Quick Listening Activities to Improve Phonological Awareness in the Kindergarten Classroom

Jill Florence Stephens
Central Washington University

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QUICK LISTENING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM

A Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

Reading Specialist

by

Jill Florence Stephens

July 2009
ABSTRACT

QUICK LISTENING ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS
IN THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM

by

Jill Florence Stephens

June 2009

Current research shows phonological awareness plays an important role in a kindergarten student’s ability to read. Phonological awareness (PA) is identifying and manipulating parts of spoken language, such as words, syllables, onsets and rimes, and rhyming. Recent research also indicates a kindergartener’s level of phonological awareness is connected to his or her ability to decode words, recognize vocabulary and comprehend text. Students lacking a sense of phonological awareness struggle learning to read. The good news is that kindergarteners’ phonological awareness can improve with 10-15 minutes of focused instruction each day. This project guides kindergarten teachers through phonological awareness listening activities, including phonological awareness activities for English as a Second Language, (ESL) Spanish-speaking students. After examining the current research this manual was developed for kindergarten teachers to use in order to provide straightforward, simple, and focused phonological instruction in their classrooms.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Project

It is difficult to dispute that the most important academic skill for young children to gain is learning to read. The enacted legislation of 2001's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) signifies a national effort in education to enable all students become readers by the third grade (NCLB, 2001). This initiative focuses on the early identification, intervention, and prevention of reading failure in early education students. With the implementation of NCLB, Reading First Grants, and the widening achievement gap of children in America now more than ever there is a national educational prioritization for schools and teachers to improve reading instruction at all levels, beginning with kindergarten. Atterman (1997) declares, “Learning to read is essential in these formative years in order to develop the higher-order thinking skills demanded in the older grades, when students are reading to learn” (p. 4). If teachers fail in bringing students' reading to grade level standards within the first few years of their education, chances are even with extra funding and programs, students will not catch up to their on grade level peers later on (Adams, 1990). More and more children need help earlier on in their reading education than in the past. Twenty years ago students needing extra reading help outside the regular education classroom were most often in third or fourth grade. Now children needing extra resource room services for reading are often in 1st or 2nd grade (Chall, 1990).
Routman (2003) describes phonological awareness (PA), as “necessary for students to become readers and is often acquired by most children by rhyming, word play, and rich, literary contexts” (p. 187). Unfortunately, not all students learn PA through these methods. Many kindergarten students have a difficult time hearing the different letter sounds and sound patterns in words. Many people may assume that all children lacking literacy skills entering school are the products of their disadvantaged homes. According to Adams (1990) income, social class, and or parental education do not necessarily predict the reading success of students entering kindergarten. Regardless of a parent’s backgrounds, many pre-kindergartners are growing up in homes where reading and writing are not valued (Adams, 1990). Smith (1978) notes that teachers must keep in mind that regardless of social or cultural factors, children from the poorest homes and all cultures have learned to read.

Often these beginning kindergarten students who lack literacy experiences at home are not adequately prepared for school because of the lack of rich literary environments. For example, at the author’s school nineteen entering kindergarten students were administered and assessed using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS, 1996) initial sounds reading test. This test was administered on the third day of school. The DIBELS assessments are designed as fluency measures to monitor and assess phonemic awareness for kindergarten through sixth grade students. According to these kindergarteners’ test results, seven students scored at the “at risk” level, and six scored at “some risk”. These scores indicate that over half of entering kindergarten students knew less than four initial sounds upon entering school. The good
news is that with PA instruction these students can greatly improve in all areas of phonological awareness.

When kids with reading difficulties are trained in phonological awareness they are significantly accelerated in reading achievement (Adams, 1990). As a teacher reads through this manual he or she may wonder why the manual incorporates listening activities with the reading process. Reading and listening are receptive language processes. Both listening and reading require the reader or listener to construct and comprehend meaning (Schulhauser, 2006). Phonological awareness activities play a large role in the development of listening and speaking. A major component of reading success is developing speaking and listening (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998). Because kindergarteners need many purposeful, engaging, and meaningful phonological awareness activities, this manual is a compilation of a wide-range of phonological awareness activities with many adaptations for ESL Spanish speaking students.

One may wonder why this manual includes English as Second Language (ESL) adaptations. Children who have a primary language other than English make up a sizeable portion of the nation's students. “Recent demographic data indicate that English-language learners, (ELLs) in public pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade schools number more than 5 million, or 10.1% of total enrollment. The primary language of the vast majority (nearly 80%) of ELL students in the United States is Spanish” (Yopp & Stapleton, 2008, p. 374). With teaching becoming more demanding due to mandates, curriculum, assessments, in-services, and testing requirements teachers have little time to
adapt non-ESL lessons for Spanish speaking students. By using this manual, teachers will find it easier to meet their ELL students’ needs.

Because phonological awareness is an auditory skill, there is no need for teachers to provide worksheets and create time-consuming materials like flashcards and games to improve their students PA skills. Teachers can use this manual to easily incorporate PA into their daily reading lessons.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to provide quick listening activities that kindergarten teachers can use in their classrooms to enhance and improve their students’ phonological awareness abilities. Research (Lundberg, Frost, & Peterson, 1988) indicates students having strong phonological awareness levels learn to read with more ease and more rapidly than students who lack phonological awareness. Phonological awareness in preschool and kindergarten has been substantially proven to produce long-term effects on kindergarteners’ literary performance (Lundberg, Frost, & Peterson, 1988). The National Reading Panel (NRP), comprised of leading reading researchers, representatives from higher education, reading teachers, educational administrators, and parents were assembled to assess the status of research based knowledge on the various approaches to teaching children to read (Reutzel & Cooter, 2005, p. xxi). After examining the scientific research, the NRP (2000) determined five important reading instructional areas teachers should be trained to teach in their classrooms. One of the five areas identified was the area of phonemic awareness (NRP, 2000). Stahl, Osborn, & Lehr (1990) claim “phonemic awareness on entering school may be the single most powerful determinant of their success, or failure, in learning to read” p.65). “Nearly 20 studies have demonstrated
that when children who are weak in phonemic awareness, receive appropriate instruction, (even if only 15-20 minutes, for seven weeks) they improve much more rapidly in reading and spelling than do control groups” (Edelen-Smith, 1997, p.103). This teacher’s manual will provide teachers with phonological awareness activities to help improve their kindergarten students’ understanding of the alphabetic principle, phonetic decoding skills and vocabulary. When implemented properly the activities included in this manual may aid in developing stronger kindergarten readers.

Significance of the Project

“Phonological awareness assessments in early education programs provide critical insights into children’s early reading skills” (Stahl, Osborn, & Lehr, 1990, p.54). Hogan, Catts and Little (2005), measures the phonological awareness, and letter identification in both kindergarten and 2nd grade students. According to their findings kindergarten measures of phonological awareness and letter identification helped to predict of 2nd grade reading skills. Another study measuring PA of kindergarten students by Gray and McCutchen (2006) indicates a strong relationship between PA and word reading and listening comprehension. “Kindergartners scoring above the mean in PA were 5 times more likely than their peers scoring below the mean in PA to score above the mean in word reading, and 3 times more likely to score above the mean in listening comprehension” (Gray & McCutchen, 2006, p. 325). By the time children reach 3rd grade, it is assumed that they have adequate phonological knowledge to begin using reading to acquire other academic information, much the way adults do (i.e. learning to read).

Contrary to research, there is some debate that a child’s working memory, nonverbal intelligence, and receptive vocabulary affects his or her ability to decode more
than a child’s level of phonological awareness. A study by Hester and Hodson (2004) reveals that phonological awareness is more likely to affect decoding than affect a child’s working memory, intelligence, or vocabulary. Further children’s phonological awareness enhances one’s ability to remember word patterns and letters (Stahl, S, Osborn, J. & Lehr, F., 1990). In order to increase phonological awareness in their classrooms, teachers must explicitly teach their students to hear the distinct phonemes in words because PA does not come naturally for all students (Hester and Hodson, 2004). By developing and improving PA starting at the onset of kindergarten through the implementation of phonological listening activities, teachers will provide young students with a firm foundation to enable them to become strong and effective readers.

Limitations

This project has the following limitations:

1. This project is aimed at early education teachers, primarily kindergarten.

2. This project focuses on phonological instruction in reading and does not explore phonological awareness’ role in writing or spelling.

3. This project does not suggest that phonological awareness is the only strong predictor of a kindergartener’s reading abilities. Phonological awareness instruction is meant to supplement other kindergarten reading curriculums and methods.

4. The resource guide that is part of this project is meant to be a guide. It is intended to offer activities for teachers to implement phonological awareness activities. It is not suggesting that the listening activities included are the only
effective way to teach and implement phonological awareness with kindergarten students.

5. The listening activities are largely based around and connected to the current addition of Harcourt Publishers 2009 version of *Kindergarten Storytown*. Although teachers from other schools may not have access to the same curriculum, the recommended activities could be used in any kindergarten classroom.

6. The research does not suggest that students should solely learn simply PA skills and phonetic decoding. While they are important skills, reading needs to be taught in the context of making sense of meaningful print. Children should not be taught to just focus on getting words “right”, but should focus on trying to make sense of what is read.

7. Other important phonological skills not incorporated into this manual are sentence segmenting and alliteration.

**Definition of terms**

*Blend.* “To combine the sounds represented by letters to pronounce a word; sound out” (Harris and Hodge, 1995, p.20).

*Decoding.* “To analyze spoken or graphic symbols of a familiar language to ascertain the intended meaning. Note: To learn to read, one must learn the conventional code in which something is written in order to decode the written message” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 54).

*Onsets.* “That part of a syllable preceding the syllable peak or nucleus, normally the consonants preceding the vowel of a syllable” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 171). An
example of this is /spɹ/ in the word sprout.

**Phoneme.** “A minimal sound of speech what when contrasted with another phoneme affects the meaning of words in a language” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 183).

**Phonics.** “A way of teaching reading and spelling that stresses symbol-sound relationships, used especially in beginning instruction” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 186).

