

A brief overview of phonological awareness

For children to read and write, they must have an awareness of the sounds in language and an ability to manipulate these sounds. This is called phonological awareness.

Phonological awareness is achieved when we can:

Break language down into sentences

e.g. We had a lovely picnic on holiday. / We had sandwiches and crisps.

Sentences are broken down into words

e.g. we / had / sandwiches / and / crisps

Words can be broken down into syllables

e.g. sand / wich / es

Syllables can be broken down into onset and rime

e.g. s / and

Children must to be able to hear the above and must also be able to:

- hear the initial sound in words
- recognise and create rhymes

Before children come to school we can help them by:

- chatting with them
- teaching them new words

- singing nursery rhymes
- singing other songs and rhymes
- singing action rhymes with our children (e.g. 'Row, row, row the boat')

- playing simple word games like I Spy

Sometimes children need to carry on playing language/sound games after they have started school. Ideally, these games should not include your child reading and writing.

Below are some fun activities to support your child's phonological awareness development at home.

Menu of phonological awareness activities:

 <p>Play 'sound bingo'</p>	 <p>Play alphabet games</p>	 <p>I Spy</p>
<p>Crawl like a creepy crawly caterpillar</p>  <p>Make up silly sentences using words that begin with same letter</p>	 <p>Clap the beats (syllables) in words</p>	 <p>Count the syllables in names</p>
 <p>Sort objects according to how many syllables their name has</p>	 <p>Cut word strips into syllables</p>	 <p>Read poems and rhymes to your child</p>
 <p>Play the 'feely bag' rhyming game</p>	 <p>Play rhyming pairs</p>	 <p>Dance and clap to raps and pop songs</p>

* If you come across any other fab ideas, please share them with us, new ideas are always welcome.

The menu explained...

Sound Bingo



A range of sound bingo games can be found on the internet and can be found by searching for 'sound bingo'

Alphabet games



- For each letter of the alphabet think of:
 - An animal
 - A name
 - A food
 - Any other group you can think of and your child would think is fun

apple

banana

cake

doughnut

egg

fruit

I Spy

You think of something you can see beginning with a letter of your choice and say 'I spy with my little eye something beginning with?' Your child then has to guess what you are thinking of. Once they guess correctly it is their turn.

Silly sentences

Make up a sentence or tongue twister using words beginning with the same letter.

Make a list of words beginning with the same letter (provided by your child). Together make up a fun story using as many of those words as possible.

Clap the beats (syllables) in words

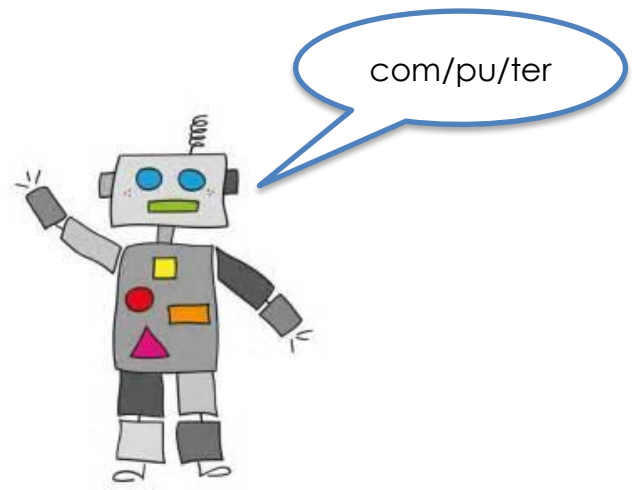
Count the syllables in:

- Family names
- Friends names
- Animal names
- Dinosaur names





Or

Say words in a robot voice

When you do it in a robot voice, it makes it easier to count the syllables.



Sort objects according to how many syllables your child's name has

1	2	3	4
			

Cut word strips into syllables

Write words on strips of paper with a picture to show what the word is. Say the word together and cut the word into syllables.

Play the 'feely bag' rhyming game

Find 6 pairs of objects from around the house with rhyming names. Put the objects in a bag. You pull an object out and then your child feels in the bag to find an object which has a name that rhymes with your object.

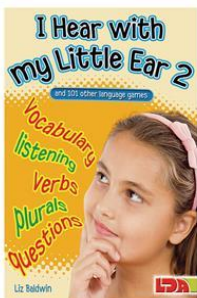
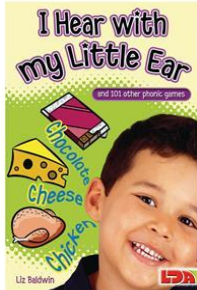
Play rhyming pairs

Make or buy pairs cards of rhyming words
Dance and clap to rap and pop songs



Useful weblinks and resources:

This list is by no means exhaustive. It is easy to find ideas online by searching 'phonological awareness activities' into a search engine.



'I hear with my Little Ear' 1 and 2 by Liz Baldwin Books full of activities to develop phonological awareness. Can be bought in book shops and via the internet.

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/blogs/scholastic-parents-raise-reader/5-favorite-games-play-words> - here you can find some suggestions for fun word games that you can buy

Ideas of games to play:

<https://www.superduperinc.com/handouts/pdf/172%20Phonological%20Awareness.pdf>

<http://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Phonological%20Awareness%20Infants.pdf>

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/blogs/scholastic-parents-learning-toolkit/word-games-to-play-kids>