



Phonological Stages – Kindergarten

What should my kindergartener be able to do?

By the end of kindergarten, children should be able to:

- Judge word length (e.g. "Which word is longer and takes more time to say: cat or caterpillar?")
- Identify whether words rhyme or not (e.g. hat - mat; sun - big)
- Provide a word that rhymes with another ("What word that rhymes with bee?")
- Clap or count syllables in a 1 to 4 syllable word (e.g. "Clap the beats in this word: Saskatoon). Give your kindergartener even longer words for an extra challenge.
- Blend syllables to make a word (e.g. "What word is this: cup-cake?")
- Segment words into syllables (e.g. "Tell me each beat in this word: porcupine.")
- Blend onsets and rimes (e.g. "What word is this: c - up?")
- Provide the first sound in a word (e.g. "What is the first sound in this word: fish?")
- Segment sounds in words that have 2-3 sounds ("Tell me the sounds in this word: hat; Child: h - a - t")

How can I help my preschooler develop kindergartener awareness skills?

To help your child notice the sound in words:

- Read books and poems that focus on the rhythm of language and rhyme. Books such as Hop on Pop or Sheep in a Jeep help children pay attention to sounds in words.
- Give your child a noisemaker (such as a whistle). Tell your child to make noise if you say two words that rhyme (cat - cup; sit - mitt.)
- Play words games such as "Guess My Word". "I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with _____. Can you guess my word?"
- Have a sound scavenger hunt. Give your child a bag and ask him/her to find as many things around the house that begin with a certain sound.
- Play "I spy" with beginning sounds of words (e.g. "I spy something that begins with 't!'")

To help your child segment (separate) and blend sounds in words:



- Have your child guess a word that you sound out slowly (e.g. sssssuuuuunnnn).
- Give your child a few blocks, beads, bingo chips or similar items. Say a word and have your child move an object for each sound in the word.
- Play Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes with sounds. Say a word and have your child touch his/her head for the first sound, shoulders for the second sound, and knees for the third while saying each sound.