**Phonological Awareness (PA).** “The awareness of the constituent sounds of words in learning to read and spell. Phonological awareness is distinguished by syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 187). One assessment would be say the word “dog” without the /d/.

**Rime.** “A vowel and any following consonants of a syllable” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 221). An example of this is /ət/ in the word cat or bat.

**Rhyme.** “Identical or very similar recurring final sounds in words within or, more often, at the ends of lines of verse or reoccurring words that represent such sounds” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 221).

**Syllabication.** The division of words into syllables (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 248). “Kindergarten students determine how many syllables are in a given word.” For example the word Halloween has three syllables, hələʊ/ˈwen/.

**Syllables.** “A minimal unit of sequential speech sounds comprised of a vowel sound or a vowel-consonant combination” (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 248).

**Vocabulary Development.** The growth of a person’s stock of known words and meanings (Harris & Hodge, 1995, p. 275).
CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION

Review of Literature

This chapter will provide an overview of current literature about the different major components of phonological awareness and the need for effective phonological awareness instruction at the kindergarten level.

From infancy throughout the preschool years, young children make momentous gains in their oral language. However, their formal instruction often does not begin until preschool or kindergarten. Although many students receive no informal or formal reading instruction prior to kindergarten, it can be noted that the reading process still starts at a very early age.

Most children start to understand the idea that print contains language when they are toddlers. "Children commonly recognize a variety of environmental print they encounter day to day. One study showed children as young as two can "read" the McDonald’s sign, toothpaste cartons, stop signs, and soft drink logos" (Stahl, Osborn, & Lehr, 1990, p. 74). While this skill is often not directly taught children learn about environmental print by growing up in print rich environments with adults who talk about print. "Children learn a great deal about both the nature and function of print through thoughtful interactions with adults" (Stahl, Osborn, & Lehr, 1990, p. 134).

In addition to phonological awareness, knowledge of letters must also be introduced (Durkin 1972, Adams, 1990, Atterman, 1997). "The ability to distinguish among letters is a requirement for (reading) success" (Durkin, 1972, p. 54). The second
best predictor of reading success is the ability to discriminate auditory phonemes (Adams, 1990). In order to discriminate auditory phonemes, kindergarten students must possess strong phonological and phonemic awareness abilities. It is critically important to teach PA in our early education classrooms.

Many kindergarten students who easily grasp letter identification, have difficulty hearing and learning the letter sounds and sound patterns in words, which play a huge role in decoding. Many children with learning disabilities struggle to process phonological information. Therefore, they do not readily learn how to relate letters of the alphabet to the sounds of language (Lyon, 1995). “In early reading phonological awareness is important because it develops the foundation of alphabetic understanding” (Oudeans, 2003, p. 258). Without a solid understanding of the alphabetic principle, the awareness that letters are used to represent speech sounds, students will struggle to read and write. They will not be able to predict the relationships between letters and speech sounds.

Children from culturally diverse backgrounds may have particular difficulties with phonological awareness. Language exposure at home and dialect both can affect the ability of children to understand the phonological distinctions in the English language. Teachers must use a variety of techniques to help struggling kindergartners learn these skills because they may lack hearing the English language at home (Lyon, 1994). Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness must be explicitly taught in the classroom for all students to be able to identify and manipulate sounds successfully. “Research show that 80% of children appear to effortlessly acquire insight into the phonological structure of language without explicit teaching. Often these children go on
to experience success in traditional reading or spelling curricula” (Troia, 2004, p. 1).

While many students do not struggle with these phonological skills, the remaining 20% will not learn without focused phonological instruction. The great news is that phonological awareness can be learned through focused instruction and it profits many children with and without disabilities (Troia, 2004). Children who receive phonological awareness instruction demonstrate increases in reading skills and have higher scores on measures of reading achievement than children who do not receive phonological awareness instruction (Oudeans, 2003). While most special education teachers have the required training in phonological awareness, the students most in need of this instruction are young beginning readers usually found in general education classrooms (Edelen-Smith, 1997). More than ever teachers are overwhelmed with the increasing numbers of children with special reading needs and teachers are challenged to meet the demands of these deficit readers (Allor, Gansle, & Denny, 2006). When this is the case, systematic instruction needs to be skillfully implemented in a collaborative effort with the general education teacher. There is a serious need for phonological awareness instruction and assessment, especially in preschool and kindergarten.

“Phonological awareness is set of skills that not only young students, but adults also utilize during the reading process” (Gray & McCutchen, 2006, p. 326). Recognizing that both children and adults need to have a firm phonological awareness foundation in order to be strong and effective readers, the question is how can kindergarten teachers successfully teach these fundamental and necessary skills?

One may wonder the necessity for a manual of this kind when most teachers are provided with traditional reading curricula. As mentioned above traditional reading
programs do not meet the phonological awareness needs of 20% of the student population. A study completed by the University of Oregon in 2001 revealed that many traditional kindergarten-reading programs do not have effective phonological awareness components. This study examined the kindergarten level of four commercial basal reading programs to determine the adequacy of phonological awareness instruction for at risk learners. While all basal programs studied had phonological awareness activities, the findings indicated considerable similarities among basal programs regarding the type of phonological awareness activities and instructional procedures. Most importantly, the activities did not address the aspects of phonological awareness most highly correlated with early reading (i.e., blending and segmenting) and did not give sufficient tasks, materials or teacher scaffolding (Smith, Simmons, Gleason, Kame’enui, Baker, Sprick, Gunn, Thomas, Chard, Plasencia-Peinado, & Peinado, 2001). The four commonly used programs reviewed were Harcourt-Brace, Houghton-Mifflin, MacMillian McGraw-Hill, and Scott Foresman. This only reinforces the author’s discovery that like other popular reading curriculums, her district adopted Reading Curriculum; Harcourt’s Story Town lacked an abundance of engaging and diverse phonological awareness activities.

Research by Qi and O’Connor (1998) investigated which phonological awareness skills most increase low-skilled kindergarteners’ abilities to decode. They compared initial sounds/rhyming to blending/segmenting in order to determine if one set of skills would be more effective in helping kindergarteners to decode text. "The results indicated that both groups were effective in improving target skills, as well as reading and writing readiness skills" (Qi & O’Connor, 1998, p. 2). This research indicates that initial sounds, rhyming, blending and segmenting must be included in kindergarten reading instruction
in order to address all the different phonological skills kindergartners need when learning to effectively read. The remainder of this literature review will cover teaching phonological awareness and its significance. The role of phonics plays in PA. It will also cover research behind the PA concepts of syllabication, rhyming, and beginning, and ending sounds.

Teaching Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness instruction begins by demonstrating the relationships of word parts to wholes. Harcourt’s *Story Town* kindergarten reading curriculum’s first major reading concept is demonstrating to students that sentences are broken up into words. This is because students must first understand that spoken and written sentences are made up of a series of words before they can begin to identify and manipulate distinct phonemes in words. Students are first instructed to count how many words they hear in a spoken sentence. Students must learn this skill before breaking actual words in the sentence into their distinct syllables. Once the students understand part-whole relationships at the sentence level then they can progress to the word level, by segmenting multi-syllable words into their different syllables. It is best to begin with easier words and then move on to more difficult ones.

It is important to understand what constitutes a word as “easy” or “difficult”. Kameenui (1995) provides five characteristics that make a word easier or more difficult to phonetically identify and/or manipulate.

1. The size of the phonological unit (e.g., it is easier to break sentences into words and words into syllables than to break syllables into phonemes).
2. The number of phonemes in the word (e.g., it is easier to break phonemically short words such as no, see and cap than snort, sleep or scrap).

3. Phoneme position in words (e.g., initial consonants are easier than final consonants and middle consonants are most difficult).

4. Phonological properties of words (e.g., continuant such as /sl/ and /ml/ are easier than very brief sounds such as /t/).

5. Phonological awareness challenges. (i.e. rhyming and initial phoneme identification are easier than blending and segmenting.)

After reviewing the research determining how phonological awareness should be taught the specific phonological skills are listed in the order they should be taught.

Syllabication, rhyming, and beginning, middle, and ending sounds should be taught in the mentioned sequence (Gleitman, Rozin, (1972), Adams, Foorman, Lundberg & Beeler, (1998), Edelen-Smith, (1997), Qi & O’Connor, (2000), Schulhauser, (2001), Runge & Watkins, (2006).) Blending and segmenting take more time to achieve mastery and require a lot of practice and phonological training. They should be webbed throughout reading instruction from the beginning of the year until the end of the school year for students to be truly successful with them. After researching different phonological awareness and its relation to kindergarten teaching the following major components were found to be the fundamental building blocks of a kindergarten PA curriculum. Topics addressed include the role of teaching phonics, blending and segmenting, syllabication, rhyming, and initial, middle, and ending sounds.
The Significance of phonemic awareness

Phonemic awareness falls under the umbrella of phonological awareness. It is a major component of phonological awareness. Instruction in phonemic awareness requires teaching children to manipulate phonemes, or sound units, in spoken syllables and words (NRP, 2000). “Phonemes are the smallest units making up spoken language. English consists of about 41 phonemes. Phonemes combine to form syllables and words” (NRP Press Release, 2000, p.1) Not very many words contain one phoneme, such as a (a) or I (i.) Most words consist of a blend of phonemes, such as no (n-o) with two phonemes, ship (sh-i-p) with three phonemes, or plop with four phonemes (p-l-o-p). “Phonemes are different from letters that represent phonemes in the spellings of words. While there are 26 letters in the alphabet, there are 40 different sounds of speech and 69 grapheme units” (Smith, 1977, p. 141). Single letters do not represent many language sounds. With the English languages’ abundant grapheme units, learning to read becomes a more challenging and a more complicated endeavor for the learner.

