Table of Contents

Letter from the Author 4

Phonemic-Awareness Overview 5

What Is Phonemic Awareness?
Phonemic Awareness and Phonics
Why Teach Phonemic Awareness?
How Is Phonemic Awareness Taught?

Levels of Phonemic Awareness 8

Extending Phonemic Awareness into Written Language 13

Parent Letters 15

Phonemic-Awareness Activities

Practice Before Print

Level 1

Seeing Sounds 19
Nursery-Rhyme Rattle 19
Getting to Know You 20
"Buggie" Boxes 20
Rhyme Time 21
What's My Sound? 21
Rhyme Away 22
Draw a Rhyme 22
No Zoo for You! 23
Silly Willy Song 23
Did You Ever? 24
Oddball Out 24
Clap, Snap, or Tap? 25
Rhythm Time March 25
Rhyming Picture Sort 26
Sing a Song of Sounds 26
Silly Greetings 27
Hink Pink 27

Level 2

Who Did You Catch? 28
Start and Stop 28
Punch It Out 29
Break It in Half 29
Turtle Talk 30
Key to the Code 30
Bubble-Gum Words 31
Name Chant 31
The Sounds in the Word 32
Patty-Cake Sounds 32
Talking Ghost 33
Mystery Box 33
Pop-Up People 34

Level 3

Sound Bingo 34
Web of Sounds 35
Mystery Trip 35
Sound Train 36
Sound Dominos 36
What Big Ears You Have! 37
Puppet Pop-Ups 37
Where's That Sound? 38
What Do You Hear? 38
What Is It? 39
Thumbs Up! 39
Give It the Test 40
Three in a Row 40
Bag of Sounds 41
Scavenger Hunt 41
Grab Bag 42
Catch the Sound 42
Listen Up! 43
Picture Spelling 43
Color-Coded Sounds 44
Penny Push 44

SAMPLE

Level 4

I Spy 45
Tap and Sweep 45
Count the Sounds 46
Classifying Objects 46
Sound Baseball 47
Jump to the Sounds 47
Tap to the Sounds 48
Eat Your Words 48
Put It Together, Take It Apart 49
Froggy Hop 49
Echoes 50
Begin with Green 50
Head, Waist, Toes 51
Word-Family Trees 51
All Aboard the Sound Train 52

Level 5

Zippity-Bippity 52
Animal Fun 53
Circle Around the Sound 53
Change Your Partner 54
Drop Off, Add On 54

Moving into Print

Level 1

Simon Says Sounds 55
We Are Family 55
Letter Hunt 56

Level 2

Letter Patterns 56
Monster Puppets 57
Walkie-Talkie Friends 57
Slip and Slide 58
Choo-Choo Charlie 58
Picture Puzzles 59
Be the Sound 59
Word Line 60

Level 3

Sort by Sound 60
Color-Coded Reading 61
Photo Line 61
Sound Relay 62
Word Chain 62

Levels 4 and 5

Friendship Directory 63
Word Detectives 63
Change That Vowel! 64
Sound Switch 64
Rhyming Zig-Zag 65
Word-Family Race 65
Alphabet House 66
Build a Word 66

Reproducibles and Resources 67

Recommended Books 126

SAMPLE

Letter from the Author

Dear Readers,

Because I have been "retained" in first grade for well over 20 years, I've learned first-hand the importance of phonemic awareness. This aptitude either "opens the door" and welcomes children to a new world of reading, or it slams that door shut, leaving them "outside" and unable to function in their reading environment. Many times, beginning readers struggle because they lack the thousands of hours of "prereading prerequisites" many of their peers have experienced. Phonemic awareness is the key that allows these children to understand how the reading world works—to reach out, open the door, and confidently walk into the world of reading.

This book has been designed to help students develop a working knowledge as well as a conscious understanding of how language works. The activities and games have been implemented in prereading and emergent classes with astonishing success. They are presented developmentally, based on the five levels of phonemic awareness. Many activities are oral in nature, but can be readily adapted to written language. *Do not expect mastery*—phonemic awareness is an ability that takes time and practice to develop. Individual progress will vary, and students will be helped more by a variety of experiences than by repeated drills. Frequent but intermittent repetition is much more beneficial.

