



Phonological Stages – Pre-Kindergarten

What should my preschooler be able to do?

By the end of preschool your child should be able to:

- Identify the number of words in sentences (e.g. "Clap your hands for each word in this sentence: The sun is hot.")
- Identify if words rhyme (e.g. fun – bun; cat – sit)
- Identify the number of syllables in a word (e.g. "Clap your hands for each beat in this word: popsicle".)
- Blend syllables to create words (e.g. "I'm going to say a word very slowly – you say it faster: sis – ter".)
- Segment syllables (e.g. "Tell me each beat in this word – say it slower: pumpkin".)
- Blend onsets and rimes; NOTE: an onset is the part of the word that comes before the vowel, and the rime is the vowel and remaining portion of the word (e.g. "I'm going to break a word into two parts and you put it back together again – say it faster: s – it." Child: "sit".)

How can I help my preschooler develop phonological awareness skills?

- To help your preschoolers develop an understanding of what a word is, show them the words in a familiar book and have them count the words in some short sentences. Then say those same sentences slowly and have them tap their hand on their leg or clap their hands to indicate how many words they hear.
- Read your child nursery rhymes and play rhyming games to introduce the concept of rhyming words. Make up silly words that rhyme with your child's name and see if he or she can do the same.
- Introduce your child to the concept of a syllable by talking about "beats". A toy xylophone or drum are great instruments to use to demonstrate beats in words. Tap out the syllables in words of things you see in your child's room with the instrument, and get him or her to do the same (e.g. lamp – one beat; teddy bear – three beats, etc).