Read-At-Home Plan for Student Success
Parent Resources

What is phonological awareness?

Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize and work with sounds in spoken language. It is the foundation for learning to read.

Students with strong phonological awareness can:

- rhyme
- count syllables
- recognize sounds alone and in words
- add, remove, and substitute sounds in words
- break words into their different sounds and blend them back together
- isolate sounds

Phoneme Segmentation is one piece of phonological awareness.

Included are some activities and resources you may want to try at home to work on phoneme segmentation.

Phoneme Activities

☐ Give your child a list of three words and ask him/her to identify which two begin with the same sound.
Example: "Which words begin with the same sound: *paper, pickle,* or *dish*?"

☐ Name different items you see. Ask your child to tell you the first sound heard in each word you give. After your child can successfully tell you the beginning sound, have him/her tell you the last sound.
Examples: "What is the first sound in *road*?" "/r/" "What is the ending sound in *road*?" "/d/"

☐ Read "There's a Wocket in My Pocket" aloud to your child. While reading, pause to talk about how the first sound of different words is changed to make a silly word in the book.
Example: https://youtu.be/NjP0k9p0MpE

☐ Turn words into a cheer.
Example: Use the following cheer to practice breaking words into their sounds. Replace the words you use each time you cheer.
Cheer: "Listen to my cheer, then shout the sounds you hear.
Cat! Cat! Cat! (Note: These are the words you will change.)
Give me the beginning sound! /*c*/ Give me the middle sound! /*a*/ Give me the ending sound! /*t*/ That's right!
/*c*/ /*a*/ /*t*/ – Cat! Cat! Cat!

☐ Using pennies, pom-poms, different colored blocks, or other similar materials, push an object toward your child for each sound in the word you are thinking of while making the sound. Ask your child to put the sounds together and tell you what word you just said. After he/she can successfully blend the sounds together, ask your child to break words apart into their separate sounds.
Examples: "What word am I saying? /ch/ /a/ /t/" "*Chat.*" "What are the sounds in *chat*?" "/ch/ /a/ /t/."

☐ Play Robot Talk with your child.
Example: Tell your child you will say a word like a robot, and he/she need to guess what you are saying. To sound like a robot, break the word into individual sounds. Say the word in a silly robot voice to make it more fun. **/r/ /a/ /g/ What word did I make?**

☐ Brainstorm simple words and ask your child to tell you what middle sound is heard.
Examples: "What is the middle sound in *sun*?" "/u/" "What is the middle sound in *hatch*?" "/a/"

More Advanced skills:
☐ Create a list of words that can be changed by adding a letter sound. Example: ice becomes nice when you add "n". Read a word from the list and ask your child to repeat the word. Then ask your child to add the new letter sound to the word and say the word altogether.
Example: https://youtu.be/RPIxbRF52rM

☐ Play a word ladder game with your child. See how many words you can make by changing one sound at a time. Add sounds to the beginning or end of the word. Once your child can successfully add sounds, change the sounds to make new words.
Example 1: "Say *top*. What word do you have if you add /s/ to the beginning?"
"*stop*"
"Say *shop*. What word do you have if you change/sh/ to /ch/?"
"*chop*"
Example 2: "Say *rat*. Change the /t/ to /g/. What is your new word?"
"*rag*"
"Say *bag*. Change the /b/ to /s/. What is your new word?"
"*sag*"

Just a note:
We typically will move from easiest to hardest. So, recognizing first sounds are the easiest. Then recognizing last sounds. Recognizing the vowel or middle sound is typically the hardest. Once students can do this, then you can move to adding more sounds, taking away sounds or changing one sound to another sound.