



# Phonological Awareness Activity Cards



Phonological awareness – having awareness of sound properties of a spoken word. This includes phonemic awareness (awareness of individual sounds in a word).

Poor phonological awareness is one of the leading causes of poor reading. These activity cards are sample phonological awareness activities that can be utilized to improve phonological awareness. Phonological awareness is auditory and does not require any additional materials. Teachers can utilize these activities at the beginning of a lesson, during small group instruction, while waiting in line, in the hallway, etc. Each activity should take no more than 5 minutes. The order of the activities ranges from early to advanced phonological awareness skills.



# Phonological Awareness Activity Cards



## Word Discrimination - Stand Up

Word Discrimination: the ability to discriminate between two words

Directions: Stand up if the words are the **same**. Stay seated if different.

mice/cheese	far/fall	<b>king/king</b>	<b>shell/shell</b>
<b>wish/wish</b>	pea/peach	ream/real	<b>phone/phone</b>
girl/girly	<b>rose/rose</b>	book/beek	small/all
basket/ball	<b>lamp/lamp</b>	<b>drive/drive</b>	vein/vine

Teacher Tip: Change up the action, such as thumbs up/thumbs down.

## Sound Discrimination - Which Sound is Different?

Sound Discrimination: the ability to discriminate between two sounds

Directions: Listen to the sounds. Which sound is different?

/b/ /b/ / <b>d</b> /	/k/ /p/ /p/	/v/ /t/ /t/	/m/ / <b>n</b> / /m/
/i/ / <b>e</b> / /i/	/oo/ / <b>oe</b> / /oo/	/l/ /w/ /w/	/er/ /er/ / <b>ar</b> /
/t/ / <b>d</b> / /t/	/ie/ /ie/ / <b>i</b> /	/r/ / <b>l</b> / /r/	/e/ /i/ /i/
/s/ /s/ / <b>z</b> /	/h/ /y/ /y/	/g/ /g/ / <b>j</b> /	/ch/ /sh/ /sh/

Teacher Tip: Give students a mirror to watch their mouth when making the sounds. Students can touch throat when distinguishing between voiced and unvoiced sounds.

## Words in a Sentence

Words in a Sentence: student's ability to identify number of words in a sentence

Directions: Students take one step forward for every word in the sentence.

The mouse stole the cheese. (5 steps)

My favorite color is royal blue. (6 steps)

I put a star on the tree. (7 steps)

I love my students. (4 steps)

Teacher Tip: If floor has tiles, students can step on one tile at a time.

### Rhyming – Rhyme Time

Rhyming: Words with ending rhyme have the same final vowel sound and following consonant sound(s)

Directions: I will say a word and you say a word that rhymes. If I say lump, you could say jump or hump. What other words rhyme with lump?

dish	mice	wall	pack	feet	drop	bee	big
dad	bell	loan	try	say	can	jar	go
red	sip	eight	bag	spell	Jill	sock	tap

Teacher Tip: Allow students to come up with “silly rhymes”, such as silly/dilly, dog/mog.

### Rhyming – Rhyming Pairs

Rhyming: Words with ending rhyme have the same final vowel sound and following consonant sound(s)

Directions: Use poems, songs, or phrases to have students finish the line with a rhyming word. Allow any answer that rhymes.

Hickory, dickory, dock, the mouse ran up the \_\_\_\_\_. (clock, sock)

He has ants in his \_\_\_\_\_. (pants)

I see a funny \_\_\_\_\_. (bunny)

Snug as a bug in a \_\_\_\_\_. (rug, mug)

The cat has a \_\_\_\_\_. (bat, mat, rat)

Teacher Tip: Encourage students to come up with their own.

### Rhyming – Rhyming Words in a Sentence

Rhyming: Words with ending rhyme have the same final vowel sound and following consonant sound(s)

Directions: Identify the rhyming words in the sentence.

The **cat** slept on the **mat**.

Do you **care** to go to the **fair**?

I keep my **light** on at **night**.

**Look** on the shelf for your favorite **book**.

Good **readers** make great **leaders**.

Teacher Tip: Encourage students to come up with their own.

### Syllables – Clapping

Syllable: a unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants, forming the whole or a part of a word; e.g., there are two syllables in *wa-ter* and three in *in-fer-no*.

Directions: Watch me clap the parts in the word. Cupcake – cup (clap), cake (clap)

alarm (2)          mother (2)          shirt (1)          thunder (2)

banana (3)          dinosaur (3)          every (3)          supper (2)

basketball (3)          water (2)          gerbil (2)          television (4)

Teacher Tip: Instead of clapping, students can jump or touch head, shoulder, toes.

### Syllables – How Many?

**Syllable:** a unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants, forming the whole or a part of a word; e.g., there are two syllables in *wa-ter* and three in *in-fer-no*.

