



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonological Awareness lessons. **Phonological awareness** allows children to recognize and work with the parts of language. These activities are sometimes called ear exercises because the focus is on hearing the parts or sounds in words. Your child will not be seeing these words in print during the phonemic awareness lessons.

### Why is Phonological Awareness Important?

Phonological awareness is a strong predictor of reading success. It is especially important at the earliest stages of reading development and is a foundation for reading.

### How Can You Support Phonological Awareness at Home?

Throughout the school year, you will receive newsletters sharing ideas of games or “ear exercises” you can play with your child. Phonological awareness is simple to support at home—all you need is language! Help your child understand that the words they hear in speech are made up of parts and sounds.

You can begin building phonological awareness in your child by:

- ★ Reciting nursery rhymes
- ★ Reading books with rhyming words
- ★ Playing with alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)
  - Example: Seven silly sisters said surprise!
- ★ Reciting tongue twisters with a focus on individual sounds in words.
  - Example: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck, if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

We look forward to supporting you and your child in building foundational literacy skills this school year! In addition to the newsletters you will receive, you can find more information about the Heggerty Curriculum by visiting the Heggerty website and social media pages.

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Visit the Heggerty website: <https://www.heggerty.org>

View lesson demonstrations: [Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](#) (Please note: these lesson demonstrations are provided by the US Heggerty team and based on the US curriculum materials. Changes to some of the selected words have been made to the Australian curriculum).

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonological Awareness lessons. Over the next 2 weeks, your child will be working with syllables. A **syllable** is a part of a word that contains a vowel sound. For example, the word *understand* has 3 syllables: un-der-stand. Each syllable (part) has one vowel sound. Your child will learn to blend (put together), segment (pull apart), and substitute (change) syllables within a word. One additional skill your child will be working with is **isolating phonemes**, where they will identify the first or last sound they hear in a word. Research tells us, *"phoneme awareness performance is a strong predictor of long-term reading and spelling success, and it can predict literacy performance more accurately than variables such as intelligence, vocabulary knowledge, and socioeconomic status"* (Gillon, 2018)

Phonological awareness activities take place orally and are about having fun with language play. Therefore, there is no need for any writing or reading during this practice. Just have fun with the sounds in words!

**Consider using the following activities at home with your child:**

- ★ **Punch it Out!** Give your child a word from the list below and have them punch their fist up in the air when they say the last sound.

florT

gloBe

dreaM

neCK

hiVe

froZe

- ★ Can you **blend** (put together) these syllables to make a word?"

in - sect → insect

stu - dent → student

gym - nas - tics → gymnastics

- ★ **Be a Ninja!** Say a word and have your child act like a ninja by chopping words into their syllables. Say, "Can you segment (chop) this word into its individual syllables?"

afternoon → af - ter - noon

member → mem - ber

fantastic → fan - tas - tic

- ★ **Switch-A-Roo!** Can you tell me the new word I can make if I substitute (change) one syllable in a word to a new one?

Say turkey → change /tur/ to /mun/ and the word is? → monkey

Say longer → change /long/ to /quick/ and the word is? → quicker

Say monster → change /mon/ to /ham/ and the word is? → hamster

- ★ Books to enjoy together: Look for these books at the library that support syllable and sound awareness!

- *Oh Say Can you Say Di-No-Saur?* by Bonnie Worth
- *Tanka Tanka Skunk!* by Steve Webb
- *Did You Take the B From My \_ook?* by Beck Stanton



**Make it Multi-sensory!** Use legos, blocks, magnets or tiles to represent the syllables! For example, use blocks to represent syllables. Push 2 blocks away from each other to segment syllables or push them together to blend syllables into a whole word. View lesson demonstrations to see how using the Heggerty hand motions can support your child. [Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](https://www.heggerty.org)

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonemic Awareness lessons. Your child has spent two weeks working with syllables. Our lessons will now shift to listening for individual sounds, or **phonemes** in words. Phonemic awareness teaches students to hear individual sounds in words, and this supports the development of strong reading and writing skills. *"Phonemic awareness has been shown to be a very powerful predictor of later reading achievement. In fact, it [phonemic awareness] is a better predictor than more global measures such as IQ or general language proficiency" (Griffith and Olson, 1992).*

Phonemic awareness activities take place orally and are about having fun with language play. Therefore, there is no need for any writing or reading during this practice.

**Consider using the following activities at home with your child:**

- ★ **Wacky Words!** Give your child a nonsense "wacky" word and have them generate another nonsense word that rhymes with it. Say, "Tell me a wacky word that rhymes with zork?" Your child would then generate a nonsense word like →lork, bork, etc.

