

HOW DO I HELP MY CHILD WITH... PHONEMIC AWARENESS



WHAT IS PHONEMIC AWARENESS?

Phonemic awareness is the ability to manipulate individual sounds in our language. (Think: taking the word *cat* and being able to say the sounds *c-a-t*.)

WHAT ACTIVITIES CAN I DO?

To build your child's phonemic awareness, play with sounds!

Examples:

1. Say the sounds in a simple word (*mat*, *cop*, *cash*, etc) and ask them to put the sounds together and tell you the word.
2. Do the reverse! Tell your child a word, and ask them to give you the sounds.
3. If your child is struggling to do this out loud, use blocks, chips, coins, etc. to represent each sound. Have them touch a block for each sound in the word.

WHAT IS TAPPING SOUNDS?

Tapping your sounds means touching something each time you say a sound. For example, when I say *cat*, I can touch three blocks and say /c/-/a/-/t/. I can also just hold up a finger for each new sound. This helps students to see and understand how many sounds a word represents.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Phonemic awareness and letter-sound knowledge are the two biggest indicators of how well a child will learn to read in the first two years of school.

If we can teach children to play with sounds, and then teach them the letters that go with those sounds, then they have a great chance of being successful in school

IT DOESN'T END WITH SOUNDS!

While it's important to play with sounds, it doesn't end there. Phonemic awareness should be taught with letters as soon as possible. Once your child knows most of the sounds that letters make, you can start adding them in!

So, when you are asking children to spell a word like *mop*, ask them to repeat the word and then say the sounds. Before they spell the word, have them draw a line for each sound they hear. As they are spelling the word, ask them to say each sound as they spell.