Phonemic awareness skills are critical to the decoding process. Children who are not able to decode are left two options when reading independently. They can rely on inconsistent context clues, or they are forced to seek help from a teacher or other student (Adams, 1990). For kindergarteners without a solid foundation of phonemic awareness, independent reading becomes nearly impossible. A child lacking phonological awareness confuses or omits a phoneme or phonemes in a word, which confuses the meaning of a word. For example, a child who lacks phonemic awareness may be presented in text with the word fled, and verbally segment the individual phonemes, /fl/, /l/, /e/, /d/, and then blend the word orally as fed. A child lacking phonemic awareness may listen to the
sounds /r/a/m/, in the word *ram*, but believe those sounds blended together form the word *ran*. For example verbally separating the word "pan" into three distinct phonemes, /p/, /æ/, and /n/, requires the phonemic awareness skill of segmenting. "Converging evidence suggests that specific phonological tasks, especially phonemic segmentation are strong predictors of beginning reading ability" (Oudeans, 2003, p. 258).

"Phonology’s role in reading is reflected in a constellation of abilities that manifest in a variety of ways as readers gain skill” (Gray & McCutchen, 2006, p. 325).

One role of phonology is to aid in students’ ability to decode. Decoding skills are the skills necessary to analyze and interpret correctly the spoken or graphic symbols of a familiar language (SIL, 2008). A significant part of decoding is the sounding out of words, which serves two purposes. The first being it allows students a way of independently identifying words that are unfamiliar. The second being sounding out focuses students’ attention on the order and identities of letters, (Adams, 1990).

Phonemic awareness is highly related to a child’s ability to decode.

*The Role of phonics instruction*

Phonological awareness instruction is often easily confused with the teaching of phonics instruction. “Phonics instruction is a way of teaching reading that stresses learning how letters correspond to sounds and how to use this knowledge in reading and spelling” (NRP, 2000, p.8). Phonics aims to give readers rules to enable them in predicting how written words sounds from the way they are spelled (Smith, 1977). It is important to note that phonics does not provide black and white rules for the reader. Instead it deals with observations about how most words are spelled, which aids in identifying words correctly most of the time (Durkin, 1972). Phonics is related to PA in
that like PA, phonics deals with letter-sound relationships specifically the ability to perceive both similarities and differences in phonemes (Durkin, 1972). In other words one cannot find phonics success without being able to hear the connections between sounds. It is only once the student can hear the distinct sounds in words, can then he or she relate them to their representations in print.

In contrast with phonics, phonological awareness refers to identifying and manipulating individual sounds within words (Griffith & Olson, 1992). The goal of phonics instruction is to teach how to figure out the pronunciation of unfamiliar written words (Durkin, 1972). Phonological awareness is involved with only the sounds heard in speech and not with written letters or sound-spellings. For example, an assessment of a student’s phonological awareness will ask him or her to manipulate the phonemes in test words. “Children are asked to pronounce a word after they have removed the first, middle, or last phoneme. For example, the children might be asked to say hill without the /hl/, monkey without the /kl/, nest without the /sl/, or pink without the /kl/” (Adams, 1990, p. 71). However, one can combine phonological instruction and phonics instruction by asking students to blend (put together) or segment (separate) the sounds in words by manipulating, writing, or using letters. It must be noted that phonics is not the only strategy available for word identification, but it does play a very important role in reading instruction (Smith, 1977).

It is important for one to consider that phonological awareness is most effective when completed by the end of first grade (Routman, 2003). Children who lack phonological awareness after kindergarten will likely not benefit from phonological awareness instruction in later grades. This makes it even more critical that teachers
phonologically fine-tune our students’ ears at the very beginning of their educational journeys.

**Syllabication**

The syllable is important because it is what individuals pronounce when speaking, and they follow general rules (Durkin, 1972). For example, if a student is asked before learning to phonetically decode the word /digest/ they might separate the word into /dig!/ /est/ instead of /di/ /jest/. Phonemic awareness should be taught beginning with children’s awareness of spoken words and should then move on to syllables, and later rimes and onsets (Adams, Foorman, & Beeler, 1998). Because syllables do not hold meaning, children notice or think about them without instruction. “Yet, the successive syllables of spoken language can be both heard and felt... For these reasons, most children find the syllables games new and difficult enough to be interesting but easy enough to be completely feasible.” (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998, p. 49)

Other researchers support Adam’s claim. According to Gleitman and Rozin (1972) “Syllables are more natural units than phonemes because they are easily pronounceable in isolation and easy to recognize and blend” (p. 1). They use the following example to explain why syllabication should be taught before other phonological awareness skills. It was investigated whether syllabic or phonemic segmentation is more accessible for early readers. They discovered that an early reader is more capable of recognizing a meaningful word when it is segmented syllabically then when it is segmented phonemically. Since research suggests that syllabication is a foundational phonological skill, it is one of the first skills that should be taught to beginning kindergarten readers. One commonly taught skill is syllable splitting. Students
must break off the first phoneme of a word or syllable. For example, if the word was “bank” students are expected to remove the /b/ and would respond /ank/. “Research suggests that syllable splitting tasks can be strong predictors of the extent to which kindergarteners will succeed with first-grade reading instruction” (Stahl, Osborn, & Lehr, p.41).

**Rhyming**

A rhyme is a repetition of similar sounds in two or more different words and is most often associated with songs and poems. In early reading instruction there is a special attention paid to rhyming and rhythm. Many adults remember learning well known nursery rhymes like “Hey Diddle, Diddle,” and “Humpty Dumpty.” The early rhyming songs and poems have a lot of merit due to what research says about the significant role rhyming plays in learning to read. The predictable rhymes and structured verses in nursery rhymes help develop phonemic awareness, while simultaneously providing children with a sense of reading enjoyment (Routman, 2003).

Research indicates a preschoolers’ knowledge of nursery rhymes and their performance has been shown to correlate significantly with their later reading ability (Adams, 1990). “Rhyming activities aid students in detecting similarities and differences in the sounds of our language” (Schulhauser, 2001, p. 7). Because most children find rhyming to be fun and easy rhyme practice is an excellent entry to phonological awareness (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, Beeler, 1998). While most children find rhyming relatively simple, there are kids who struggle with rhyming activities.

An important question is how does rhyming connect to one’s phonological awareness? “The ability to hear rhymes — knowing that cat rhymes with bat, but not with
bag — is an essential skill for learning to read, because it means that children can discern the differences between individual sounds” (Neuman, 2004, p.32). When developing students’ sense of rhyming do not try to overwhelm them by incorporating the written form of words. In regards to PA, teachers want to first develop their aural awareness. That is why it is appropriate to accept non-sense words when kindergartners are experimenting with rhyme (Schulhauser, 2001). For example, if you are asking students to produce a word that rhymes with “door” and they respond with “joor”, it is acceptable because the word rhymes. Incorporating rhyming activities early on in the kindergarten classroom is essential in helping students learn to read.

Initial and ending sounds

When working with the concept of PA, it is often critical to teach initial sounds in words before other PA skills like blending and segmenting. “If a child cannot become aware of the fact that bid, bugs, and banana, “start with the same sound”, then he or she cannot understand the relevance of the written symbol b in the orthography. But once he can agree that bad consists of the “sounds” b, a, and d, he has learned the critical factor in decoding” (Gleitman & Rozin, 1972, p. 3-4). Furthermore, establishing for children that sounds occur in different positions of words help children with the later task of segmenting (Edelen-Smith, 1997).

Special attention should also be made to the sounds students make when doing these activities (Adams, 1990). “Students should be asked to notice what they are doing with their lips, tongue, mouth, and voice as they make various sounds” (Schulhauser, 2001, p. 23). One will notice the first few activities focus on beginning sounds because children have an easier time noticing initial sounds than ending sounds. “The initial
phonemes of words are easier to distinguish and attend to than medial or final phonemes” (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998, p. 57). Students will first learn to make new words by taking an initial sound away and by replacing the sounds with a new one. For example, the word *dog* without the *d* becomes *og*. Or *dog* becomes *fog* when one changes the *d* to an *f*. Later on, students will complete similar activities with the ending sounds of words. Ending sounds are harder for children to distinguish because speakers often articulate these sounds poorly when they drop off their speech at the ends of words (Schulhauser, 2001). Therefore, extra time may be needed for children to master hearing and replacing final sounds. Teachers may want to revisit these final sound activities if students are struggling to grasp initial phonemes.

It is important to note that teachers should teach letter sounds with their corresponding pure sounds. Some sounds are “voiced” and some are “voiceless”. An important way in which one speech sound may differ from another is in voicing or the lack of it. A sound is voiced if one’s vocal cords vibrate as it is pronounced; a sound is voiceless if it is pronounced without such vibration (Durkin, 1972). Additionally some sounds are “stops” and others are continuants. “A continuant sound is like-/m/-which may be prolonged as long as the speaker has breath to pronounce it. A stop must be produced instantaneously, and cannot be held like /t/” (Durkin, 1972, p.12). In other words teachers should not distort letter sounds when teaching them in words. For example, with the word *cat*, should not be segmented as /cuhl-/a/- /tuh/, but rather /cl-/a/- /t/. 
Summary

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate phonemes, or sound units in speech. Without a good grasp on the phonological aspects of syllabication, rhyming, initial and ending sounds, blending and most influentially segmenting, a young reader will struggle in learning to decode text. When teaching phonological awareness, it is best to teach in the order suggested above. Through specific, engaging, and direct instruction, a young reader's ear can be trained to better hear units of sounds in speech. With focused instruction guided by a trained teacher, a young reader can significantly improve in reading achievement, and is less likely to struggle when learning to read. Phonological awareness training does not take hours upon hours, but is effective if taught for only 15-20 minutes per day. By using the activities included in the manual presented in Chapter Four, kindergarten teachers will help to deepen their students' phonological understanding and improve students reading performance.
CHAPTER THREE
INTRODUCTION

Design of the Project

The purpose of this project was to develop an daily instructional guide for teachers to supplement with their normal reading curriculum as they begin to develop phonological awareness listening activities in their classrooms. Kindergarten teachers will find this guide easy to use as it provides quick listening activities they can utilize with their students to incorporate phonological awareness activities into their daily reading instruction.

Development of the Project

As a kindergarten teacher, the author recognized the need for more phonological awareness instruction in her own kindergarten classroom. The reading curriculum the author was using contained some phonological awareness instruction, but it was hard to navigate, as it did not provide phonological awareness activities aimed at specific targets such as syllabication, rhyming, and beginning, middle, and ending sounds. When students struggled with one specific concept like rhyming, finding a variety of easy to implement activities was problematic. More current reading curriculums do include PA activities, but they can be very repetitive and non-engaging. With this manual, it is the author’s aim that teachers will have a guide readily available to assist them in quickly implementing engaging activities aimed at their students’ phonologically weak areas.