Finally, keep in mind that the following phonemic-awareness activities are "generic" in nature, and any list of appropriate words can be used. Ideally, words taken from current classroom literature (e.g., read-aloud or shared reading books) are best—they allow students to focus on the auditory, visual, and/or structural aspects of key words before beginning guided reading. As a result, phonemic awareness will be effortlessly, but effectively, integrated into the core reading program.

I sincerely hope this resource on phonemic awareness serves as a springboard for learning, and that many more excellent literacy-promoting ideas and experiences evolve.

Jo Fitzpatrick

Jo Fitzpatrick

SAMPLE

Phonemic-Awareness Overview

What Is Phonemic Awareness?

Students need to have a strong understanding of spoken language before they can understand written language. This knowledge of how language works is called *phonemic awareness.* Phonemic awareness is not a skill. It is the ability

- to examine language independent of meaning (hear the sounds that make up the words).
- to attend to sounds in the context of a word (see relationships between sounds).
- to manipulate component sounds (alter and rearrange sounds to create new words).

The significance of phonemic awareness lies not in the ability to recognize differences in sounds (phonemes), but in knowing these sounds are manipulative elements of our language. Children need to be able to hear sounds, know their positions, and understand the role they play within a word. For example, say, /s/ (the sound of the letter, not the name). Now slowly say, *see* and *so*, paying close attention to the formation of your mouth when you say the words. Even though both words begin with the same letter, the /s/ sound is slightly different. As /s/ is pronounced, it is done in anticipation of the vowel that follows, changing the oral sound of the phoneme.

The path to phonemic awareness is sequential, beginning with awareness of spoken words, then to syllables, followed by onsets and rimes*, and finally to individual sounds within a word. This awareness is not innate, it must be acquired. The key to developing strong phonological awareness lies in training and practice. As students progress through different phonemic-awareness levels, they become proficient at listening for and reproducing sounds they hear, or listening "inside" words. Phonemic-awareness instruction helps children understand, use, and apply oral language.

* An *onset* is all of the sounds in a word that come before the first vowel. A *rime* is the first vowel in a word and all the sounds that follow. (For example, in the word *splint*, the onset is *spl-* and the rime is *-int*.)

SAMPLE

Phonemic Awareness and Phonics

Phonemic awareness and phonics are not the same but are mutually dependent. Phonemic awareness focuses on the sound units (phonemes) used to form spoken words; phonics instruction associates sounds to written symbols (i.e., the alphabet). Together, they help children develop word-recognition skills, namely the ability to "sound out" unknown words. Once beginning readers have mastered sound-symbol relationships and applied them to print, they can approximate the pronunciation of most printed words.

Before phonics can be taught, phonemic awareness is essential. Children must be able to hear and manipulate oral sound patterns before they can relate them to print. Phonics instruction builds on a child's ability to segment and blend together sounds he or she hears. Without this ability, children have difficulty with basic decoding skills—an integral component of any reading program.

Studies show that connections between oral language and print must be thoroughly developed to achieve reading success. Reading programs that include systematic instruction on letter-to-sound correspondence lead to higher achievement, both in word recognition and spelling. In other words, a prereader's knowledge of letters and their names is important, but not enough. Familiarity with letters, combined with a sensitivity to phonetic structure, is essential for early reading success.

Why Teach Phonemic Awareness?

Children in the early stages of language development have difficulty sequencing sounds. Many times a word is heard as just one big sound, as their understanding of the alphabetic principle is limited. It is essential, however, for the progression to phonics and reading, that children are able to hear sounds and the patterns used to make up words. Before children can identify a letter that stands for a sound, they must be able to hear that individual sound in a word. This is a difficult task, as sounds (phonemes) are abstract in nature.