Try rhyming with these words too:  
gax - vob - zunk - tark - foop - sout

*Give your child praise for real words too!  
Generating nonsense words can be tricky.*

- ★ Can you **blend** (put together) three sounds to make a word? Say the sounds n - ě - t, your child will repeat those sounds back and then tell you the whole word, Child: n - ě - t → net.

h - ǒ - p → hop

s - ä - t → sat

b - ī - k → bike

- ★ Can you **segment** (separate) these words into their individual sounds? Say the word map, your child will repeat the word and then segment the word into individual sounds, Child: map → m - ä - p .

rope → r - ȳ - p  
name → n - ā - m  
feed → f - ē - d

*TIP: If your child is having difficulty, try this: "Can you tell me the **3 sounds** you hear in this word?"  
Or have them say the word in slow motion to see if they can hear each sound.*

- ★ Books to enjoy together: Look for these books at the library to have more fun with "Wacky Words!"
  - *Runny Babbit* by Shel Silverstein
  - *The Wonky Donkey* by Craig Smith
  - *There's a Wocket in my Pocket!* by Dr Suess



**Make it Multi-sensory!** For blending, have your child use a pop-it and push down one bubble for each sound they hear in the word. Then, have your child blend the sounds together to "say it fast" like a word. For segmenting, students can do the opposite. Have your child repeat the whole word, then push down one bubble for each sound they hear. For more options, view lesson videos to see how using hand motions can support your child: [Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](https://www.heggerty.org)

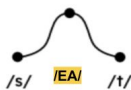
Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonemic Awareness lessons. For the next seven weeks, your child will continue practicing phonemic awareness by identifying and manipulating individual sounds in words with **digraphs** (two letters that spell one sound) i.e. th, sh, ch, ck and **blends** (two consonants that go together but keep their individual sounds) i.e. st, pr, cl, mp. Your child will be working with blends and digraphs at the beginning and end of words. We know this practice is crucial, as "phonemic awareness is the most potent predictor of success in learning how to read" (Stanovich, 1994).

Phonemic awareness activities take place orally and are about having fun with language play. Therefore, there is no need for any writing or reading during this practice.

**Consider using the following activities at home with your child:**

- ★ **Middle Sound Rollercoaster!** Have your child make a roller coaster motion with their hands as they say the sounds in a word. Then have them repeat the middle sound they heard at the top of the rollercoaster. Say to your child: Say seat, child repeats whole word and then uses their hand to isolate first, middle, and last sound. Ask your child if they heard the short or long vowel sound. Use the visual below and remind your child to start their roller coaster on the left, go up the hill, and finish on the right to mimic how we read print.



brUsh

shOck

tEEth

chOse

flAke

- ★ Can you blend (put together) these sounds to make a word? Say the sounds, sh - ē - p, your child will repeat those sounds back and then tell you the whole word, Child: sh - ē - p → sheep.

ch - ē - s → chess  
th - ũ - m - p → thump  
sh - ī - n → shine

*Extension: See if your child can tell you if the word contained a digraph, blend, or both!*

- ★ Can you segment (separate) these words into their individual sounds? Say the word chop, your child will repeat the word and then segment the word into individual sounds, Child: chop → ch - ǒ - p.

float → f - l - ǒ - t

shake → sh - ā - k

chest → ch - ě - s - t

- ★ Books to enjoy together: Look for these books at the library that support phonological awareness!

- *Llama Llama B Zhh B Zhh B Zhh* by Anna Dewdney
- *E [ʧ] Vh ʧdcfl: Vi ʧVchans* by Eve B. Feldman



**Make it Multi-sensory!** Use legos, blocks or pop-its to represent the sounds when blending and segmenting! For example, using legos, have your child touch or slide down one lego piece to represent each sound they hear. For blending, have your child slide their finger quickly under the legos (sounds) to read the word. Or using a popit, have your child push in one bubble for each sound in the word. View lesson demonstrations to see how the Heggerty fun hand motions can support your child as well. [Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](https://www.heggerty.org)

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonemic Awareness lessons. For the next four weeks, your child will start to practice breaking apart blends by adding and deleting the initial sound in a word. Your child has learned that a **blend** is: *two consonants that slide or blend together, but keep their individual sounds*. This practice will continue your child on the path towards phonemic proficiency. Research tells us that, "The **lack** of phonemic awareness is the **most** powerful determinant of the failure to read." (Marilyn Adams, 1990).

Phonemic awareness activities take place orally and are about having fun with language play. Therefore, there is no need for any writing or reading during this practice.

**Consider using the following activities at home with your child:**

- ★ Give your child a word and have them repeat it back to you. Then, add a sound to the beginning and see if they can tell you the new word.

Say race → add \*/b/ to the beginning and the word is? → brace  
Say car → add \*/s/ to the beginning and the word is? → scar  
Say lash → add \*/f/ to the beginning and the word is? → flash

Note: \*//, indicates you should say the letter **sound**.

- ★ Give your child a word and have them repeat it back to you. Then, take away the first sound and see if they can tell you the new word.

Say blink → without \*/b/ what's left is? → link  
Say crane → without \*/c/ what's left is? → rain  
Say space → without \*/s/ what's left is? → pace

Extension: See if your child can tell you the blend used in the word.

- ★ Books to enjoy together: Look for these books at the library that support phonological awareness!

