

Phonological Awareness

Awareness of speech sounds, such as rhyming or syllables. Children with phonological awareness skills recognize that words are made up of a number of sounds. Children who can hear and understand how words are made up of smaller sounds will be more successful at "sounding out" written words when they start to read.

This includes:

- Hearing and manipulating the smaller sounds in words (rhyming, syllables, starting sounds, etc.)
- Hearing and creating rhymes
- Saying words with sounds or "chunks" left out
- Putting sounds together to make a word

Ways to encourage this skill:

- Clap or jump along to songs and rhymes. This accentuates each sound and syllable as you sing it.
- Talk about rhyming words as you discover them in books or in daily life.
- Put out items on the table. Ask your child to choose the item that rhymes with whatever word you say.
- Some rhyming words don't look alike when they are written out. Write two columns on a page. Each column contains one word that matches the other. Have your child pick out or draw a line to connect the two rhyming words.