



Session 4:
**Phonemic/Phonological
Awareness**

Teacher Professional Development Series



Recap

In our last session, we spent time...

- discussing the role of language comprehension in developing skilled readers.
- explaining how background knowledge, vocabulary, language structure, verbal reasoning, and literacy/print knowledge lead to reading comprehension.



Today's Objective

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- ★ define *phonemic* and *phonological awareness*, and distinguish between them.
- ★ explain how *phonemic* and *phonological awareness* are essential foundational skills for developing skilled readers.



Why Phonemic Awareness?

The lack of phonemic awareness is the most powerful determinant of the likelihood of failure to read (Adams, 1990).



Phonological Awareness

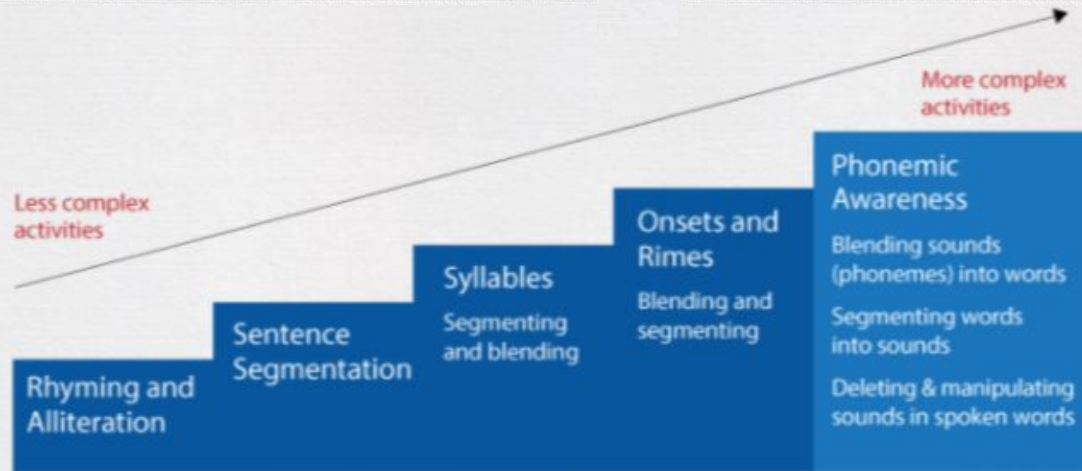
What is phonological awareness?

- A broad skill that includes identifying and manipulating units of oral language - words, syllables, onsets, rimes
- Children who have phonological awareness can
 - identify and make oral rhymes
 - can clap out syllables
 - can recognize words with the same initial sounds



Phonological Awareness

Phonological skill develops in a progression



Phonological Awareness

In the classroom, you can support a student's phonological awareness by having them:

- Clap out the number of syllables in a given word.
- Identify the **onset** (part of a single syllable word before the vowel) and **rime** (the part of the word that includes the vowel and the letters after the vowel in a single syllable word).
- Identify and produce rhyming words.
 - An early warning sign for dyslexia is difficulty with rhyming.
- Listening to nursery rhymes is a great way to build phonological awareness in students.
- Sentence segmenting (identifying how many words are in a sentence).



Nursery Rhymes

In Pre-K and K, nursery rhymes are so important!

Choose a nursery rhyme each week, and have the students recite it daily. This helps to condition the child's ear to listen for rhymes in words.

For this activity, you can even have the nursery rhyme displayed in print and give students copies for a poetry folder. They can practice "reading" the nursery rhyme and following along with the print.

You can also review previously recited nursery rhymes.

SOURCE: Heggerty, 2020

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Phonemic Awareness

- As students' phonological awareness increases, they can then start manipulating smaller units of sounds - the phonemes!
- Phonemic awareness is the ability to focus on and manipulate individual phonemes (sounds) in words.
- Phonemic awareness is important because it is the foundation for spelling and word recognition skills.



Phonemic Awareness

8 Phonemic Awareness Activities

1. Rhyming
2. Onset Fluency
3. Blending
4. Isolating Final or Medial Phonemes
5. Segmenting
6. Adding
7. Deleting
8. Substituting



Phonemic Awareness

- Phonemic awareness is one of the best predictors of how well children will learn to read during the first two years of school instruction.
- Most students who become poor readers have poor phonemic awareness skills early on.
- Phonemic awareness is something that should be practiced daily with early readers.



Phonemic Awareness

In the classroom, you can support a student's phonemic awareness by:

- having them blend and segment sounds in words.
- having them isolate the initial, medial, and final sounds in words.
- having them substitute sounds in words.
- having them add and/or delete sounds in words to create new words.
- having them identify all of the different sounds they hear in a given word.



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Teaching Phonemic/Phonological Awareness

You should be able to provide instruction in phonemic/phonological awareness *in the dark*.

Students should be listening and orally producing sounds. They should not see the letters in phonemic/phonological awareness activities.

Even after you introduce the letters and spellings, it's important to include phonemic/phonological awareness activities.



Teaching Phonemic/Phonological Awareness

Activities to teach phonemic/phonological awareness could include:

- clapping out syllables
- identifying and producing rhyming words
- identifying the first sounds in words
- orally blending/segmenting words
- adding sounds to words, changing sounds in words, removing sounds from words



Final Thoughts

- Instruction in phonological/phonemic awareness is crucial.
- Struggles in these areas are predictive of future reading struggles.
- It is essential that early readers have regular practice with phonological/phonemic awareness activities.



Engage

Why is phonemic awareness such an essential part of learning to read? What sorts of activities will you do to support the development of phonemic awareness in your classroom?

