

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonemic Awareness lessons. Your child has spent two weeks working with syllables. Our lessons will now shift to listening for individual sounds, or **phonemes** in words. Phonemic awareness teaches students to hear individual sounds in words, and this supports the development of strong reading and writing skills. *"Phonemic awareness has been shown to be a very powerful predictor of later reading achievement. In fact, it [phonemic awareness] is a better predictor than more global measures such as IQ or general language proficiency" (Griffith and Olson, 1992).*

Phonemic awareness activities take place orally and are about having fun with language play. Therefore, there is no need for any writing or reading during this practice.

Consider using the following activities at home with your child:

- ★ **Wacky Words!** Give your child a nonsense "wacky" word and have them generate another nonsense word that rhymes with it. Say, "Tell me a wacky word that rhymes with zork?" Your child would then generate a nonsense word like → lork, bork, etc.

Try rhyming with these words too:
gax - vob - zunk - tark - foop - sout

Give your child praise for real words too!
Generating nonsense words can be tricky.

- ★ Can you **blend** (put together) three sounds to make a word? Say the sounds n - ě - t, your child will repeat those sounds back and then tell you the whole word, Child: n - ě - t → net.

h - ă - p → hop

s - ă - t → sat

b - ĩ - k → bike

- ★ Can you **segment** (separate) these words into their individual sounds? Say the word map, your child will repeat the word and then segment the word into individual sounds, Child: map → m - ă - p .

rope → r - ă - p
name → n - ă - m
feed → f - ě - d

*TIP: If your child is having difficulty, try this: "Can you tell me the 3 sounds you hear in this word?"
Or have them say the word in slow motion to see if they can hear each sound.*

- ★ Books to enjoy together: Look for these books at the library to have more fun with "Wacky Words"!
 - *Runny Babbit* by Shel Silverstein
 - *Cock-A-Doodle-Moo* by Bernard Most
 - *Zoochini*: The spectacular zoo with animal and food mashups



Make it Multi-sensory! For blending, have your child use a pop-it and push down one bubble for each sound they hear in the word. Then, have your child blend the sounds together to "say it fast" like a word. For segmenting, students can do the opposite. Have your child repeat the whole word, then push down one bubble for each sound they hear. For more options, view our lesson videos to see how using hand motions can support your child: [Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](https://www.heggerty.org)

Visit our website: <https://www.heggerty.org>