help your child clap other family names, or familiar words such as "ap-ple," "straw-ber-ry," or "wat-er-mel-on."





# School-Age...

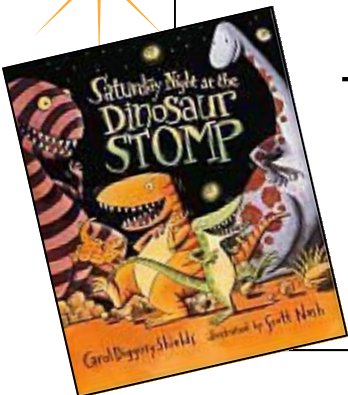
**Music:** Singing songs or moving with the rhythm helps beginning readers separate words into smaller parts or syllables. Try this one:

## Song: "Down by the Bay"

Down by the bay,  
Where the watermelons grow,  
Back to my home, I dare not go.  
For if I do, my mother would say:  
"Did you ever see a moose, kissing a  
goose?"  
Down by the bay.

*Now try these:* Did you ever see a...  
...duck driving a truck?...cat wearing a hat?

Try it with frog (log), whale (pail),  
bug (jug)



# School-Age...

## Rhyme-Time:

Playing with rhymes helps beginning readers recognize words in print and identify the smaller sounds in unfamiliar words as they read.

**Activity:** Have your child complete these phrases with a rhyming word. (Nonsense or silly words are okay!)

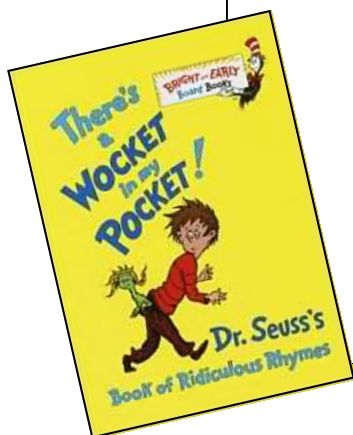
I saw a bug crawling on a \_\_\_\_\_.

I saw a frog hopping on a \_\_\_\_\_.

I saw a cat eating a \_\_\_\_\_.

I saw a \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_.

*Let your child draw a picture  
of one of the phrases.*



# School-Age...

## Playing with words: “Say It Slow/Say It Fast”

**Level 1:** This activity will help improve your child’s ability to “take words apart” (say it slowly) and put them “back together” (say it fast). *(-from the Denver Public Library)*

1. Choose a two-syllable word puzzle (hot - dog, mon - key, air -plane). Show your child the whole picture and say the word. Have your child imitate the word.

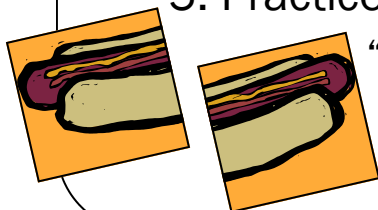
2. Say, “I’m going to say this word slowly. I’m going to break it apart.”

3. Separate the two pieces as you say the word again, this time slowly (e.g. “hot – dog,” pause between the “hot” and “dog”).

Point to the first part of the picture as you say “hot” and the second part as you say “dog”. Be sure the picture is facing the child.

4. Ask your child to say it after you as you hold up a piece of the picture. When your child says the syllable, hand him or her that piece of the puzzle.

5. Practice saying the word “fast” (normally, “hotdog”) and “slowly” (broken apart; i.e., “hot” – “dog”) as you take apart and put the puzzle together.