**Directions:** Have students place their hand under their chin and feel how many times their chin touches their hand, indicating the number of syllables.

rocket (2)	brother (2)	small (1)	candle (2)
happiest (3)	astronaut (3)	hospital (3)	money (2)
exciting (3)	weather (2)	crystal (2)	information (4)

**Teacher Tip:** Have students watch themselves in a mirror.

### Alliteration – Silly Sentences

**Alliteration:** the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

**Directions:** Come up with sentences that have words that start with the same sound. We will focus on the sound for this activity, not the letter.

**Examples:**

Happy hippos have heavy hats on their heads.

Lisa loves laughing with lizards.

Phillip found fluffy flowers in the field.

**Teacher Tip:** Have students work in small groups to come up with a “silly sentence” and share their sentence with the class.

### Onset-Rime: Blending

**Onset-rime** - the onset is the initial phonological unit of the word and the rime is remaining letters that follow, usually vowel and final consonants

**Directions:** Listen to me: It starts with /sh/ and ends with /oo/, it's shoe. Your turn... say phrase and the students say the final word.

It starts with /sh/ and ends with /oo/, it's \_\_\_\_\_. (shoe)

It starts with /sl/ and ends with /am/, it's \_\_\_\_\_. (slam)

It starts with /b/ and ends with /eard/, it's \_\_\_\_\_. (beard)

It starts with /gr/ and ends with /ape/, it's \_\_\_\_\_. (grape)

It starts with /j/ and ends with /acket/, it's \_\_\_\_\_. (jacket)

**Teacher Tip:** Use hand gestures (onset in one hand and rime in the other coming together).

### First Sounds - One of These Words is Not Like the Other

**First sound isolation:** the ability to isolate the first sound of a word

**Directions:** Say three words aloud. Students identify which word does not have the same initial sound.

mop **jewel** mail      light leg **black**      aim **egg** eight

**chin** shoe short      joke jam **goat**      quick **yoke** quail

fight phone **vote**      red **watch** rope      each **ape** even

**Teacher Tip:** As students master the skill, add in words that have the same phonemes in the word, not just at the beginning, e.g. mom, jump, map. Students may need additional support with distinguishing the difference between voiced and unvoiced phonemes, such as /f/ and /v/.

### First Sounds

First sound fluency: the ability to isolate the first sound of a word

Directions: Listen to the first sound in car, /c/, car. What is the first sound in jump? Yes, the first sound in jump is /j/ (say letter sound, not the letter name). What is the first sound in (word)?

map   chair   run   shoe   star   face   smile   gate  
fall   real   ball   desk   team   grab   egg   nose  
up   horse   aim   yes   lady   bring   eagle   daughter

Teacher Tip: Time them for one minute. Record how many they did in one minute. Have them do a second round trying to beat round one.

### First Sounds – Detectives

First sound fluency: the ability to isolate the first sound of a word

Directions: Detectives find clues to solve a mystery. I am looking for something that is brown that starts with /d/ (say letter sound, not the letter name)? I found it. It is a desk, /d/, desk. (Repeat creating riddles.)

Teacher Tip: Have students use magnifying glasses to look around the room or in a book. Include students' names in the game too, such as "I'm looking for a girl with a name that starts with /sh/".

### First Sounds - Line Up!

First sound fluency: the ability to isolate the first sound of a word

Directions: Have students line up when you call out the first sound of their name (say letter sound, not the letter name)

Example:

Line up if your name starts with /r/. (Ryan and Raneika line up.)  
Line up if your name starts with /f/. (Phaedra and Finn line up.)  
Continue until all students are lined up.

Teacher Tip: Change up the rule. Line up when the first sound of your last name or the first sound of the picture you are holding.

### First Sounds – I Spy with My Little Eye

First sound fluency: the ability to isolate the first sound of a word

Directions: I spy with my little eye something that starts with /d/. It is a door. What do you spy that starts with the sound /d/? Repeat with other sounds.

Teacher Tip: Have students also come up with the sounds they spy.

### First Sounds – Put on the Brakes

First sound fluency: the ability to isolate the first sound of a word

Directions: We will pretend as if we are driving a car. I will say a word and you will push the brakes, only saying the first sound. Watch me. (Pretend to drive a car.) Car, /c/ (pretending to push the brakes)

Teacher Tip: Let students walk around the room pretending to drive and they must stop (putting on the brakes) when they say the first sound.

### Phoneme Segmentation – 2 Phonemes

Phoneme Segmentation: the ability to break down a word into individual phonemes (sounds)

Directions: Listen to me say all the sounds in see, /s/ /ee/. There are two sounds in see. Tell me all the sounds you hear in (word).

go	two	up	so	at	zoo	knee	egg
pay	me	pie	odd	she	off	eat	tow
ace	oak	is	no	moo	own	bee	jay
wee	moo	each	go	day	low	sigh	us

Teacher Tip: Students can clap out, step out, or jump for each sound. Students can also move an object, such as a bean, as they segment each phoneme.