For example, when we say the word *dog*, the three distinct sounds that form the word are not heard separately—the phonemes are not auditorally divisible. The only way the sounds */d/ /o/ /g/* are heard is by thinking of them separately, one at a time. This segmenting of sounds does not come easily. It takes training and modeling before students are capable of thinking of sounds separately within a word. Once students can identify individual sounds, they can break the word into separate phonemic elements and manipulate them within the context of the word.

Students need to know phonemic sounds, but it is vital to successful decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) that they know how to apply their phonological skills. Studies show that an absence of phonemic awareness is characteristic of students who are failing, or have failed, to learn to read. The implication is clear—phonemic awareness can significantly bridge the critical gap between inadequate preparation for literacy and success in beginning reading.

SAMPLE

How Is Phonemic Awareness Taught?

The goal of phonemic awareness is to help children develop an "ear" for language—to hear specific sounds, identify sound sequence, and understand the role phonemes play in word formation. Although it can have visual overtones, phonemic awareness is basically oral in nature and presents itself well in meaningful, interactive games and activities.

Phonemic awareness is multi-leveled and progresses through five sequential stages. (See *Levels of Phonemic Awareness*, pages 8–12, for a detailed explanation of each phonemic-awareness level.) Before starting instruction, it is important to assess students to determine their awareness level. This helps indicate where your instruction should begin and what areas need emphasis. The Phonemic-Awareness Inventory (pages 67–69) is a comprehensive tool that assesses students' phonological performance. This assessment should be given orally and individually to each child. (You may choose to use parent volunteers or instructional assistants to help administer assessments.)

After assessment, use the activities and reproducibles to help promote stronger phonemic knowledge. These activities are designed to help students develop a working knowledge as well as a conscious understanding of how language works. They are grouped in two categories—those that are oral or pictorial in nature (pages 19–54), and those involving letter recognition and sound/symbol relationships (pages 55–66). Within each category, activities are arranged according to level of difficulty. Photocopy, laminate, and cut activity pages into half-size sheets for easy use and storage.

As you teach phonemic awareness, keep in mind that it is not an isolated skill. For meaningful reading development, phonological training should be incorporated into current reading materials or programs. The goal is integrated practice, so when doing the activities, choose vocabulary related to a current story or theme.

SAMPLE

Levels of Phonemic Awareness

The activities in this book are grouped according to the following levels of phonemic awareness. Review this information thoroughly before assessing students' abilities and incorporating phonemic-awareness activities into your reading program.

Level 1
Rhythm and Rhyme

At level one, children develop an "ear" for language. They hear, identify, and match similar word patterns (e.g., rhymes, alliterations). They also listen for, detect, and count syllables within words. The goal is to help children develop stronger auditory discrimination and awareness. Exposure and experience are the keys to mastering this level by comparing and contrasting the overall sounds in words.

TASKS

- **Hearing and identifying similar word patterns (sound matching)**
- **Listening for and detecting spoken syllables (syllable counting)**

Instruction Guidelines

Read many stories aloud, especially those containing rhyming words (e.g., *cat, bat*) and alliterations (e.g., *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers*). Use both auditory and visual learning devices (e.g., chants, songs, picture cards, puppets) to help students focus on and compare sound patterns. Have children listen for, tap out, and count syllables in spoken words. Syllables are acoustically and articulatorily distinct in the flow of oral language, making them easier to identify and distinguish than individual letter sounds (phonemes).

SAMPLE EXERCISE

Say words pairs (e.g., *fox, box; bear, chair; horse, house*), and ask children to identify those that rhyme. Have more advanced learners think of a rhyming word to match a given word.

SAMPLE

Level 2
Parts of a Word

At level two, children listen for sounds within a word. They discover that speech can be broken down into smaller "sound units"—words to syllables, syllables to onsets and rimes, and onsets and rimes to phonemes. They experiment with oral synthesis, blending sounds together to form spoken words.

Oral synthesis is the backbone of decoding—it focuses on hearing sounds in sequence and blending them together to make a word. Oral synthesis contains all the challenges of phonetic decoding except letter recognition. This skill provides support for the least prepared children who have no concept of words or sounds—it also helps them understand the alphabetic principle.