After reviewing the current research, the need for an increased phonological instruction, particularly in kindergarten was very evident. The author was determined to develop her students’ listening and phonological awareness through guided instruction.
Because of the difficult time constraints and classroom demands the author felt that teachers would be more likely to implement phonological awareness activities in their classrooms if they had easy access to a wide variety of activities that focused on all major components of phonological awareness. Moreover since the research reviewed indicated that a learner’s listening abilities were closely tied to their levels of phonological awareness, the author chose to only use activities that required listening. Since the research showed that phonological training was focused on improving a child’s sense of listening, the manual logically focuses only on activities that require students to listen rather than write, read, or spell. Phonological awareness is auditory and does not involve words in print.

With the large amount of Spanish speaking ESL students in the author’s area, Spanish language activities are periodically incorporated in the manual for teachers to use as they see fit with their ESL Spanish speaking students. The reason for this adaptation is to help these Spanish ESL students understand phonological concepts such as syllabication, rhyming, and beginning, middle, and ending sounds in their native language. Research through the University of Washington has shown these phonological skills in Spanish translate into students’ abilities to read in English as well. “Phonological awareness in Spanish predicted (a) phonological awareness in English and (b) English word reading” (Quiroga, Lemos-Britton Mostafapour, Abbott & Berninger, 2002, p. 85). Research shows phonological awareness can transfer across first and second languages. With the struggle ESL students face in the English-speaking classroom, these activities can help them become better readers in English by incorporating some of their own language.
Procedures

Research was gathered from several sources to explore the importance phonological awareness has on the development of early readers. Activities were adapted from research articles, reading curriculums and books about reading early reading instruction. Searches were conducted via the Internet, focused on scholarly and peer-reviewed journals. These searches were performed using the databases available through Central Washington University. Education ProQuest, ERIC, and Education Full Text were primarily used. Books on the topics of phonological and phonemic awareness were purchased from Amazon.com. Reading curriculums were borrowed from East Valley School District, as well as the Central Washington University library. Information pertaining to the importance of phonological awareness and how it is developed was organized and synthesized in Chapter Two. Other research indicating different listening activities were organized, modified, and included in Chapter Four.

The manual was designed to aid kindergarten teachers in the implementation of phonological awareness activities in their own classrooms. Upon completion of the manual it was distributed to the kindergarten and resource room teachers and the author's school.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Project

Quick Listening Activities to Improve Phonological Awareness

in the Kindergarten Classroom

by

Jill Florence Stephens

July 2009
INTRODUCTION

The following chapter contains an implementation guide for teachers who are interested in improving their kindergarten students’ phonological awareness skills. The guide provides all of the directions and no additional materials are needed to incorporate the lessons provided in the manual. It was developed with teachers in mind, specifically those teachers who have kindergarten students who lack phonological awareness skills, and those teachers who teach Spanish-speaking ESL students. Their needs and preferences were taken into consideration when formatting the manual. This manual should be used as a supplemental material with other kindergarten-reading curriculum. It is only focused on phonological awareness activities and does not incorporate other important kindergarten reading skills such as letter and word identification, phonics, or reading fluency.

Section One of the manual outlines the research supporting the need for and the importance of phonological awareness instruction in today’s kindergarten classroom. Section Two describes the different aspects of phonological awareness and how the acquisition of these skills is necessary in learning to read. It explains in great detail the complexities involved with phonemic awareness, syllabication, rhyming, and initial and ending sounds. It also gives teachers a clear picture and definition for the phonological skills they will be teaching with this manual. It further explains the complex relationship that exists between phonics and phonological awareness, clarifying any misunderstandings one might hold about the two subsets of skills.

Section Three explains why the author felt other phonological awareness activities were not meeting her needs and the reason for the development of this manual. Section
Four provides phonological awareness activities organized by the specific skill each lesson is teaching. The areas of syllabication, rhyming, segmenting, blending and beginning and ending sounds are organized by topic in Section Four. The activities that note an adaptation below were adapted by using the poem or song that was included in the original curriculum, but more practice may have been added or the song or poem was modified for students to more easily learn or repeat. In most activities, new Consonant Vowel Consonant (CVC) words were added to incorporate a wider range of words. All ESL Spanish adaptations were originally created and added by the author to help these ESL students transfer readings skills in Spanish to similar reading skills in English. On some of the adaptations, the original activity was adapted because the original did not provide enough practice with a particular skill. Some were adapted to provide a challenge to higher ability or lower ability students.

The activities suggested in Chapter Five are additional ways to incorporate phonological awareness into the school day. This section also offers some ways one can quickly assess students' phonological awareness skills in their everyday class work. In the final section a list of references is provided.

The activities included in this manual will help the teacher easily and effectively teach phonological awareness in his or her kindergarten classroom. Using the compiled available research the author aims to provide kindergarten teachers with easy to implement listening activities that when used effectively will increase their students' performance in the phonological awareness areas addressed.
Quick Listening Activities
To Improve Phonological Awareness
In the Kindergarten Classroom

A Guide for Easy Implementation
By
Jill Stephens
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Foreword

With the recent implementation of the Federal Government's No Child Left Behind Education Act in 2001 there is now more than ever an emphasis on helping struggling early readers reach grade level reading standards. Many kindergarten students today are struggling to read because they lack phonological awareness, that is they are not aware or able to hear the distinct sounds in words. Early education teachers have found that explicitly teaching phonological awareness accelerates reading growth in their classrooms. Many teachers are finding that traditional reading curriculums include phonological awareness activities, but often these activities are repetitive and not engaging. While the phonological awareness activities in current curriculums meet some of the students' phonological awareness needs, they often do not meet all students' needs, particularly those with limited English language proficiency. By using this manual kindergarten teachers can better meet their young students' needs. The information and activities provided show teachers how increasing students' phonological awareness abilities will help them become more proficient readers. Though the implementation of these activities you will not only see student growth, but also better understand the role phonological awareness plays in early reading.

Jill F. Stephens
Section I: The Importance of

Phonological Awareness Instruction Today

As much as 50% of the variance in first grader's reading proficiency may be linked to his or her phonological awareness abilities (Schulhauser, 2001).
What is Phonological Awareness?

Phonological awareness is a hot topic in today's world of early education. It is often confused with the teaching of phonics for its close relationship and although it has many ties with phonics, it is in fact it has its own unique subset of skills. Phonological Awareness (PA) is defined as "the awareness of the constituent sounds of words in learning to read and spell."

Research indicates a kindergartener's level of phonological awareness is connected to their reading abilities of decoding words, recognizing vocabulary, and comprehending text. The skills of rhyming, syllabication, and recognizing initial and final sounds all fall under the umbrella of phonological awareness.

Children lacking phonological awareness struggle when learning to read. It is difficult to dispute that the most important academic skill for young children to gain is learning to read. The recent enacted legislation of 2001's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) signifies a national effort in education to enable all students become readers by grade three (NCLB, 2001). This initiative focuses on the early identification, intervention, and prevention of reading failure in early education students. With the implementation of NCLB, Reading First Grants, and the widening achievement gap of children in America there is now more than ever a national educational prioritization for schools and teachers to improve reading instruction at all levels, beginning with kindergarten. If teachers fail in bringing students' reading to grade level standards within the first few years of their education, chances are
even with extra funding and programs, students will not catch up to their on grade level peers later on (Adams, 1990).

Even more concerning is that more and more children need help earlier on in their reading education than in the past. "We've been getting into our reading lab more children who need help in 1st or 2nd grade. Twenty years ago, we did not get any until 3rd or 4th grade... they are beginning to fall off in 1st grade... (Chall, 1990)." The good news is that with intentional instruction in phonological tasks can significantly increase students' reading and writing (Schulhauser, 2001). Phonological awareness in preschool and kindergarten has been substantially proven to produce long-term effects on kindergarteners' literary performance (Lundberg, Frost, and Peterson, 1988).

❖ Why Are PA Skills So Difficult for Many Students?

The problem is that many young students do not focus on the distinct sounds in words but instead they focus their active attention to the words as a whole. In other words when people speak or listen to one another they normally listen to the whole words and not the sounds in the words. This is why it is challenging to train young children's ears to notice phonemes, or distinct sounds that make up different words.

While many traditional activities pre-school activities like nursery rhymes and song rhythms help to train students' ears, not all students' ears become phonologically attune using only these long-enjoyed traditional methods. Many
students today enter kindergarten less prepared than ever before because they lack literacy experiences at home. That is why today's kindergarten teacher must find new ways to help their students develop phonological awareness. "Phonological awareness (PA) is necessary for students to become readers and is often acquired by most children by rhyming, word play, and rich, literary contexts" (Routman, 2003).

But unfortunately not all students learn PA through these methods. Many kindergarten students have a difficult time hearing the different letter sounds and sound patterns in words. Many people may assume that all children lacking literacy skills entering school are the products of their disadvantaged homes. Regardless often of income, social class, or parental education, many pre-kindergartners are growing up in homes where reading and writing are not valued (Adams, 1990). Often these beginning kindergarten students who lack literacy experiences at home are not adequately prepared for school because of the lack of rich literary environments.

The good news is that with PA instruction these students can greatly improve in all areas of phonological awareness. When kids with reading difficulties are trained in phonological awareness they are significantly accelerated in reading achievement (Adams, 1990). As a teacher reads through this manual he or she may wonder why the manual incorporates listening activities with the reading process. "Reading and listening are receptive language processes. They involve many of the
same cognitive processes—those of constructing and comprehending meaning” (Schulhauser, 2001). Phonological awareness activities play a large role in the development of listening and speaking. A major component of reading success is developing speaking and listening (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998). Because kindergarteners need many purposeful, engaging, and meaningful phonological awareness activities, this manual is a compilation of a wide-range of phonological awareness listening activities with many adaptations for ESL Spanish speaking students.

