

Phonological Awareness

Early Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum
2021 EDITION

35-Weeks of Explicit and Systematic Phonological Awareness Lessons
for 3 & 4 Year Old classrooms

by **Marjorie Bottari, M.Ed** and **Alisa VanHekken, M.Ed**
based on the work of Dr. Michael Heggerty

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About the Authors

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What is Phonological Awareness?

Phonological awareness is a skill that includes identifying and manipulating units of oral language (words, syllables, onset and rimes). Phonological awareness includes language play activities that are oral and auditory. Students can participate in phonological awareness lessons and activities before they know the letter names and sounds, and phonological awareness can be taught as an oral warm-up to letter names and sounds instruction.

Phonemic awareness is a subset of phonological awareness and students hear individual sounds in spoken words. During the Early Pre-K lessons, students learn to hear initial sounds in spoken words, and final sounds in spoken words.

Phonological Awareness Progression of Skills in the Early Pre-Kindergarten Lessons				
Rhyme	Repetition	Recognition	Production	
Phoneme Isolation: Initial	Initial Phoneme Isolation	Alliteration	Categorization	Generating Words
Blending	Two words into compound words	Two syllables into a spoken word	Body-Coda Blending	Onset - Rime into a spoken word
Segmenting	Compound words into two words	Spoken words into syllables	Spoken Words into Onset - Rime	
Phoneme Isolation: Final	Isolate and identify the final sound we hear in a spoken word			

Early Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum at a Glance

The following weekly lesson plans provide explicit and systematic phonological awareness instruction for early Pre-Kindergarten classrooms for 3 and 4 year olds. The lesson plans include 3 days of instruction that can be taught in half-day or full-day preschool programs.

A systematic progression is used to introduce students to different phonological awareness skills and early literacy skills throughout the weekly lessons. By Week 24, students are working with 5 phonological awareness skills and 2 early literacy skills. The phonological awareness activities are oral and auditory, and the words are not shown in print to the students.

LESSON COMPONENTS	5 Phonological Awareness skills with teacher modeling, and 2 Early Literacy skills
LESSON LENGTH	6 – 8 minutes
GROUPING	Whole group
CUSTOMIZED SUPPORT FOR 2 DAY PROGRAMS	Teachers can teach 2 days of lessons each week, and move on to the following week of lessons plans the next week of school.
LESSON FORMAT	Teacher modeling is included within the daily instruction. A lesson focus is provided for the teacher, and this can be shared with the students. Explicit teacher directions have been written to provide an explanation of the activity. Hand motions are listed for some skills to provide visual support during the lesson instruction.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE ACTIVITIES	Alphabet Chart and Alphabet Flashcards available for purchase at www.heggerty.org/shop Printable alphabet chart and flashcards, hand motion videos, and printable hand motion guide available at www.heggerty.org/epk
ADDITIONAL CURRICULA	Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum for students in the last year of preschool (English and Spanish) Kindergarten Curriculum (English and Spanish) Primary Curriculum (English and Spanish) Bridge the Gap: Intervention Lessons for Older Learners Professional Development options: www.heggerty.org/pd

Phonological Awareness Lesson Components

Taught in the order of easiest to most difficult

5 Phonological Awareness Skills:

- I. Rhyming
- II. Initial Phoneme Isolation
- III. Blending
- IV. Segmenting
- V. Final Phoneme Isolation

2 Early Literacy Skills:

- I. Alphabet Knowledge
(This is the only part of a lesson where letters are shown in print)
- II. Language Awareness

An Index of Phonological Awareness Skills: Early Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum