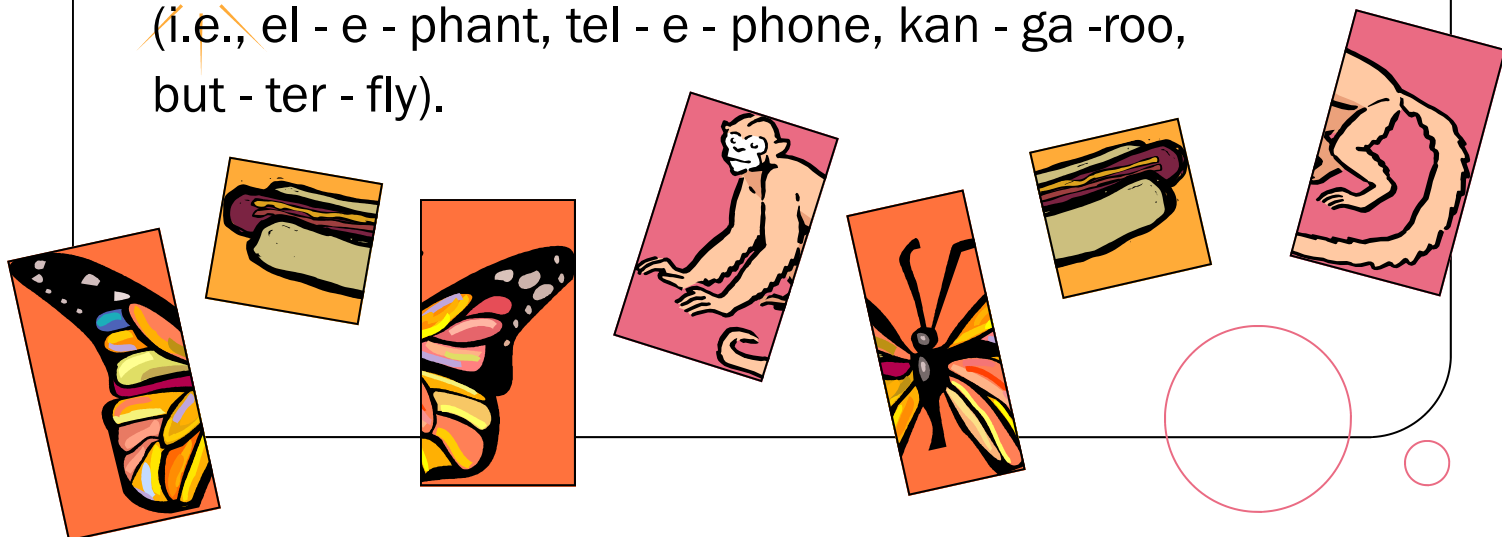


# School-Age...

## Playing with words: “Say It Slow/Say It Fast”

**Level 2:** Once your child can break words into smaller parts, make it more challenging:

- Lay out three puzzles of two-syllable words that he or she has practiced. Mix up the pieces and ask your child to put the puzzles together and tell you the word normally and broken apart.
- Lay out three two-syllable word puzzles (put together) and have your child say one of the words slowly while you try to “guess” which one she or he is saying.
- Ask your child to put the words together backwards and make a “silly” word out of it (e.g., “monkey” becomes “key-mon,” “hotdog” becomes “dog-hot”).
- Introduce the three-syllable word picture puzzles (i.e., el - e - phant, tel - e - phone, kan - ga - roo, but - ter - fly).



# Center Instructions...

- Choose a variety of board books and picture books to set out. Include the following in your selection:

- Nursery rhymes/Mother Goose

- Rhyming text

- Songs and poetry

- Alliteration or other sound play

- Set out some rhythm instruments, such as shakers, small drums, tambourines
- Parents may not know the tunes to the songs:

*Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush, Down by the Bay, Wheels on the Bus, Bingo, Hokey Pokey*

You may need to sing them or provide them on a CD player/computer.

Here is a good website that has just the tunes:  
[www.gardenofsong.com](http://www.gardenofsong.com)

- Crayons/markers and paper for School-Age Rhyme center
- Picture puzzles for “Say It Fast/Say It Slow:

Download at [http://read.denverlibrary.org/fast\\_slow.pdf](http://read.denverlibrary.org/fast_slow.pdf)



Cut each one out, cut in half. Separate 2-syllable pictures and 3-syllable pictures.