One may wonder why this manual includes ESL adaptations. Children who have a primary language other than English make up a sizeable portion of the nation’s students. “Recent demographic data indicate that English-language learners, (ELLs) in public pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade schools number more than 5 million, or 10.1% of total enrollment. The primary language of the vast majority (nearly 80%) of ELL students in the United States is Spanish” (Yopp & Stapleton, 2008). With teaching becoming more demanding with mandates, curriculum, assessments, in-services, and testing requirements teachers have little time to adapt non-ESL lessons for Spanish speaking students. By using this manual teachers will find it easier to meet their ELL students’ needs.

Because phonological awareness is an auditory skill, there is no need for teachers to provide worksheets and create time-consuming materials like
flashcards, games, etc. to improve their students PA skills. Teachers can use this manual to easily incorporate PA into their daily reading lessons.

❖ What Does Today’s Research Say About Phonological Awareness?

Research indicates students having strong phonological awareness levels learn to read with more ease and more rapidly than students who lack phonological awareness. The National Reading Panel, comprised of leading reading researchers, representatives from higher education, reading teachers, educational administrators, and parents were assembled to assess the status of research based knowledge on the various approaches to teaching children to read (Reutzel & Cooter, 2005). After examining the scientific research the National Reading Panel, (2000) determined five important reading instructional areas that teachers should be trained to teach in their classrooms. One of the five areas identified was the area of phonemic awareness (National Reading Panel Report, 2000).

Phonemic awareness falls under the umbrella of phonological awareness. It is a major component of phonological awareness. Instruction in phonemic awareness involves teaching children to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken syllables and words” (National Reading Panel Report, 2000). “Phonemes are the smallest units making up spoken language. English consists of about 41 phonemes. Phonemes combine to form syllables and words” (NRP, 2000). Not very many words contain one phoneme, such as a (a) or i (i.) Most words consist of a blend of phonemes, such as no (n-o) with two phonemes, ship (sh-i-p) with three phonemes, or plonk with four
phonemes (p-l-o-p). Phonemes are different from letters that represent phonemes in the spellings of words. While there are 26 letters in the alphabet, there are 40 different sounds of speech, and 69 grapheme units (Smith, 1977, p. 141). Single letters do not represent many language sounds. With the English languages many grapheme units, learning to read is a more challenging and more complicated endeavor for the learner.

Phonemic awareness skills are critical to the decoding process. Decoding skills are the skills necessary to analyze and interpret correctly the spoken or graphic symbols of a familiar language (SIL, 2008). A significant part of decoding is the sounding out of words, which serves two purposes. The first being it allows students a way of independently identifying words that are unfamiliar. The second being sounding out focuses students' attention on the order and identities of letters, (Adams, 1990). Phonemic awareness is highly related to a child's ability to decode. Children who are not able to decode are left two options when reading independently. They can rely on inconsistent context clues, or they are forced to seek help from a teacher or other student (Adams, 1990). For kindergarteners without a solid foundation of phonemic awareness, independent reading becomes nearly impossible. A child lacking phonological awareness confuses or omits a phoneme or phonemes in a word, which confuses the meaning of a word. For example, a child who lacks phonemic awareness may be presented in text with the word *fled*, and verbally segment the individual phonemes, /f/, /l/, /e/, /d/, and then
blend the word orally as fed. A child lacking phonemic awareness may listen to the sounds /r/a/m/, in the word ram, but believe those sounds blended together form the word ran. For example verbally separating the word "pan" into three distinct phonemes, /p/, /æ/, and /n/, requires the phonemic awareness skill of segmenting. "Converging evidence suggests that specific phonological tasks, especially phonemic segmentation are strong predictors of beginning reading ability (Oudeans, 2003).

According to Adams, "phonemic awareness on entering school may be the single most powerful determinant of their success, or failure, in learning to read" (Adams, 1990). "Nearly 20 studies have demonstrated that when children who are weak in phonemic awareness, receive appropriate instruction, (even if only 15-20 minutes, for seven weeks) they improve much more rapidly in reading and spelling than do control groups (Edelen-Smith, 1997).

This teacher's manual will provide teachers with phonological awareness activities to help improve their kindergarten students' understanding of the alphabetic principle, phonetic decoding skills and vocabulary. All and all when implemented properly the activities included in this manual will aid in developing strong kindergarten readers.
Why Are the Phonological Awareness Activities Focused on Listening?

A major component of reading success is developing speaking and listening (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998). Phonological awareness activities play a large role in listening and speaking. Phonological awareness is an auditory skill there is no need to use worksheets or flashcards or other materials. In order to train students' ears to hear the distinct sounds, instruction should incorporate listening and speaking rather than writing and reading. While phonological awareness is related to phonics, phonological awareness is a precursor to phonics. Phonics deals with letter-sound relationships specifically the ability to perceive both similarities and differences in phonemes. But it is only once the student can hear the distinct sounds in words, that he or she can relate them to their representations in print (Durkin, 1972).
How Should I Teach Phonological Awareness?

Phonological awareness instruction begins by demonstrating the relationships of word parts to wholes. The first major reading concept is demonstrating to students that sentences are broken up into words. By learning this concept students begin to realize that oral language is comprised of smaller linguistic units (Schulhauser, 2001). This is because students must first understand that spoken and written sentences are made up of a series of words before they can begin to identify and manipulate distinct phonemes in words. Students are first instructed to count how many words they hear in a spoken sentence. Students must learn this skill before breaking actual words in the sentence into their distinct syllables. Once the students understand part-whole relationships at the sentence level then they can progress to the word level, by segmenting multi-syllable words into their different syllables.

When teaching PA skills it is best to begin with easier words and then progress to more difficult ones. It is important to understand what constitutes a word as "easy" or "difficult". Kameenui (1995) provides five characteristics that make a word easier or more difficult to phonetically identify and/or manipulate.

1. The size of the phonological unit (e.g., it is easier to break sentences into words and words into syllables than to break syllables into phonemes).
2. The number of phonemes in the word (e.g., it is easier to break phonemically short words such as no, see and cap than snort, sleep or scrap).

3. Phoneme position in words (e.g., initial consonants are easier than final consonants and middle consonants are most difficult).

4. Phonological properties of words (e.g., continuant such as /s/ and /m/ are easier than very brief sounds such as /t/).

5. Phonological awareness challenges. (i.e., rhyming and initial phoneme identification is easier than blending and segmenting.)

After reviewing the research determining how phonological awareness should be taught the specific phonological skills are listed in the order they should be taught. Syllabication, rhyming, and beginning, middle, and ending sounds should be taught in the mentioned sequence. Blending and segmenting take more time to mastery and require a lot of practice and phonological training. They should be webbed throughout reading instruction from the beginning of they year until the end of the school year for students to be truly successful with them. After researching different phonological awareness and its relation to kindergarten teaching the following major components were found to be the fundamental building blocks of a kindergarten PA curriculum. Topics addressed include the role of teaching phonics, blending and segmenting, syllabication, rhyming, and initial, middle, and ending sounds. Below each skill or subset of skills is research justifying and explaining each topics need for its instructional implementation in the kindergarten classroom.
Section II: Classroom Activities Organized by Focus Skill

Now that you are aware of the research supporting the importance of phonological and phonemic awareness, you are ready to get started. This program is sequenced according to difficulty. It is important to instruct the concepts in the order they are listed for your students to be most successful.
Syllabication

dog-gy  per-ro

"Syllable-splitting tasks can thus be seen to tap an essential...Consistent with this impression; they have been shown to be strong predictors of the extent to which kindergarteners will succeed with first-grade reading instruction" (Marilyn Jager Adams, 1990).
Activity 1: Kings and Queens

At the beginning of the game the children stand in a circle. Acting as a King or Queen the teacher starts by issuing an order (the actions below) pausing between the syllables (e.g., march-ing, march-ing, march-ing). Students then do the action rhythmically so that everyone is in time with each other. Once the children get the hang of it, the teacher designates a student to be the king/queen and that child issues the order.

waving stretching hugging hopping curtsying sewing nodding hammering wiggling flying marching tiptoeing bowing waving hugging

ESL Spanish Adaptation

vo-lar (fly) es-ti-rar (stretch) sal-tar (jump) mar-char (march) a-bra-zar (hug) a-plau-dir (clap)

Activity 2: Clap for Names

Read the poem below "Alan's Apple" to students.

Adam's Apple
Adam has an apple,
as sweet as can be.
The apple is from his grandma's tree.
A-dam!

Say the word "Adam" and clap once for each syllable in his name. Tell students the name "Adam" has two syllables. Have volunteers substitute their names for Adam's. Clap to find the number of syllables in each student's name.

Adapted from McGraw Hill Reading Kindergarten Teacher's Guide.

ESL Spanish Adaptation

La Manzana
Mario tiene una manzana,
Es muy dulce, sí
La manzana es del árbol de ti.
Mar-i-o!

*Substitute student's names for Mario.
Activity #3: Syllables in the Classroom

Have students take turns choosing items in the room (I.e. window, door, table, calendar, etc.) Have students repeat the word. Have students tap the number of syllables in each word on the desk or floor. For example, for the word window, they would tap twice.

Here are some examples if students have trouble thinking of items.

- computer
- pencil
- paper
- backpack
- calculator
- book
- marker
- globe
- library
- cushion
- alphabet
- carpet

Adapted from How Now Brown Cow: Phoneme Awareness for Collaborative Classrooms by Patricia Edelen-Smith (1997).
Activity #4: Troll Talk

At the beginning of the game have a small group of students sit in a circle. Then the teacher reads the following story:

"Once upon a time there was a kind little troll who loved to give people presents. The only catch was that the troll always wanted people to know what their present was before he gave it to them. The problem was that the little troll talked very strange. He broke words into syllables. If he was going to give a child a “bicycle”, he would say bi-cy-cle. The child could only have the present if he or she could tell the troll how many syllables were in the word."