Instruction Guidelines

Begin by having children blend together onsets and rimes—the "sound units" derived from splitting syllables. For example, say *sp–ill* to form the word *spill*. It is much easier for children to hear the distinction between onsets and rimes than to hear separate phonemic components. Once students have mastered identifying and blending onsets and rimes, proceed to phoneme blending—combining sounds that correspond to individual letters or graphemes (e.g., */s/–/p/–/i/–/l/* to form the word *spill*).

SAMPLE EXERCISE

Segment sounds by saying them slowly, separating individual sounds. Use two-phoneme words first (e.g., */i/–/s/*, */a/–/t/*, */u/–/p/*), followed by three- and four-phoneme words divided into onsets and rimes (e.g., *m–an*, *c–at*, *sl–eep*). As student abilities improve, move to completely segmented words (e.g., */j/–/ee/–/p/*, */b/–/ar/–/k/*, */sh/–/i/–/p/*).

TASKS

- **Identifying onsets and rimes (syllable splitting)**
- **Blending individual sounds to form a word (phoneme blending)**

Focus on blending sounds rather than taking words apart—splitting words into phonemes requires more knowledge and insight (see Level 4) than simply combining "strange little sounds" together to form a word. Say words slowly, stretching out and enunciating each separate sound. Have children blend the sounds together to identify the word.

SAMPLE

Level 3
Sequence of Sounds

Students in the early stages of phonemic development have difficulty sequencing sounds. Many times a word will sound like one big sound, especially when knowledge of the alphabet is limited. At level three, children direct their attention to specific positions of sounds within a word. This is early training for segmenting sounds independently. Once recognition of beginning, middle, and ending sounds is acquired, children are better able to isolate sounds and hear them separately.

TASKS

- **Identifying where a given sound is heard in a word (approximation)**
- **Identifying beginning, middle, and ending sounds in a word (phoneme isolation)**

Instruction Guidelines

Begin by identifying a target sound, then say words and have children identify whether the sound is heard at the beginning, middle, or end of the word. Children do not have to know the names of letters to master this level—the emphasis is on *listening*, not letter recognition. Have them repeat the sound heard, not the letter name, when identifying phonemes.

SAMPLE EXERCISE

Say the word *book* and ask children, *What sound did you hear first?* (/b/). After a correct response, continue with beginning and middle sounds. Repeat with other words, having children randomly identify the beginning, middle, and ending sounds. After further practice, change the format by giving the directive first, followed by the words (e.g., *Listen to these words and tell me what sound you hear at the end of the word*).

SAMPLE

Level 4
Separation of Sounds

By this level, children have acquired a good sense of phonemic awareness and are ready to acoustically divide words into separate sounds or phonemes. This skill is reverse of phoneme blending, where "sound units" are combined (see Level 2). While separation of sounds (phoneme segmentation) appears to be a simple feat, many children, even older ones, struggle with this skill. They may be able to identify isolated sounds (recognition), but cannot break a word into separate phonemic components.

TASKS

- **Counting the number of phonemes in a word (phoneme counting)**
- **Identifying individual sounds within a word (phoneme segmentation)**

Instruction Guidelines

Before attempting to split apart and identify individual phonemes, have children count the number of sounds in a word. Say each word slowly as children listen for, tap out, and count the number of phonemes they hear. After they master this skill, move on to the more difficult task of identifying individual phonemes. (Remember to have children repeat the individual sounds they hear, not letter names.)

SAMPLE EXERCISE

Say two- and three-phoneme words one at a time. Ask children to orally separate the sounds so that each phoneme is repeated. For example, *no /n/–/o/, up /u/–/p/, egg /e/–/g/, bit /b/–/i/–/t/.*

SAMPLE

LEVEL 5

Level 5
Manipulation of Sounds

Level five is the highest level of phonemic awareness. Children manipulate sounds within words—adding, exchanging, deleting, or transposing phonemes to form new words. Students should have solid knowledge of how language works before attempting this level. They should be adept at mentally blending sounds, modifying words, and segmenting sounds in order to make the phonemic transference. The ability to manipulate phonemes strongly correlates with beginning reading acquisition.

