

Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to manipulate the structure of an utterance independently from its meaning. It is an auditory task that requires an individual to manipulate the utterance at the word, syllable, or sound level. According to the National Center on Education and the Economy, "Children who readily develop phonemic awareness in kindergarten will probably learn to read easily" (Goldsworthy, 2001, p. 3).

Phonological awareness skills develop from syllable, to onset-rime, to phoneme. These skills begin at age three and continue through the development of early reading skills at ages six and seven.

Skill	Definition	Sample Task
Syllable Segmentation	counts the number of syllables in a word	How many syllables do you hear in <i>butterfly</i> ?
Syllable Blending	blends syllables into a word after they are given separately	What word do you hear when I say <i>cow...boy</i> ?
Rhyming	identifies words that sound alike or rhyme	Which word rhymes with <i>mat</i> ; <i>star</i> or <i>hat</i> ?
Phoneme Isolation	identifies whether a given sound occurs at the beginning, middle, or end of a word	In the word <i>sun</i> , is the /s/ at the beginning, middle, or end of the word?
Initial Alliteration	identifies the beginning sound in a word	Which word begins with /t/; <i>toad</i> or <i>boat</i> ?
Final Alliteration	identifies the last sound in a word	Which word ends with /b/; <i>dog</i> or <i>tub</i> ?
Sound Blending	blends sounds into a word after they are given separately	What word do you hear when I say /b/... /a/.../t/?
Sound Deletion	deletes a given sound from a word and says the new word	Say <i>cup</i> without the /k/.
Sound Substitution	replaces a specified sound in a word and says the new word or syllable	Say <i>top</i> ; now change /t/ to /h/.
Sound-Grapheme Matching	identifies grapheme(s) associated with individual sounds	What letters say /k/?

We'd like to thank the following sources from which we obtained information for this section: Gillon (2004) and Goldsworthy (2001). Flahive & Lanza (2004) was used as a source for this chapter as well. For more information, please see the full References, Websites, & Resources list on pages 22-24.