

Especially for Families of Preschool Students with IEPs

# Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

## What is phonological awareness?

Phonological awareness is understanding that language is made up of sounds and syllables.

This includes:

- finding and creating rhyming words (e.g., funny bunny)
- recognizing similar sounds (e.g., initial sounds: big bunny)
- identifying syllables in a word (e.g., bun-ny- 2 syllables)

## What is phonemic awareness?

Phonemic awareness is included in phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness focuses on individual sounds in spoken words.

This includes:

- putting sounds together to create words
- using sounds to create new words (real or made up!)
- breaking down words into parts

Both phonological and phonemic awareness **only** involve sounds, not written symbols.

Children may develop phonological awareness in more than one language.

## Why is it important?

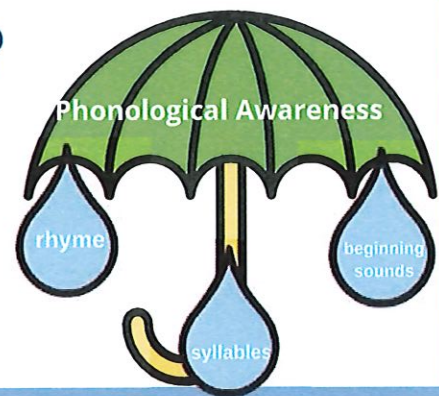
Phonological awareness provides support for:

- connecting sounds to letters
- learning how to read and write

## What does it look like?

Children show phonological awareness when they:

- say last word(s) of a familiar rhyme or song
- put sounds together to make words
- identify or create rhyming words
- find words with the same beginning sounds
- count the number of syllables in a word



A phonological awareness goal on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) might sound like:

- identify rhyming words
- identify the beginning sound of a word
- identify words that start with the same sound
- recognize individual syllables within spoken words (e.g. cup-cake, base-ball)
- differentiates between similar-sounding words (e.g., grow and go; show and snow)



**Remember:** Children develop at different rates and each child is unique in their development and growth. A child's family is an important part of their development and learning.



Before you start:

- Get your child's attention
- Make it fun!
- If it is not working, try again later.



Read and talk in the language that you know best.



Have siblings, relatives, and friends do these activities too!

## What families can do...

Sing songs and say rhymes with your child, focusing on the rhyming words. After it is familiar, you can pause and have your child say the final rhyming word.

"Twinkle, twinkle little *star*. How I wonder what you    (*are*)?"

Talk about words and sounds during everyday activities (e.g., at the grocery store).

"**P**ineapple and **p**each have the same beginning sound. Can you find another fruit that begins with the same /p/ sound?" -

**pears**

Help your child break up words into sound parts (syllables). Have them clap, hop, or tap for each sound.

"Mom·my" - 2 syllables  
 "mac·a·ro·ni" - 4 syllables  
 "school" - 1 syllable  
 "lunch·box" - 2 syllables

Play "I hear and spy" with your child to name objects around the room that begin with a certain sound.

"I hear and spy with my little ear and eye something that begins with /d/" - **dog**

## How do I know my child is learning?

★ Your child may understand more than they can say or show.

Your child may:

- find words that rhyme
- count the number of syllables in words or names
- find objects/words that begin with the same sound
- put sounds together to make words
- break sounds of words into parts

Paying attention to sounds in words builds phonological and phonemic awareness!