SAMPLE

TASKS

- **Substituting beginning, middle, and ending sounds of a word (phoneme substitution)**
- **Omitting beginning, middle, and ending sounds of a word (phoneme deletion)**

Instruction Guidelines

Begin by having children add, substitute, or delete beginning consonant sounds. Working with initial consonant sounds is an easier task to master than modifying ending sounds (i.e., it is easier for children to identify the /p/ in *pat* than the /p/ in *tap*). Once students have mastered manipulation of beginning consonant sounds, advance to ending sounds and then middle sounds.

SAMPLE EXERCISE

Give the oral directive, *Say* cat *without the* /c/. After a correct response, continue with other examples (e.g., pan *without* /p/, fit *without* /f/). After sufficient practice, increase the difficulty by giving children less specific directions (e.g., *Leave off the first sound in these words; Can you move the sounds around in the word* eat *to come up with a different word?*).

Extending Phonemic Awareness into Written Language

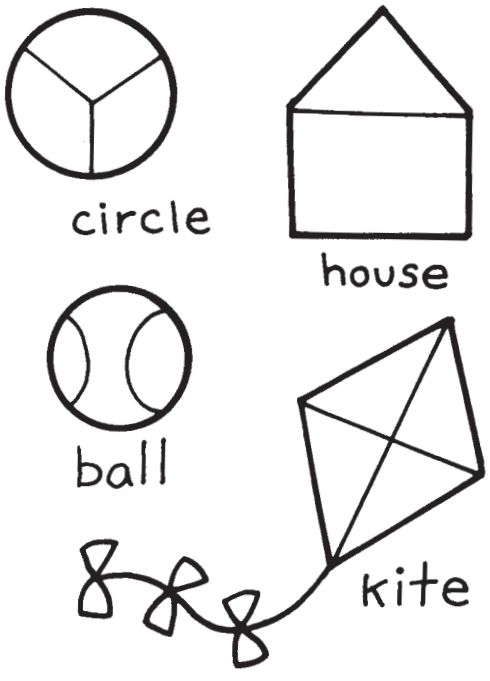
When learning to read, children associate sounds with printed words. When presented with a written word, children must readily see the word as a unit, with letters combining together to make one sound (e.g., the word *dog* is read as one blended "unit"). Having become accustomed to hearing letter sounds, moving into written letter combinations and sentence formation can be challenging for young learners. To ease this transition, students should be "overly exposed" to letters and their combination patterns.

Before children can understand the alphabetic principle (that letters have names and sounds, and sounds make up words), they need to understand that letters are more than just random symbols. When combined in specific ways, like pieces of a puzzle, letters are tools to communicate with others.

Using simple geometric shapes that demonstrate "parts making up the whole" can help children visualize this abstract concept. Draw pictures of common objects (e.g., circle, pencil, rainbow, kite), and cut them into pieces. Show children that as separate pieces, objects are difficult to identify—the "message" is unclear. But when pieces are put together in the right order, much like letters in words, the "picture" is clear—we understand the information being presented.

After children have manipulated geometric shapes and are comfortable with the notion of letters as "parts" that make up the whole (words), expand the concept into letter combinations. Allow children to freely explore and manipulate letters (e.g., plastic letters, sponge letters, alphabet puzzle pieces, alphabet cards), and discuss how some letter combinations form words that make sense, while others form "nonsense" words.

A simple way to move from letter recognition into word formation is with children's names—they are concrete, personal, and relevant to beginning readers. Most students already have a visual image of their name—they know what it looks like. By using something familiar, children are better able to see that words (e.g., their names) are made up of parts. They realize these parts are letters and sounds, that when combined, make words.



