



PHONEMIC AWARENESS

EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION CHEAT SHEET

Why is this skill important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A phoneme is an individual sound. For example, the sound /k/ in cat, kitten, or jack. In these examples, the same sound, /k/, is made by three different letter combinations, c, k, and ck. • Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear individual sounds in words, combine or blend sounds into words, separate sounds in words, and manipulate sounds in words, such as when you change the sound /c/ in cat for /h/ and end up with hat. • Phonemic awareness is an important underlying skill for reading. When children have strong phonemic awareness, they are better able to decode words when they start reading.
How long and how often?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-15 minutes each day. • Daily in short lessons, and reinforced throughout the day. • Each phoneme should be introduced one at a time. Start with continuous phonemes, or those that you can easily draw out -- /m/ /s/ /f/. These include vowel phonemes. Unvoiced phonemes -- /t/ /p/ -- that are not able to be drawn out are taught next.
How to Explicitly Teach this Skill	<p>To introduce a new phoneme (individual sound, like /m/ in “mouse”):</p> <p><u>Step 1:</u> Say: I am going to say a word. I want you to listen for the first sound you hear in that word. Ready? Mouse (draw out the <i>m-mmmmouse</i>). What sound do you hear?</p> <p><u>Step 2:</u> Students reply: /m/</p> <p><u>Step 3:</u> That’s right! Now /m/ is for mouse. Let’s listen to another word: mmm-om. What sound do you hear?</p> <p><u>Step 4:</u> Students reply /m/</p> <p>Continue this sequence with more practice words. As you build their knowledge, you may lead into each lesson with a review of the phonemes you have taught before introducing a new one.</p>

	<p>To practice a skill, like blending or segmenting, using Elkonian boxes:</p> <p><u>Step 1:</u> Provide students with an image of Elkonian boxes.</p> <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <p><u>Step 2:</u> Say a word slowly: Whale</p> <p><u>Step 3:</u> Ask the child to repeat the word.</p> <p><u>Step 4:</u> Have the child count the number of phonemes in the word using the Elkonian boxes. They should point to one box for each sound they hear. So, for whale: /w/ /a/ /l/</p> <p>Students may also put one unit cube or other manipulative into each box instead of pointing. Use Elkonian boxes with 3 and 4 boxes to practice words with various numbers of phonemes.</p>			
Suggested Connections	Read rhyming picture books to practice phonemic awareness by identifying and creating new rhymes.			
Prep & Materials	Prepare Elkonian boxes and words that you will use for each phoneme ahead of time.			
Considerations/ Differentiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Phonemic awareness is an auditory skill, so students will not be using letters when they practice it. However, phonemic awareness activities can be incorporated into interventions for young students who are struggling with phonics because they have not mastered phonemic awareness. For these struggling readers, they should spend time engaged in both phonemic awareness and phonics instruction and activities.			
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scripts for teaching and modeling each phonemic awareness skill: https://www.reading-tutors.com/tips/TH_Tips_PhonAware.pdfMore information and a video about how to use Elkonian Boxes: http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/elkonin_boxesSpecific intervention plan for phonemic awareness using Elkonian boxes: http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/Phonics-Sound-Elkonin-Boxes.pdf (Includes lists of words that you can use with students to practice)Videos and more activities for phonemic awareness: http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/blending_games			