- *Room on the Broom* by Julia Donaldson
- *Fancy Dress Jungle* by Nick Sharratt
- *Under the Love Umbrella* by Davina Bell



**Make it Multi-sensory!** Legos or blocks can work great to support this skill! For example, use blocks to build the sounds of a word. Add or remove a block (sound) at the beginning to give your child visual support for what is happening with the sounds in that word. View lesson demonstrations to see how the Heggerty fun hand motions can support your child as well.

[Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](#)

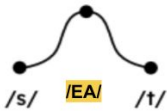
Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At school your child is engaging in Heggerty Phonemic Awareness lessons. According to Dr. David Kilpatrick, "To be a fluent reader, one must display phonemic proficiency, which is best demonstrated via instant responses to advanced phoneme activities of phoneme deletion and/or substitution" (*Equipped for Reading Success*, 2016). For the next four weeks, your child will continue strengthening their phonemic awareness by identifying and manipulating individual sounds in words. Your child will begin to add, delete and substitute (change) the final sound in words.

Phonemic awareness activities take place orally and are about having fun with language play. Therefore, there is no need for any writing or reading during this practice. Just have fun with the sounds in words!

**Consider using the following activities at home with your child:**

- ★ **Middle Sound Rollercoaster!** Have your child make a roller coaster motion with their hands as they say the sounds in a word. Then have them repeat the middle sound they heard at the top of the rollercoaster. Say to your child: Say seat, child repeats whole word and then uses their hand to isolate first, middle, and last sound. Use the visual below and remind your child to start their roller coaster on the left, go up the hill, and finish on the right to mimic how we read print.



Have your child try to identify these other middle vowel teams:

tEEth

sprAIn

stEAm

mOOd

- ★ Give your child a word and have them repeat it back to you. Then, add a sound to the end and see if they can tell you the new word.

Say car → add \*/d/ to the end and the word is? → card

Say sir → add \*/ch/ to the end and the word is? → search

Say stor → add \*/m/ to the end and the word is? → storm

Note: \*/\*, indicates you should say the letter **sound**.

- ★ Give your child a word and have them repeat it back to you. Then, take away the last sound and see if they can tell you the new word.

Say torch → without \*/ch/ what's left is? → tore

Say paste → without \*/t/ what's left is? → pace

Say storm → without \*/m/ what's left is? → store

- ★ **Switch-A-Roo!** Give your child a word and have them repeat it back. Then, change the last sound to a new sound and see if they can tell you the new word.

Say bark → change \*/k/ to \*/n/ and the word is? → barn

Say curve → change \*/v/ to \*/l/ and the word is? → curl

Say write → change \*/t/ to \*/z/ and the word is? → rise

- ★ Books to enjoy together: Look for these books at the library that support phonological awareness!

- *A Squash and a Squeeze* by Julia Donaldson
- *One Duck Stuck* by Phyllis Root
- *A Great Big Cuddle of Poems for the Very Young* by Michael Rosen



**Make it Multi-sensory!** View lesson demonstrations to see how the Heggerty hand motions can support these phonemic awareness tasks! [Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](#)



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### Consider using the following activities at home with your child:

- ★ Be a Ninja! Can you segment (chop) these words into their individual sounds? Say the word great, your child will repeat the word and then segment the word into individual sounds, Child: great → g - r - ā - t

grease → g - r - ē - s

croak → c - r - ō - k

shriek → sh - r - ē - k

- ★ Give your child a word and have them repeat it back to you. Then, add second consonant sound to create a consonant blend.

Say cave → add \*/r/ after \*/k/ and the word is? → *crave*

Say sir → add \*/t/ after \*/s/ and the word is? → *stir*

Say side → add \*/l/ after \*/s/ and the word is? → *slide*

Note: \*//, indicates you should say the **sound**, not the letter name.

- ★ Give your child a word and have them repeat it back to you. Then, take away the second consonant of the consonant blend.

Say store → without \*/t/ what's left is? → *sore*

Say play → without \*/l/ what's left is? → *pay*

Say steam → without \*/t/ what's left is? → *seam*

- ★ **Switch-A-Roo!** Give your child a word and have them repeat it back. Then, change the vowel sound to a new sound and see if they can tell you the new word.

Say bat → change \*/ă/ to \*/ā/ and the word is? → *bait*

Say nut → change \*/ŭ/ to \*/ö/ and the word is? → *not*

Say red → change \*/ē/ to \*/ē/ and the word is? → *read*

- ★ Books to enjoy together: Look for these books at the library that support phonological awareness!

- *The Very Noisy Bear* by Nick Bland
- *Sofa Valdez, Future Perez* by Andrea Beaty
- *The Sisters Saint-Claire* by Carlie Gibson



**Make it Multi-sensory!** Legos or blocks can work great to support this skill! For example, use 1 block to represent each sound of a word. Add or remove a block (sound) where instructed to give your child visual support for what is happening with the sounds in that word. View lesson demonstrations to see how the Heggerty hand motions can also support your child with blending and segmenting. [Heggerty Phonemic Awareness - YouTube](https://www.heggerty.org)