SAMPLE

An excellent way to explore letters and sounds in names is to use connecting paper dolls—each letter of a child's name is written on a separate doll to illustrate how letters connect to form words. Once children understand that sounds and sound patterns are combined to make words, extend learning by inviting children to cut apart and rearrange the "letter dolls," showing that some letter combinations make sense (letters *T, i, m* combine to form the name *Tim*), while others do not (letters *T, i, m* combined as *imT* have no meaning).

A useful tool for children as they learn to arrange letters into words is a "placement mat"—an index card or pre-cut sentence strip with a "start" dot on the left side. (You may choose to use a green dot to indicate starting position.) Because many children initially struggle with the left-to-right progression of English words, the dot can help guide them toward proper letter sequence.

It is extremely important to use the term *sounds*—the goal is for students to discover that sounds make up words. Refrain from saying the term *letters* or using letter names. When writing letters that correspond with sounds, use the sound symbols (graphemes—letter combinations that represent a phoneme) rather than the letters alone (e.g., /i/ to indicate the sound of *i* rather than the letter name).

Once students have thoroughly explored and discovered letters—connected sounds to individual letters, manipulated letters to form words, and recognized spelling patterns—they are ready to explore letter patterns in stories (e.g., vowel-variant storybooks). Students should be "overly exposed" to these letters and build inter-letter associations. For decoding to become an effortless process, students need extensive exposure to letter combinations and spelling patterns. Don't rush this step—if children consistently struggle or stop to decipher words, then spelling patterns have not been adequately learned and review is necessary. Children should extensively practice lower-level processes until they are automatic. Once this occurs, direct attention to higher-order processes of reading comprehension.

As children learn written language, continue to integrate phonemic-awareness activities into the regular reading program. Consistently practice and reinforce phonemic awareness—especially segmentation and manipulation—throughout the reading process. Proficient reading depends on the automatic ability to recognize frequently-used spelling patterns and translate them into sounds that form words. Studies show that differences in this ability are what separate good readers from poor readers. If students are phonologically proficient, they stand a much better chance of being good, strong, successful readers.

SAMPLE

Dear Parents,

Did you know that children develop reading skills long before being introduced to written language? Playing with and practicing oral language helps children become better readers. In fact, phonemic awareness—the ability to differentiate and manipulate letter sounds—is critical to beginning reading development. Help your child become a better reader by practicing phonemic-awareness activities at home.

- Draw your child's attention to the sounds of his or her language with silly songs and poems. Include favorites such as *Down by the Bay* by Raffi, *If You're Happy and You Know It* by Nicki Weiss, *Sing Hey Diddle Diddle: 66 Nursery Rhymes with Their Traditional Tunes* by Beatrice Harrop, and *Six Sick Sheep: 101 Tongue Twisters* by Joanne Cole.
- Read and reread stories that play with language. Some excellent books include *There's a Wocket in My Pocket* by Dr. Seuss, *Silly Sally* by Audrey Wood, and *More Spaghetti, I Say!* by Rita Gelman.
- Have your child listen to and chant along with stories on tape. Make your own tape of songs and stories for your child to enjoy.
- Substitute and delete letters from common words to create your own silly sayings. For example, substitute *T* for *N* to change *Tommy eats tuna* to *Nommy eats nuna*. Celebrate Silly Word Day by speaking in rhyme or by greeting family members, replacing the first letter of their names with the letter of the day, such as *Faula* for *Paula*.

SAMPLE

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

Dear Parents,

Before your child can learn to read, he or she needs to understand the connection between sounds and letters. Teaching your child to say and write the ABCs is not enough. Children need to hear and practice letter sounds as they see and write the symbols. Use the following activities to help your child associate sounds to written language.

- Have your child trace letters on multi-sensory surfaces such as cloth or sand. Ask him or her to say the corresponding sound as each letter is written.
- Construct letters using various materials such as macaroni, clay, or pipe cleaners. Have your child say the corresponding sounds as he or she feels each letter.
- Place magnetic letters on the refrigerator for your child to practice letter names and sounds, form words, and/or create messages.
- Have your child match letters to objects in and around the house. For example, place a plastic letter *B* on a bed, *T* on a table, and *F* by a flower.
- Draw your child's attention to letters and words in his or her environment, such as signs, cereal boxes, toy boxes, and menus.