### Phoneme Segmentation – 3 Phonemes

Phoneme Segmentation: the ability to break down a word into individual phonemes (sounds)

Directions: Listen to me say all the sounds in chick, /ch/ /i/ /ck/. There are three sounds in see. Tell me all the sounds you hear in (word).

gum	game	face	bike	shoot	goose	sheep	sun
cup	chin	form	chip	foot	cone	stay	eats
bat	beach	book	cab	mill	seed	date	leg
hill	toes	phone	lip	zoom	crow	room	fit

Teacher Tip: Students can clap out, step out, or jump for each sound. Students can also move an object, such as a bean, as they segment each phoneme.

### Phoneme Segmentation - Robots

Phoneme Segmentation: the ability to break down a word into individual phonemes (sounds)

Directions: We are going to sound like robots today. Listen to me say chick like a robot, /ch/ /i/ /ck/. Your turn. How would a robot say (word)?

run (3)	fights (4)	get (3)	horse (3)	bed (3)	wheel (3)	fur (2)	pigs (4)
leaf (3)	cut (3)	dog (3)	name (3)	lucky (4)	face (3)	looks (4)	lips (4)
time (3)	kites (4)	with (3)	bite (3)	toad (3)	no (2)	tell (3)	right (3)
sun (3)	jumps (5)	bee (2)	red (3)	past (4)	cry (3)	dark (3)	chimp (4)

Teacher Tip: Let students move their arms like a robot. One move per sound.

### Phoneme Segmentation

Phoneme Segmentation: the ability to break down a word into individual phonemes (sounds)

Directions: Listen to me say all the sounds in chick, /ch/ /i/ /ck/. There are three sounds in see. Tell me all the sounds you hear in (word).

lamp (4) way (2) call (3) love (3) dust (4) dime (3) cut (3) shoes (3)

bed (3) rest (4) rock (3) roast (4) boat (3) black (4) hat (3) chimp (4)

ham (3) slash (4) stove (4) spill (4) low (2) ant (3) class (4) bell (3)

beet (3) burns (4) crash (4) up(2) ram (3) burn (3) live (3) neck (3)

Teacher Tip: Students can clap out, step out, or jump for each sound. Students can also move an object, such as a bean, as they segment each phoneme.

### Phoneme Blending - Basketball

Phoneme blending: the ability to blend individual sounds into one word

Directions: Teacher says the sounds. Student says the sounds, pretending to bounce a basketball for each sound, then blends the sounds as they pretend to shoot the basketball.

/m/ /o/ /p/- mop      /s/ /k/ /i/ /p/ - skip      /l/ /o/ /g/ - log

/sh/ /e/ /d/ - shed      /b/ /r/ /e/ /d/ - bread      /c/ /ae/ /k/ - cake

/sh/ /or/ /t/ - short      /g/ /r/ /ee/ /n/ - green      /s/ /t/ /o/ /p/ - stop

/w/ /ie/ /p/ - wipe      /f/ /a/ /s/ /t/ - fast      /t/ /oe/ /s/ - toes

Teacher Tip: If a student struggles, start with words with two phonemes and work their way up to multiple phonemes.

### Phoneme Isolation - Final Sounds

Phoneme isolation: the ability to isolate a sound in a word

Directions: Listen to the word. What is the last sound in (word)?

blue    camp    show    help    bus    bear    fall

clip    tan    glad    flag    toe    finger    car

five    light    horse    paddle    rock    cookie    plant

bush    tunnel    flame    teeth    candy    iron    snowman

Teacher Tip: Time them for one minute. Record how many they did in one minute. Have them do a second round trying to beat round one.

### Phoneme Addition - First Sounds

Phoneme addition: the ability to add a phoneme to other phonemes

Directions: Listen to me make a new word by adding a sound to the beginning of a word. If I add /b/ to rick and I get brick. Your turn.

add /h/ to ear - (hear)      add /t/ to all - (tall)

add /k/ to lips - (clips)      add /f/ to lip - (flip)

add /b/ to lock - (block)      add /m/ to ice - (mice)

add /m/ to any - (many)      add /b/ to ranch - (branch)

Teacher Tip: Consider adding in hand motions.

### Phoneme Deletion

Phoneme deletion: the ability to isolate and delete a sound

Directions: Have students listen to the statement and say the new word.

grace without the /g/ is \_\_\_ (race)    plan without the /l/ is \_\_\_ (pan)

brown without the /n/ is \_\_\_ (brow)    spin without the /s/ is \_\_\_ (pin)

bread without the /r/ is \_\_\_ (bed)    beak without the /k/ is \_\_\_ (bee)

fast without the /s/ is \_\_\_ (fat)    bus without the /b/ is \_\_\_ (us)

Teacher Tip: Use beans or another item to represent each sound. Have students remove the target sound to represent the deletion of the sound.

