

Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and distinguish between the different sounds that make up a word. It is an important skill for children who have difficulties pronouncing the sounds in their words.

There are lots of helpful activities and strategies that adults can use to support children to develop their phonological awareness.

REMEMBER

- Do not try to correct mispronunciation as the child may lose interest and confidence and be less likely to try again
- Reinforce correct production of the child's speech by repeating the word back clearly and in a positive way
e.g. Child: "it's a bish", Adult: "oh yes, an orange **f**ish"
- Try to focus on SOUNDS rather than LETTER NAMES e.g. say 'sss' rather than 'ess'
- Listening to and talking about sounds through fun games and activities will support the child's speech sound development. They do not have to say the sounds, just hearing them is enough.

Rhyme:

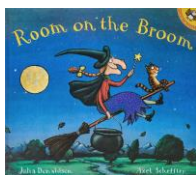
Sing rhyming songs and read books with rhyme to help your child listen carefully to how the words sound similar.

- Humpty Dumpty
- Hickory Dickory Dock
- Baa Baa Blacksheep
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
- Row Row Row your boat

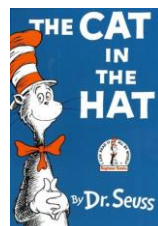


- Miss out the rhyming word in songs and encourage the child to fill in the gap, e.g. "Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great ...?"

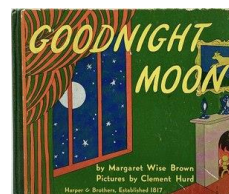
- Room on the Broom



- Cat in the Hat



- Goodnight moon



- Have fun making up your own silly stories with rhyming words.

Syllables:

Help your child to hear that some words have more parts (syllables) than others.

- When talking and playing with the child, clap out the syllables in longer words (cat-er-pill-ar), (but-ter-fly). Encourage the child to clap with you. You could also bang a drum to indicate the number of syllables.



Hearing the first sound:

Help your child to listen to and identify the first sound in words. Emphasise the sound by stretching it or repeating it e.g. "it's a fffish", "you are p-p-p-popping the bubbles"

- Sound bags: Find a range of toys beginning with the same sound e.g. **b**ook, **b**all, **b**ubbles, **b**us. Put them in a bag and take turns to choose one. Talk about the toys and say the first sound lots of times e.g. "b b b book". The child does not have to say the sounds, hearing them is enough.
- Play treasure hunts to find items which begin with different sounds. Say the first sound in the word lots of times. To simplify this task put 5 or 6 items on the floor and ask your child to find the one beginning with a certain sound.
- Scrap book. Make a scrap book with 1 page for each sound. Cut out pictures from magazine's/catalogues/sticker books and stick them in, talking about the sounds e.g. "that's a book, it starts with buh"
- Sorting sounds: find a range of toys which begin with two different sounds e.g. 'f' and 'g'. Emphasise the first sound when naming the toys and see if your child can sort them into two groups.



Once your child can find the first sound in a word, you can practice finding the last or end sound in a word.

If you have any questions please contact a member of the Early Years Speech and Language Therapy team on 0203 316 1897 or by emailing whh-tr.IslingtonEarlyYearsSLT@nhs.net