



Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Activities

These activities build students' ability to notice, think about, and work with individual sounds in spoken words (phonemic awareness) as well as map sounds unto written letters (phonics). Choose activities that fit your students, resources, time, and staff. Recognize that you can use multiple activities at once, or use different activities at different times.

Activity	Description	Ideas for implementation and variations
Song: If You Think You Know This Word (Sing to tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It")	If you think you know this word, shout it out! If you think you know this word, shout it out! If you think you know this word, Then tell me what you've heard, If you think you know this word, shout it out! [Sound out word, e.g. /c/ /a/ /t/, have students respond by blending sounds into the word: cat]	
Song: Twinkle, Twinkle Little Word (Sing to tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star)	Twinkle, twinkle, little word What's the new word to be heard? If I take off the FIRST sound What new word will now be found? Take the /sh/ right off of shout. Now the new word sounds like... _____. (out) . Change it up: Substitute "If I take off the LAST sound" for third line and practice taking the ending sounds off a word, e.g. Take the /er/ right off of hammer. Now the new word sounds like... _____. (ham)	



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<p>Song: I'm Thinking of a Word (Sing to tune of "The Wheels on the Bus")</p>	<p>Teacher: I'm thinking of a word named /t/ /e/ /n/, /t/ /e/ /n/, /t/ /e/ /n/, I'm thinking of a word named /t/ /e/ /n/, What is my word?</p> <p>Students: Is the word you're thinking called ten, ten, ten, ten, ten, ten, ten, ten, ten? Is the word you're thinking called ten, ten, ten?</p> <p>Teacher: Yes, ten is my word.</p>	
<p>Chant: Hickety Pickety</p>	<p>Hickety Pickety Bumble Bee Can you say your name for me? [Student says name] Hickety Pickety Bumble Bee Can you clap your name for me? [Student claps number of syllables in their name] Hickety Pickety Bumble Bee Can you whisper your name for me? [Student whispers name]</p>	
<p>Snack Sounds</p>	<p>Give each student a handful or two of snacks that can be stacked easily, e.g. cheese blocks, fruit squares, vegetable rounds, etc. Call out a word and have students segment that word by stacking the number of snack pieces that correspond to the number of sounds in the word. For example, "plum" has four sounds so students would make a stack of four snacks. Let students eat those snack sounds and ask them think of other words to segment with their remaining snack pieces.</p>	<p>Change it up: Use the number of letters or syllables in the word instead of sounds.</p>



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Clapping and Tapping Syllables	Have students determine the number of syllables in their name by either clapping their hands or tapping their feet. For example, you would clap or tap three times if your name is "Jessica." Create different beats by clapping or tapping out students' names in different combinations. To increase difficulty, have students clap their first name and tap their last name.	Change it up: Instead of names, use words of objects in the room and challenge students to find other words with the same number of syllables.																			
Name Graphs	<p>Give each student a sheet of paper. Have students write their name on the top of the paper. On the left side of the paper, have students write Letters, Sounds and Syllables in a vertical column. In each row, have students draw and color in the number of squares corresponding to the number of letters, sounds, and syllables in their name. For example, Jessica has 7 letters, 6 sounds, and 3 syllables:</p> <p>Jessica</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Letters</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sounds</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Syllables</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Letters								Sounds							Syllables				Change it up: Make graphs for high frequency and/or vocabulary words and post them up to create a word wall.
Letters																					
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Sound Paper Chain	Choose a vowel sound or letter combination to focus on, e.g. long a, st, etc. Write a few examples of words with that sound on strips of colored paper. Ask students to identify the vowel sound or letter combination that they share. Once they have identified the vowel sound or letter combination correctly, split students into small teams. Have each team write as many words as they can with that vowel sound or letter combination, each on a separate strip of paper. After 5 minutes, have students link their strips of paper together in a chain, with their words facing out. Compare chains to see what common words appear and which team has the longest.																				



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Sound Toss	Make a list of words students are learning. Students will count the number of sounds they hear in a given word and then throw a bean bag or tennis ball into a basket or box for each sound. Have the student say each sound of the word with each corresponding throw. A point is received for each bean bag or ball that makes it into the basket or box. Keep a tally of the points. When they have each run through all the words on the list, have them count up points to determine the grand total.	Change it up: Have students segment each sound and its corresponding letter(s).
Homophone Match	Have students generate a list of homophones, e.g. sale and sail, few and phew, etc. on a sheet of chart paper. Ask them to write each word on their homophone list on an index card. If they wish, they can draw a picture to represent each word. Mix up the cards and lay them face up on a table. As a team, see how many matches they can make in one minute.	Note: Post the homophone list and encourage students to add to the game.
Operation Word	Have students generate a list of compound words, e.g. hotdog, sailboat, etc. on a sheet of chart paper or black/whiteboard. Have them write each smaller word within each compound word on an index card so that there are two index cards for each compound word. If they wish, they can draw a picture to represent each word. Mix up the cards and lay them face up on a table. Have students use colorful bandages to combine the original compound word or discover new compound words. Write any new compound words on the list.	
A to Z Brainstorm	On a piece of chart paper, write the letters from A to Z in two vertical columns. On the top of the sheet, write "Words That Begin With..." Have students brainstorm words that begin with each letter of the alphabet. To increase difficulty, change the topic to word families or letter combinations, e.g. "Words that end in -nd" or "Words with -st."	Note: Students will need to be allowed to write a vowel before the letter "x."