### Phoneme Deletion - First Sounds

Phoneme deletion: the ability to isolate and delete a sound

Directions: Listen to me change the word by removing the first sound: chair, /ch/, /air/, air. Your turn, what is the new word when you remove the first sound?

cat (at)	ball (all)	face (ace)	more (oar)
fall (all)	real (eel)	flap (lap)	name (aim)
cup (up)	shame (aim)	cheat (eat)	stone (own)

Teacher Tip: Be mindful not to do this activity along with rhyming activities, as students may get confused and begin to give rhyming words instead of deleting the first sound.

### Phoneme Deletion - Final Sounds

Phoneme deletion: the ability to isolate and delete a sound

Directions: Listen to me change the word by removing the last sound: goat without the /t/ is go. Your turn, \_\_\_.

nose without the /z/ is \_\_\_ (no)    hide without the /d/ is \_\_\_ (high)  
meet without the /t/ is \_\_\_ (me)    plant without the /t/ is \_\_\_ (plan)  
ripple without the /l/ is \_\_\_ (rip)    date without the /t/ is \_\_\_ (day)  
roam without the /m/ is \_\_\_ (row)    speaker without the /er/ is \_\_\_ (speak)

Teacher Tip: Have students use the new word in a sentence to emphasize it is a new word with a new meaning.

### Phoneme Deletion - Second Sounds in Initial Blend

Phoneme deletion: the ability to isolate and delete a sound

Directions: Listen to me change the word by removing the second sound: play, /p/ /l/ /ae/, pay. Play without the /l/ is pay. Your turn,

free without the /r/ is \_\_\_ (fee)    club without the /l/ is \_\_\_ (cub)  
slip without the /l/ is \_\_\_ (sip)    crab without the /r/ is \_\_\_ (cab)  
plan without the /l/ is \_\_\_ (pan)    sport without the /p/ is \_\_\_ (sort)  
smell without the /m/ is \_\_\_ (sell)    drip without the /r/ is \_\_\_ (dip)

Teacher Tip: Use beans or another item to represent each sound. Have students remove the second sound to represent the deletion of the sound.



### Phoneme Substitution - First Sounds

Phoneme substitution: the ability to substitute one sound for another

Directions: Listen to me make a new word by changing the first sound: If I change /m/ in mix with /f/, I get fix. Your turn, change the \_\_\_\_

/t/ in top with /m/ - (mop)	/f/ in fall with /b/ - (ball)
/c/ in cap with /r/ - (rap)	/d/ in dog with /l/ - (log)
/l/ in luck with /d/ - (duck)	/ch/ in chip with /l/ - (lip)
/b/ in bed with /sh/ - (shed)	/v/ in van with /t/ - (tan)

Teacher Tip: Have students use the new word in a sentence to emphasize it is a new word with a new meaning.

### Phoneme Substitution - Medial Sounds

Phoneme substitution: the ability to substitute one sound for another

Directions: Listen to me make a new word by changing the middle sound: If I change /o/ in fox with /i/, I get fix. Your turn, change the \_\_\_\_

/o/ in top with /i/ - (tip)	/e/ in bed with /a/ - (bad)
/a/ in cap with /o/ - (cop)	/o/ in dog with /i/ - (dig)
/u/ in luck with /i/ - (lick)	/i/ in chip with /o/ - (chop)
/a/ in bag with /e/ - (beg)	/a/ in ban with /u/ - (bun)

Teacher Tip: Use beans or another item to represent each sound. Have students "replace" the medial bean with another bean to show the change in the medial sound.

### Phoneme Substitution – Second Sound in Initial Blend

Phoneme substitution: the ability to substitute one sound for another

Directions: Listen to me make a new word by changing the second sound: If I change /l/ in slack with /t/, I get stack. Your turn, change the \_\_\_\_

/l/ in sleep with /w/ - (sweep)	/r/ in brush with /l/ - (blush)
/c/ in scale with /n/ - (snail)	/l/ in glue with /r/ - (grew)
/t/ in stop with /l/ - (slop)	/p/ in spill with /t/ - (still)
/l/ in sly with /p/ - (spy)	/r/ in grass with /l/ - (glass)

Teacher Tip: If students are struggling, start with just the blends: change the /l/ in /bl/ with /r/ - (/br/) before adding rime.

### Phoneme Reversal

Phoneme reversal: the ability to reverse one sound for another

Directions: Reverse the sounds in the word.

toe - oat	tip - pit	card - dark
tell - let	tab - bat	sub - bus
cake - cake	keep - peek	gum - mug
cheap - peach	cook - cook	funny - enough

Teacher Tip: This is the most advanced phonological skill. Students who struggle may start with segmenting the sounds before blending.