Now the teacher pretends to be the troll and presents a “present” word to each child, pronouncing the present syllable by syllable. The child must tell the troll how many syllables are in the word. Here are some examples of “present” words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>syllables</th>
<th>syllables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barbie</td>
<td>co-co-nut</td>
<td>rhin-o-cer-oses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base-ball</td>
<td>com-put-er</td>
<td>rol-ler blade-s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basket-ball</td>
<td>fin-ger-paints</td>
<td>spa-ghet-ti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-cy-cle</td>
<td>fris-bee</td>
<td>tel-e-vis-ion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boom-er-ang</td>
<td>ti-ger</td>
<td>tramp-o-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kit-ten</td>
<td>hipp-o-pot-a-mus</td>
<td>uk-u-e-l-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nin-ten-do</td>
<td>wat-er-melon</td>
<td>cam-er-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pep-per-mint</td>
<td>choc-o-late</td>
<td>play-sta-tion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity #5: Broken Words

Tell students, “The words I say have fallen off a wall. They are broken and we need to help them by putting them back together. I will give you the two broken parts of the words. Say each word part after me. Then we will all say the word together.”

Have children blend the following syllables into words.

car-toon  gar-den-er  mu-sic
show-er  i-ci-cle  sub-way
pre-sent  cir-cus  gold-en
at-ti-tude  a-ma-zing  shoul-ders
in-side  pa-per  trac-tor

ESL Spanish Adaptation:

ca-sa  ga-to  pla-tâ-no
ca-ma  me-sa  ho-ja
fre-sa  cal-a-ba-za  no-che
Activity #6: Syllable Deletion

This lesson is only to be introduced after students can easily break words into syllables and blend words by the given syllables. As you break the word apart use your hands to model. Start with fists together in front of you. As you break the word apart pull apart your hands. This gives students a visual to help them.

Tell students, "Listen to this word: rainy
Break the word into its parts. Rain-y: Now I am going to say rainy without the -y. Rainy without -y is rain."

Have children repeat the following words after you say each one, and then follow the directions above to say the word without its parts.

- moonshine without moon-
- picture without -ture
- yellow without yel-
- picnic without pic-
- street without -eet
- wallflower without wall-
- dinosaur without -saur
- ponytail without -tail
- tomorrow without to-

ESL Spanish Adaptation

- libro without -bro
- huevo without -vo
- tomate without -to
- rana without -ra
- abeja without -abe
- barco without -bar

Because most children find rhyming to be fun and easy rhyme practice is an excellent entry into phonological awareness (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998).

*It is important to note that Spanish rhyming words are similar to English rhyming words. Almost all the rhymes begin with a last stressed vowel and may consist of one, two or three syllable.

In Spanish, one syllable rhyme is known as masculine rhyme, two syllable rhymes is known as feminine rhyme and three syllable rhymes is not termed because it is extremely rare. Rhyming is not nearly as prevalent as it is in the English language. Rhyming is not commonly taught in Spanish speaking countries, but providing Spanish rhyming activities may help ESL Spanish students transition their knowledge of Spanish word rhyming into English word rhyming.
Activity #1: Clap for Rhyming Words

Say the rhyme "Baa Baa Black Sheep" or "Humpty Dumpty". Have students repeat the rhymes. When children are able to say it with you, ask them to clap on the words that rhyme.

**Baa, Baa Black Sheep**

Baa, baa, black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir,
Three bags full.

One for my master,
One for my dame,
And one for the little boy
Who lives down the lane.

Baa, baa, black sheep,
Have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir,
Three bags full.

**Humpty Dumpty**

Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall;
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the king's horses
And all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty Together again.
Activity #2: Fan Your Face

Say, "nan/fan". Have students repeat the words. Tell the students the two words rhyme. Have students close their eyes. Give the students the following word pairs. If the word pair words rhyme students fan their face. If they do not rhyme, they leave their hands in their lap.

- can/fan (yes)
- pet/dan (no)
- bat/tan (no)
- man/dog (no)
- jan/van (yes)
- lan/pan (yes)
- zan/zig (no)
- pan/fan (yes)

Adapted from McGraw Hill Reading Kindergarten Teacher's Guide.

ESL Spanish Adaptation

- amor/actor (yes)
- gato/fresa (no)
- gato/pato (yes)
- casa/calabaza (yes)
- uvas/burro (no)
- río/frio (yes)
Activity #3: Sam Lost His Jam

Read the sentences "Sam lost his Jam," "Sam lost his ham," to your students. In a small or whole group have students respond with things that rhyme with the following names.

Sam lost his __________. (i.e. jam, ham, etc.)

Mike lost his __________. (i.e. bike, trike, etc.)

Trish lost her __________. (i.e. dish, fish, etc.)

Nat lost her ___________. (i.e. cat, rat, hat, etc.)

Ren lost his ___________. (i.e. pen, men, etc.)

Fred lost his ___________. (i.e. bed, head, etc.)

Meg lost her ___________. (i.e. leg, peg, etc.)

Nan lost her ___________. (i.e. pan, can, tan)

Pig lost her ___________. (i.e. wig, jig, etc.)

ESL Spanish Adaptation

Juana lost her ____________. (i.e. rana, banana)

Chasa lost her ________________. (i.e. masa, casa)

Paco lost his _________________. (i.e. taco, chaco, faco)

Adapted from McGraw Hill Reading Kindergarten Teacher’s Guide.
Activity #4: Action Rhymes

Have two students volunteer. Tell students they are going to be participating in action rhymes. Have one student do one action and other student do the other action. See if students listening can figure out the rhyming actions.

- mopping/hopping
- eating/meeting
- walking/talking
- riding/sliding
- fanning/tanning
- batting/patting
- flying/tying
Activity #5: Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down

Give students the word pairs. If the word rhymes have the students give a “thumbs up”. If the word does not rhyme they give a “thumbs down”.

bug/rug cat/pat fog/log hat/shoe car/grass
star/car plate/eight nine/fit fun/sun button/glove
tin/pin lap/trap six/desk duck/Dan bike/Mike
Dan/man far/car chair/mouse sock/rock tall/bill

Adapted from How Now Brown Cow: Phoneme Awareness for Collaborative Classrooms by Patricia Edelen-Smith (1997).
**Activity #6: One Potato, Two Potato**

Students sit in a circle with both fists in front of them. After teaching the students the rhymes below have them recite the rhymes. The teacher then moves around the circle and gently pounds out the stressed syllable (bold words) on the students' fists. If a child is pounded on the last rhyming word they must put their hand behind their back. As soon as a child loses both hands, she or he is out. The last child remaining wins.

**One Potato**

"One Potato, two potato, three potato, four,"

"Five potato, six potato, seven potato more."

**Eeny, Meeny, Miny, Moe**

Eeny, meeny, miny, moe,
Catch a tiger by the toe
If he hollers let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

**Ice Cream**

I Scream,
You scream,
We all scream,
For ICE CREAM!
Activity #7: Related Rhyming

The teacher produces two words that are rhymed. They then have individual children respond by giving the second word that is meaningfully related to the first.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cat</td>
<td>hat</td>
<td>dog</td>
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<tr>
<td>car</td>
<td>far</td>
<td>truck</td>
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<tr>
<td>wig</td>
<td>big</td>
<td>head</td>
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<tr>
<td>mouse</td>
<td>house</td>
<td>rat</td>
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<td>bag</td>
<td>rag</td>
<td>sack</td>
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<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>hair</td>
<td>desk</td>
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<td>walk</td>
<td>talk</td>
<td>run</td>
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<td>rose</td>
<td>hose</td>
<td>flower</td>
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<tr>
<td>book</td>
<td>hook</td>
<td>read</td>
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<td>face</td>
<td>lace</td>
<td>smile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day</td>
<td>play</td>
<td>night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mom</td>
<td>tom</td>
<td>dad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Children will give nonsense rhymes, which is fine because the purpose of rhyming is to attend to the sounds of language. The purpose of this game is to show that almost any word can be rhymed.

Adapted from Phonemic Awareness for Young Children (1998) by Marilyn Jager Adams, Barbara Foorman, Ingvar Lundberg and Terri Beeler.
Activity #8: Clue in to Rhyming

The teacher reads several rhyme phrases aloud, emphasizing the rhyming words by saying the rhyming words a little louder than the others. The challenge is for the students to complete each rhyme aloud.

A cat is wearing a _____________. (hat)
A mouse lives in a _____________. (house)
A moose has a tooth that is _____________. (loose)
A pig is dancing a _____________. (jig)
The kittens are wearing _____________. (mittens)
A sheep is sound _____________. (asleep)
A bear has long brown _____________. (hair)
An ape is eating a _____________. (grape)
We drove far in the _____________. (car)
Smell the rose with your _____________. (nose)
Write 1-10 with a _____________. (pen)
Airplanes fly in the _____________. (sky)
The sheep drive in a _____________. (jeep)
A goat is sailing a _____________. (boat)
Activity #9: Rhyming Cargo

Have students sit in a circle. Make sure you have something to toss like a beanbag or ball. To begin the game, say we are going to pretend we are in a plane. Our plane only carries cargo, or stuff in it that rhymes. To start say “the plane is loaded with cheese.” Then toss the beanbag to a student in the circle. The student is required to produce a word that rhymes with the item the ship is loaded with (i.e. cheese). Continue the game until the students run out of rhymes. Then begin a game with a new type of rhyming cargo.

The following are examples that can be used:

The plane is loaded with peas. (cheese, flees, bees, keys, etc.)
The plane is loaded with frogs. (dogs, logs, hogs, etc.)
The plane is loaded with mats. (hats, cats, bats, rats, etc.)
The plane is loaded with jars. (cars, bars, stars, etc.)
The plane is loaded with rugs. (bugs, hugs, mugs, etc.)
The plane is loaded with cots. (dots, pots, tots, etc.)
The plane is loaded with rings. (swings, things, etc.)
Activity #10: Pat a Cake

Use the nursery rhyme below to teach how the letter names, B, C, D, G, P, T, V, and Z all rhyme with words ending with the long e sound (i.e. me).

**Pat-A-Cake**

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake,
   Baker's man!
   Bake us a cake,
   As fast as you can;
   Pat it and prick it, (Pretend to stir bowl, then prick cake)
   And mark it with B, (Make letter in the air)
   Put it in the oven,
   For you and me.
Activity #11: Animal Rhymes

Teach students the song below by singing a line and having them sing back. Then tell them you will start each line of the song but they have to say the last word in the song that rhymes with the animal name. The words they fill in are underlined.