	Lesson Component	Lesson Plan by Week	Page Numbers
Setting the Stage with Listening Games This sets the stage for students to learn about hearing sounds and distinguishing sounds they hear.	What is a Sound? Name Work Name Game / Animal Name Game Same or Different?	Weeks 1 - 2 Weeks 1 - 2 Weeks 3 - 4 Weeks 5 - 6	2, 4 2, 4 8, 10 12, 14
Rhyming Students learn to hear words that rhyme, recognize words that rhyme, and produce words that rhyme.	Setting the Stage for Rhyme Rhyme Repetition Rhyme Recognition Rhyme Production	Weeks 1 - 2 Weeks 3 - 12 Weeks 13 - 27 Weeks 28 - 35	2, 4 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 26, 28 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60 62, 64, 66, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78
Initial Phoneme Isolation Isolating and identifying the first sound we hear in a spoken word; distinguishing between sounds that are the same or different.	Initial Phoneme Isolation Generating Words Alliteration Categorization	Weeks 3 - 10, 15 - 20 Weeks 11 - 14, 33 - 35 Weeks 21 - 26 Weeks 27 - 32	8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 26, 28, 30, 32, 74, 76, 78 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 60, 62, 64, 66, 70, 72
Blending Students hear two words, two syllables, or two parts of a word and put them together (blend) to make a whole word. <i>A hand motion is included within the lesson plans.</i>	Two words into Compound Words Two Syllables into Spoken Words Body - Coda Blending Onset - Rime Blending	Weeks 3 - 11 Weeks 12 - 20 Weeks 21 - 25 Weeks 26 - 35	9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 26 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 48, 50, 52, 54, 56 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78
Segmenting Students hear a spoken words and separate (segment) the word into two individual words, two syllables, or into onset - rime. <i>A hand motion is included within the lesson plans.</i>	Compound words into Two Words Spoken Words into Syllables Spoken Words into Onset - Rime	Weeks 7 - 11 Weeks 12 - 20 Weeks 21 - 35	17, 19, 21, 23, 27 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78
Final Phoneme Isolation Isolating and identifying the final sound we hear in a spoken word. <i>A hand motion is included within the lesson plans.</i>	Final Phoneme Isolation (with focus sounds)	Weeks 24 - 35	55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79

Scope and Sequence

Phonological Awareness Skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Listening Games	What is a Sound?		Name Game & Animal Name Game		Same or Different?																														
Rhyme	Setting the Stage		Rhyme Repetition									Rhyme Recognition														Rhyme Production									
Initial Phoneme Isolation	Name Work	Initial Phoneme Isolation with Focus Sounds									Initial Phoneme Isolation: Generating Words			Initial Phoneme Isolation				Alliteration				Initial Phoneme Categorization						Generating Words							
		m, p, n	k, f, g	t, h, m	p, k, d	n, b, f	g, b, t	d, h, m	t, g, m	names	h, g, j	f, t, n																							
Blending			2 Words into a Compound Word									2 Syllables						Body – Coda				Onset – Rime													
Segmenting			Compound Words into 2 Words									2-Syllable Word into Syllables						Single Syllable Word into Onset – Rime																	
Final Phoneme Isolation																									Phoneme Isolation: Final Sound with Focus Sound										
	m, p, k	b, n, d																							t, g, k	f, m, p	t, f, g	b, n, d	k, p, m	n, d, t	g, f, b	d, p, n	k, b, t	g, m, n	
Early Literacy Skills																																			
Alphabet Knowledge	Learning Letter Names with an Alphabet Song																										Extension: Letter Names and Letter Sounds								
Language Awareness			Welcome Song		Pat-a-Cake		Hickety Pickety Bumblebee		Star Light, Star Bright		Hey Diddle Diddle		Pattern Sentences		Repeating Sentences and Counting Words			Rain, Rain Go Away		Me		Itsy, Bitsy Spider		Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star		Down by the Bay		5 Little Peas in a Pod		Reciting Sentences		Nursery Rhyme Review			