SAMPLE

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

Dear Parents,

As your child enters the wonderful world of reading, share in the enthusiasm and excitement by reading to him or her regularly. Your child will treasure these special times together, and you will be helping him or her become familiar with the sounds of the English language. Use the following tips as you read aloud and share favorite stories with your child.

- Select stories both you and your child will enjoy, such as those pertaining to a favorite hobby or sport. Include silly rhymes, chants, and tongue twisters for extra fun.
- Encourage your child to predict what comes next by looking at pictures or listening to word clues. For example, Jack and Jill went up the ____.
- Point out letter sounds in words as you read. Highlight words that have a specific phonetic sound, such as those that contain the /b/ sound. Have your child identify rhyming words aloud as you point to them in the story.
- Look for words with similar letter patterns (flow–er, pow–er). Have your child think of additional words with the same sound patterns.
- Dramatize your voice as you read. Your child will delight in hearing words "come to life." Take turns reading different parts, or invite your child to act out each role as you share stories aloud.

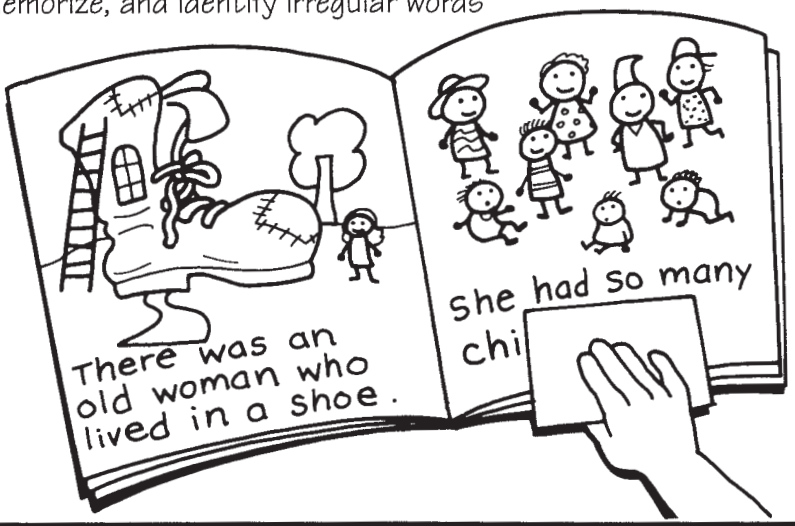
SAMPLE

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

Dear Parents,

Parent involvement plays an important role in any child's academic success. You can help your child become a better reader by encouraging him or her to read to you regularly. Use the following simple techniques to guide and support your child's reading development.

- Select a specific time each night to read with your child—one that is free from interruptions. This will help your child understand and appreciate the importance of reading regularly.
- As your child reads aloud, give him or her sufficient time to "sound out" unfamiliar words. Offer hints and suggestions before saying the word. For example, looking at initial and final consonant sounds, trying short vowel sounds before using long ones, looking at other words in the sentence to see what makes sense.
- Be patient and supportive while your child reads. Allow time for him or her to self-correct and reread mispronounced words. Oftentimes, children will recognize mistakes as they continue to read the rest of the sentence.
- Break unfamiliar words into syllables so your child can focus on one syllable at a time. Use your hand or a paper strip to cover up extra syllables as your child sounds out each part.
- Point out and review phonetically-irregular words that do not follow conventional pronunciation, such as *two*, *was*, or *enough*. Have your child practice, memorize, and identify irregular words in context.