Animal Rhymes
Hen, hen, count to ten;
Goat, goat, get your coat;
Pig, pig, dance a jig.

Mouse, mouse, build a house;
Chick, chick, make it quick;
Cat, cat, find your hat.

Bear, bear, go upstairs,
Mite, mite, say good-night;
Sheep, sheep, go to sleep.

Song by: Ann Underhill and Eleanor Smith
Initial and Ending Sounds

Initial and final sounds are a first and critical step in phonemic awareness, but for many children it is a difficult one (Marilyn Jager Adams, 1990).
Activity #1: Sound That Name

The teacher sings the song below, while inserting different letter sounds in the blank. The song is the tune, "If you’re Happy and You Know It”.

If your Name Begins With...

If your name begins with /_/ stand up.
If your name begins with /_/ stand up.
If your name begins with /_/ stand up and spin around,
If your name begins with /_/ stand up.

If your Name Ends With...

If your name ends with /_/ stand up.
If your name ends with /_/ stand up.
If your name ends with /_/ stand up and spin around,
If your name ends with /_/ stand up.

ESL Spanish Adaptation
Insert a beginning sound in the blank, students with that sound will stand up and turn around instead of bowing.

Si Tu Nombre Tiene...
Si tu nombre tiene _____ levantate,
Si tu nombre tiene _____ levantate,
Si tu nombre tiene ______levantate, y revuelte.
Si tu nombre tiene _____ levantate.

Adapted from Developing Fluency: Phonological Awareness (2001) by Candy Schulhauser.
Activity #2: What’s the Word for These Sounds?

The teacher uses the following song to teach students to identify the beginning sounds in words. The song is to the tune of “Old McDonald Had a Farm”. The teacher fills the word blanks in with the word sets below. The teacher sings the song and waits for students to respond with the appropriate beginning sound (not the letter name).

What’s the word for these three words?

______, ______, and ______.

(Wait for student response).

_/_/ is the sound that starts these words

______, ______, and ______.

With a /_/ here and a /_/ there

Here a /_/, there a /_/ everywhere a /t/, /t/.

_/_/ is the sound that starts these words:

______, ______, and ______.

Three Word Sets:

ball, bear, big  duck, drill, dump  hot, hill, hike
jungle, jump, jello  map, monkey, man  pickle, pop, pail
zebra, zig, zag  tiger, top, tall  sit, sun, sap

ESL Spanish Adaptations:

manzana, mono, maestra  rato, rico, río  tortuga, tiburón, taco
bom-bon, barco, burro  pollo, policía, pan  carne, casa, campo

Adapted from How Now Brown Cow: Phoneme Awareness for Collaborative Classrooms by Patricia Edelen-Smith (1997).
Activity #3: Name Chant with Initial Sounds

Use the following chant to review initial consonants and vowel sounds.

   My name is ______________.
   I like ______________and ______________.

Whatever name you insert in the first line, the class comes up with items for the second line that start with the same sound of the alphabet.

   For example:
   My name is Jill.
   I like jelly and jo-jo's.

You can use your student's names or choose a name that starts with the letter sounds your students have learned.
Activity #4: The Beginning Song

Have students listen for the beginning sounds in the words of a song. Sing the following words to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell."

Big, bug, and ball,
Big, bug, and ball,
/b/ is at the beginning of big, bug, and ball.

Repeat the song, using the following words and sounds. Have children sing along with you. Pause for them to supply the initial sound of each set of words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rug, rip, ripe /r/</th>
<th>Ted, tug, top /t/</th>
<th>pan, pit, pill /p/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fat, fit, farm /f/</td>
<td>Map, mug, moon /m/</td>
<td>dog, dip, dot /d/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sun, soup, sit /s/</td>
<td>Doll, dug, dill /d/</td>
<td>fun, flip, food /f/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ESL Spanish Adaptation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>perro, pato, pizza /p/</th>
<th>Cosa, casa, color /c/</th>
<th>rojo, rodilla, roca /r/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mano, mono, morado /m/</td>
<td>boca, brazo, blanco /b/</td>
<td>cabeza, cola, compra /c/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pies, papel, plato /p/</td>
<td>azul, agua, aceite /a/</td>
<td>oso, ojo, oro /o/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity #5: Ending Sounds We Hear

Remind students how words are made up of sounds and they can listen for the ending sound in words, as well as beginning and middle sounds. The teacher sings the song above and then pauses to allow students to give the correct ending sound for the sets of words.

Listen carefully with each ear,
Then say the ending sound you hear:
Bed, hid, need, /d/.

Insert the sets of words in the song below for more practice.

book, leak, soak (/k/)
rug, wig, frog (/g/)
hum, boom, steam (/m/)

zip, clap, sleep (/p/)
clean, twin, rain (/n/)
fit, jet, neat (/t/)

ESL Spanish Adaptations
rana, abeja, vaca (/a/)
huevo, conejo, rojo (/o/)
corazón, patín, león (/n/)

papel, béisbol, sol (/l/)
bufinda, cama, silla (/a/)
tren, van, creyón (/n/)

Adapted from Harcourt Publisher's StoryTown Kindergarten Edition (2009).
"Instruction, which systematically teaches letter-sound correspondences and phonological blending, cannot be overemphasized" (Oudeans, 2003).
Activity #1: Shout it Out

The teacher sings the song below and teaches it to students. The teacher has the students sing the song. Then he or she segments the following words. The students then blend the word together and give the word.

**Shout It Out**

If you think you know this word, shout it out!
If you think you know this word, shout it out!
If you think you know this word,
Then tell me what you heard,
If you think you know this word, shout it out!

The teacher segments a word such as /k/-/a/-/t/ and the children respond with the blended word.

/b/-/a/-/t/  /t/-/a/-/t/  /r/-/a/-/m/
/h/-/o/-/p/  /c/-/o/-/t/  /l/-/i/-/t/
/p/-/i/-/c/  /f/-/o/-/x/  /b/-/u/-/g/
/s/-/o/-/x/  /r/-/o/-/c/  /s/-/i/-/x/

Adapted from *How Now Brown Cow: Phoneme Aw`areness for Collaborative Classrooms* by Patricia Edelen-Smith (1997).
**Activity #2: Syllable, Syllable, Set**

The teacher sings the song below and teaches it to his or her students. The teacher asks one student to stand up. The teacher then whispers a different classmates name in his or her ear. The class sings the song. After the class sings the student who is in front of the class stretches the name given into syllables, then the class says the whole student's name.

*Syllable, Syllable, Set*
Syllable, syllable, set
Tell me, what name you get.

*(The students say the name whispered.)*

The game continues until all students in the class or small group have had a turn to stand up.

*Note: This is a great game to play at the beginning of the year for students to learn one another's names.*
Activity #4: Say the Word
The teacher says the three sounds in a consonant-vowel-consonant word (CVC word). The students then blend the word together and say the whole word.

\[ /c/ /a/ /t/ \text{ (cat)} \quad /p/ /a/ /n/ \text{ (pan)} \quad /s/ /i/ /ck/ \text{ (sick)} \]
\[ /n/ /a/ /p/ \text{ (nap)} \quad /l/ /o/ /g/ \text{ (log)} \quad /d/ /o/ /l/ \text{ (doll)} \]
\[ /p/ /a/ /t/ \text{ (pat)} \quad /r/ /u/ /n/ \text{ (run)} \quad /s/ /a/ /p/ \text{ (sap)} \]
Programs that include segmenting instruction as a major part of the curriculum result in the most positive effect on one's ability to read (National Reading Panel Report, 2000).
**Activity #1:**
**Stretching Names**

Teach students the song below while clapping for each word.

**Who's the Friend Next to You?**

"Jackson, Jackson how do you do? Who's that friend right next to you?"

jjjj-aaaaa-kkkkkkk-ssssss-ooooo-nnnnn.

Both students and teacher clap and say a verse for each child in class. They say the next child's name very slowly, stretching palms far apart as the word is stretched; jjjj-aaaaa-ckckckck-ssssss-ooooo-nnnnn. To practice blending ask the students to clap once and say the whole name. (I.e. Jackson).
Activity #2: 
Listen, Listen

Teach students the song below.

Listen to My Word
Listen, listen to my word,
Then tell me all the sound you heard: pan
/p/ is one,
/a/ is two,
/n/ is last it’s true.
Thanks for listening to my word,
And saying the sounds you heard!

Complete the song with these words one at a time.

run /r/ /u/ /n/ pig /p/ /i/ /g/ bit /b/ /i/ /t/
sat /s/ /a/ /t/ shop /sh/ /o/ /p/ tot /t/ /o/ /t/
can /c/ /a/ /n/ box /b/ /o/ /x/ ben /b/ /e/ /n/
Activity #3: 
Head, Waist, Toes

Have children stand as they listen to you say a three-phoneme word from the list below. Have them touch their head as they say the first phoneme, waist as they say the second and toes as they say the third.

bat /b/ /a/ /t/       dab /d/ /a/ /b/       fan /f/ /a/ /n/
fed /f/ /e/ /d/       hex /h/ /e/ /x/       men /m/ /e/ /n/
bit /b/ /i/ /t/       dip /d/ /i/ /p/       kim /k/ /i/ /m/
cob /c/ /o/ /b/       dot /d/ /o/ /t/       yon /y/ /o/ /n/
hut /h/ /u/ /t/       pug /p/ /u/ /g/       tut /t/ /u/ /t/

*Variation: You can also do this doing the shoulder slide. Start at shoulder, elbow, and wrist instead of head, waist, and toes.
Activity #4:
Segmenting Baseball

Tell students you are going to play segmenting baseball. Have each student hold up his or her fingers each time he or she is able to correctly segment a three-sound word. Tell students, “In baseball to make it to home plate you have to round four bases. We will go around taking turns segmenting words. Each time you correctly segment a word you get to round a base, and put up one finger. The first person with four fingers up wins.”