Research Findings

The Early Learning and Development standards for 3 and 4 year olds identify specific skills and activities that can be included in reading instruction, to help students become aware of the sounds we hear in spoken words. The standards for all fifty states were reviewed and considered while creating the lessons for the Early Pre-Kindergarten lessons.	
National Early Literacy Panel findings, 2009	Six variables representing early literacy skills had moderate to large predictive relations with later measures of literacy. These six variables maintained their predictive power even when the roles of other variables, such as IQ or socioeconomic status, were accounted for (there are no procedures for meta-analyzing multivariate studies, but the panel analyzed these results descriptively to identify which variables were robust even when other variables were statistically controlled).
	Three of the six variables include the following, and are included in the daily lesson plans.
	Alphabet knowledge: Knowing the names and sounds of letters. There were 52 studies (n = 7,570) showing an average correlation with later decoding of .50, 17 studies (n = 2,038) with an average correlation of .48 with later reading comprehension, and 18 studies (n = 2,619) with an average correlation of .54 with later spelling.
	Phonological awareness: The ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory aspects of spoken language independent of meaning. The panel examined 69 studies (n = 8,443) with an average correlation of .40 between phonological awareness and later decoding, 20 studies (n = 2,461) with an average correlation of .44 with later reading comprehension, and 21 studies (n = 2,522) with an average correlation of .40 with later spelling.
	Rapid automatized naming of letters/digits: The ability to name rapidly sequences of random letters or digits. Twelve studies (n = 2,081) showed an average correlation of .40 for this variable with decoding, and three studies (n = 333) showed an average correlation of .43 with reading comprehension.
Becoming phonologically aware prepares children for later reading instruction, including instruction in phonics, word analysis, and spelling (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998; Chard, Simmons, & Kameenui, 1998).	
Phonological awareness is critical for learning to read any alphabetic writing system (Ehri, 2004; Rath, 2001; Troia, 2004)	
Phonological awareness interacts with and facilitates the development of vocabulary and word consciousness. (Moats, L, & Tolman, C (2009). Excerpted from Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS)	
The most common barrier to learning early word reading skills is the inability to process language phonologically (Liberman, Shankweiler, & Liberman, 1989). Moreover, developments in research and understanding have revealed that this weakness in phonological processing most often hinders early reading development for both students with and without disabilities (Fletcher et al., 1994).	

Early Literacy Skill: Language Awareness

The Early Literacy activity of Language Awareness is included to introduce students to nursery rhymes and chants, and hear sentences spoken aloud. Through this activity, students have the opportunity to repeat sentences that the teacher says aloud, count the words they hear in a sentence, and sing and chant familiar rhymes.

- This activity can align to age-level expectations and behaviors from state standards, including:
- “Hears and shows awareness between separate words within spoken phrases and sentences.” (AZ)
 - “Distinguish individual words in a sentence.” (CT)
 - “Recognize that sentences are made up of separate words.” (4.C.ECa, IL)
 - “Recite favorite nursery rhymes, poems, and songs, and create their own rhymes in English and home languages;” (Head Start)

The nursery rhymes and songs are used for two weeks of instruction to provide students with multiple exposures and opportunities to practice the rhyme. The nursery rhymes can be sung or chanted with the students, and the rhyme can be written out or pictures can be shown while reciting the song or nursery rhyme. Eleven rhymes and songs are introduced to students throughout the 35 weeks of lessons. A review of the nursery rhymes is included in the final three weeks of lessons.

WEEKS		WEEKS	
3 – 4	Welcome Song	19 – 20	Hey Diddle Diddle
5 – 6	Pat a Cake	21 – 22	Me
7 – 8	Hickety, Pickety Bumblebee	23 – 24	5 Little Ducks
9 – 10	Star Light, Star Bright	25 – 26	Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
11 – 12	Rain, Rain Go Away	27 – 28	Down by the Bay
13 – 14	Sentence Repetition: Counting 3 or 4 words	29 – 30	5 Little Peas in a Pod
15 – 16	Sentence Repetition: Rhyme sentences	31 – 32	Sentence Repetition
17 – 18	Sentence Repetition: Pattern with students supplying words	33 – 35	Nursery Rhyme Review

Glossary of Terms

Final Sound

The final sound is the last sound we hear in a spoken word.

Onset

The part of a word that comes before the first vowel, which is usually the beginning sound.

Phoneme

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound.

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic Awareness is the understanding that spoken words are made up of individual sounds.

Phonics

The understanding of letter-sound correspondences and their use in reading and spelling.

Rime

The part of the word that begins with a vowel and all the sounds after; this can also be called a “word family.” In the lessons, students blend and segment two parts of a word, the onset and rime.

Syllable

A syllable is a unit of pronunciation that is uttered without interruption. A syllable usually has only one vowel sound. Example of a 2-syllable word: win - ter.