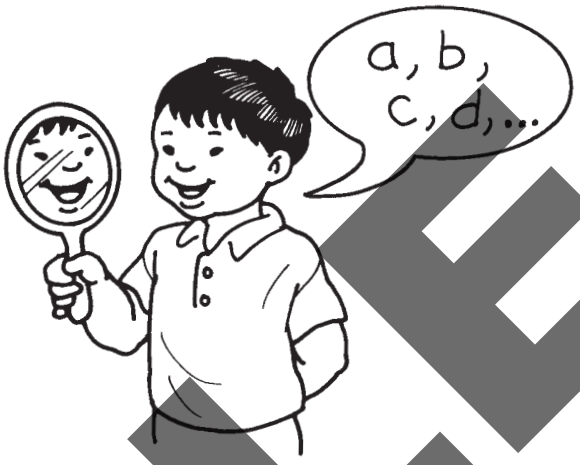
SAMPLE

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

LEVEL 1

Seeing Sounds

Task: sound matching



Materials

- hand-held mirrors

Directions

1. Distribute mirrors. Say words and have children repeat them as they look in the mirror. Point out teeth, tongue, and mouth positions as they say different letter sounds.
2. Divide the class into pairs. Have children hold mirrors for partners and say letter sounds again. Ask children to place their hands in front of their mouths as they speak, feeling the air expel.
3. Have children repeat the process a third time, saying the letters and placing their hands on their chins to feel mouth positions.

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

LEVEL 1

Nursery-Rhyme Rattle

Task: sound matching

Materials

- nursery rhymes
  (see Recommended Books, pages 126–128)
- noisemakers

Directions

1. Review and discuss rhyming words.
   Say three words, two of which rhyme, and have children identify the rhyming pair.
2. Tell children the number of rhyming pairs in a nursery rhyme (e.g., *Jill, hill*), and challenge them to listen for and find them as you read it aloud.
3. Distribute noisemakers. Read the nursery rhyme again, and invite children to use their noisemakers each time they hear the second half of a rhyming pair.

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

SAMPLE

LEVEL 1

Getting to Know You

Task: sound matching

Materials

- none

Directions

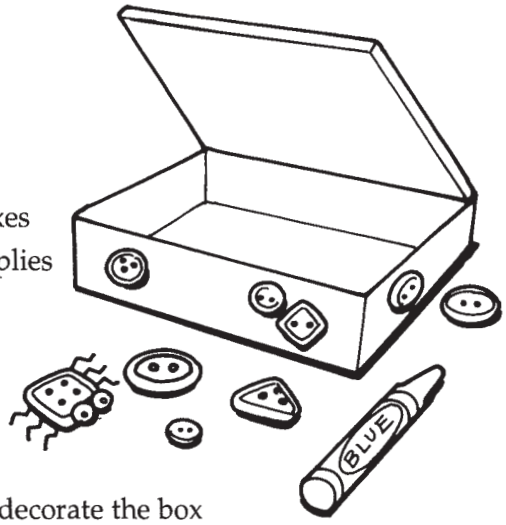
1. Use this activity at the beginning of the year to help children learn classmates' names. Have children practice phoneme matching by asking a partner to name his or her favorite hobby or treat. Explain that "favorites" must begin with the same sound as the child's name. (e.g., *Patty* and *peanut butter*).
2. Invite children to introduce partners to the class, telling what he or she likes. For example, *Sam likes soccer and salamanders.*
3. Extend learning by having children draw pictures of their classmates on connecting paper dolls. Write each child's "favorite" on the bottom of his or her doll.

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

LEVEL 1

"Buggie" Boxes

Task: sound matching



Materials

- *More Bugs in Boxes* by David A. Carter (Simon & Schuster)
- small boxes
- craft supplies

Directions

1. Read aloud and discuss the book *More Bugs in Boxes.*
2. Give each child a small box. Ask him or her to think of describing words that begin with the same sound, and decorate the box to match the descriptions (e.g., *bumpy, blue, button box; sparkly, silver, star box*).
3. Have children create matching bugs to place inside their boxes (e.g., a big button bug would match a bumpy, blue, button box).
4. Invite students to share bug boxes, saying descriptive words that match their creations.

Phonemic Awareness © 1997 Creative Teaching Press

SAMPLE