Use the word list below.

ban /b/ /a/ /n/     cap /c/ /a/ /p/     fat /f/ /a/ /t/
bed /b/ /e/ /d/     met /m/ /e/ /t/     wed /w/ /e/ /d/
bib /b/ /i/ /b/     did /d/ /i/ /d/     his /h/ /i/ /s/
cox /c/ /o/ /x/     dot /d/ /o/ /t/     pop /p/ /o/ /p/
dud /d/ /u/ /d/     gut /g/ /u/ /t/     jug /j/ /u/ /g/
Activity #5:
Segmentation Cheer

Teach the song below to the students. Each time you say the cheer, change the words in the third line using the word list below. Have children segment the words, sound by sound.

**Segmentation Cheer**

Listen to my cheer.  
Then shout the sounds you hear.  
_Run! Run! Run!_

Let's take apart the word *run*.

Give me the beginning sound. (*Children respond with /r/.*).

Give me the middle sound. (*Children respond with /u/.*).

Give me the ending sound. (*Children respond with /n/.*).

That's right!  
/r/ /u/ /n/—Run! Run! Run!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Beginning Sound</th>
<th>Middle Sound</th>
<th>Ending Sound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bag</td>
<td>/b/ /a/ /g/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fax</td>
<td>/f/ /a/ /x/</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>map</td>
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<tr>
<td>hum</td>
<td>/h/ /u/ /m/</td>
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</table>
Section III: Additional Ways to Incorporate Phonological Awareness Into the School Day

Phonological awareness can easily be incorporated throughout the school day. It is an integral part of any language arts program. PA is an important part of reading instruction by helping students to become aware of the sounds heard in speech can be accomplished in a variety of other ways.

One great way to incorporate phonological awareness is through songs. These can be sung while walking to class or while the students are in transitions during class time. Use the songs listed in the curriculum above to provide extra practice, as well as provide smooth transitions between activities.

Using big books and charts provide the opportunity for students to work on print features. They also are a good way to focus instruction on PA skills. For example, if a teacher is reading a story, the students can fill in the rhyme. The teacher may also ask students to listen for words that start with a particular sound.

“Students' knowledge of phonological awareness can be observed and assessed in the daily literacy activities in the kindergarten classroom” (Adams, 1990). A good time for teachers to observe a students sense of PA is when the students are working on their independent writing. Kindergarten students' use of invented or phonetic spelling allows a teacher to observe what PA skills a student has or doesn't have. When these young children begin to write, they often start
with random letters and move to initial sounds in words to eventually spelling all
words phonetically correct. This practice enables students to become more
effective readers and writers.

Now that you are armed with the knowledge and are aware of the
importance phonological awareness plays in the classroom you will continue to
discover more unique ways to bring this understanding to your students.
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*University of Pittsburgh*, 1-24.


from CWU ERIC database.


Procedures

Research was gathered from several sources to explore the importance phonological awareness has on the development of early readers. Activities were adapted from research articles, reading curriculums and books about reading early reading instruction. Searches were conducted via the Internet, focused on scholarly and peer-reviewed journals. These searches were performed using the databases available through Central Washington University. Education ProQuest, ERIC, and Education Full Text were primarily used. Books on the topics of phonological and phonemic awareness were purchased from Amazon.com. Reading curriculums were borrowed from East Valley School District, as well as the Central Washington University library. Information pertaining to the importance of phonological awareness and how it is developed was organized and synthesized in Chapter Two. Other research indicating different listening activities were organized, modified, and included in Chapter Four.

The manual was designed to aid kindergarten teachers in the implementation of phonological awareness activities in their own classrooms. Upon completion of the manual it was distributed to the kindergarten and resource room teachers and the author’s school.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY

The purpose of this project was to create a manual for teachers to use daily in their classrooms to implement phonological awareness. This guide will help teachers quickly engage students with phonological awareness by easily implementing listening activities in order to help students improve their phonological abilities. By incorporating these activities kindergarten students will improve in their abilities to hear sounds in words. This is a resource to easily incorporate phonological awareness throughout the school day.

Phonological awareness is an important part of reading instruction by helping students to become aware of the sounds heard in speech. Kindergarteners lacking PA have a difficult time in early reading and can fall behind their peers if they do not increase their phonological awareness.

While many traditional kindergarten activities like nursery rhymes and song rhythms help to train students’ ears, not all students’ ears become phonologically attune using only these long-enjoyed traditional methods. Many students today enter kindergarten less prepared than ever before because they lack literacy experiences at home. That is why today’s kindergarten teacher must help their students develop phonological awareness through daily instruction. This manual incorporates the important aspects of kindergarten phonological awareness. After researching different phonological awareness and its relation to kindergarten teaching the following major components were found to be the fundamental building blocks of a kindergarten PA curriculum. Research indicates these phonological skills should be taught in this specific order. Syllabication,
rhyming, and beginning, middle, and ending sounds should be taught in the mentioned sequence (Gleitman, Rozin, (1972), Adams, Foorman, Lundberg & Beeler, (1998), Edelen-Smith, (1997), Qi & O’Connor, (2000), Schulhauser, (2001), Runge & Watkins, (2006).) Blending and segmenting take more time to mastery and require more practice and phonological training. They should be webbed throughout reading instruction from the beginning of the year until the end of the school year for most students to master them. The activities listed in this manual can be incorporated throughout the school day and take only a few minutes to teach. The activities included work for both large and small reading groups. This manual provides motivating activities for teachers to engage students in listening activities to deepen students’ phonological abilities. Regardless of ethnic, economic, or special needs groups, incorporating phonological awareness instruction students will substantially improve students reading achievement (Oudeans, 2003).

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on an examination of literature and a belief that phonological awareness instruction is an integral and necessary part of any kindergarten reading program. Teachers must decide how and when to use particular materials and techniques depending on their students’ needs. When making these decisions teachers must have the knowledge and the understanding to properly use the tools they are given. The best cookware and utensils do not make the best chef. He or she must learn to use the tools properly and effectively. Teachers must realize the same. While deliberate and systematic phonological awareness instruction profits many children, it is important to consider a few important points. “First spontaneous transfer
from one phonological awareness skill such as phoneme segmentation to another untrained skill such as blending is a rare occurrence” (Troia, 2004, p. 4). “Many times when students make gains they often attenuate in as few as 18 months unless training is followed up with additional phonics instruction” (Bus & Van Ijzendoorn, 1999, p.413). The good news is that the majority of first grade reading curriculums when used appropriately provide students and teachers with solid phonics instruction.

**Recommendations**

Based on the trial tests of the author would like to make a few recommendations. Because the implementation guide was trial tested for a limited time, more trial tests implementing phonological awareness activities would be available. Additional trial tests and accompanying assessment of activities from other kindergarten teachers would be beneficial for all teachers who are implementing the listening activities in their kindergarten classrooms.

The author’s experience during the trial tests bring about the following recommendations for teachers who are thinking about including phonological listening activities into their daily reading instruction. In order to keep students at an instructional level when incorporating the activities, teachers must know their students abilities and recognize those students who have speech and communication difficulties. Students must also receive some training in listening to one another and not shouting out answers to early so that all students have the appropriate amount of time to process. As teachers begin implementing these activities in their classrooms, they should continually assess students so students do not feel overwhelmed or under-challenged.
Students should enjoy the listening activities and be provided appropriate modeling and support along the way. With the appropriate support students will gain confidence in their abilities to hear and manipulate phonemes. Teachers should use student journal writing and daily reading work to assess students' phonological awareness levels. It has been suggested to review kindergarten students' journal writings to see whether or not students have a strong grasp of phonemic awareness. “After reviewing student writing it can be determined if students have PA if students writings include consonants and vowels containing correct letter combinations and sequences” (Routman, 2003, p.51). Training parents in phonological awareness will help them to provide their child with appropriate help at home. Since all of the activities are listening activities, after proper training parents may find ways to easily incorporate some of the activities above into their child’s home routine. It is important to note that parents should use their native language to engage their youngsters in activities that foster sensitivity to sounds in speech, even when the children are participating in English reading programs at school. Many teachers, who provide reading instruction in English, may be unsure about enlisting Spanish speaking parents help at home in regards to phonological awareness activities. Teachers may be concerned that the parents do not speak English well enough to support the classroom instruction, and they may believe that native-language support at home will interfere with what is happening at school. “However, the evidence regarding phonemic awareness reveals that, as with many aspects of reading development, native-language support at home is appropriate and desirable” (Yopp & Stapleton, 2008, p. 376). There is a close relationship between Spanish phonological awareness and English phonological awareness. “Sensitivity to syllables in Spanish may be particularly
important for later reading success, and the ability to segment words into their phonemes may play a critical role in reading acquisition” (Denton, Hasbouck, Weaver, & Riccio, 2000, p. 335).

With the high demands of teaching, teachers may feel overwhelmed at the idea of adding another reading component to their plate. Moreover, many teachers may feel that special preparations are necessary for practicing phonological awareness skills, but this manual attempts to demonstrate how easily PA can be incorporated into the day. After incorporating phonological awareness activities into their reading curriculum, teachers will quickly observe the important role that phonological awareness plays in their students’ abilities to decode text. By incorporating phonological awareness teachers can bridge the achievement gap and better prepare their young students for reading in the future.
CHAPTER SIX

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CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Graduate Studies

Final Examination of
Jill Florence Stephens
B.A. Whitworth College, 2003
For the Degree of
Master of Education
Reading Specialist

Committee in Charge
Dr. Gail Goss
Dr. Andrea Sledge    Dr. Sharryn Walker

Black Hall
Room 209
July 17, 2009
9:00am
Courses presented for the Master's Degree

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BIOLOGICAL INFORMATION

Jill Florence Stephens

Born [redacted]

Undergraduate Study:

Yakima Valley Community College, 1998-1999
Whitworth College, 1999-2003

Graduate Study:

Southeastern Louisiana University, 2005
Central Washington University, 2006-2009

Professional Experience

Teacher: The Dunham School, Baton Rouge, 2004-2006
Teacher: Moxee Elementary, 2006-present

Certification:

Initial Certificate, now being converted to a Continuing Certificate

Please note:
Biographical information redacted due to privacy concerns.