



# Fundamentals of Phonological Awareness

Module 4

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# Module 4: Phonological Awareness

## Introduction

It is well supported that phonological awareness is critical for learning to read an alphabetic language (Anthony & Francis, 2005; Gillon, 2017). Children's phonological awareness skills develop at different times and at different rates. The Phonological Awareness Developmental Timeline (Texas Education Agency, 2015) serves as a tool for understanding the development of these skills as teachers provide instruction across the various skills. Using the timeline as a guide for understanding this continuum of development, this session will explore and practice effective methods for teaching phonological awareness skills in prekindergarten.



## What Is Phonological Awareness?

Phonological awareness is the ability to detect the sounds in language without thinking about the meaning of what is said and can be taught before children have begun to make a connection with letters. A crucial understanding that letters or groups of letters can represent sounds or phonemes (alphabetic principle) requires phonological awareness.

Children can hear larger “chunks” of sounds in the beginning, moving to increasingly smaller parts of words. Children acquire this sensitivity to sound by playing with language through manipulating the sounds in words by blending, segmenting and changing sounds within words

Phonological awareness is the ability to detect the sounds in language without thinking about the meaning of what is said. It is:

- An \_\_\_\_\_ skill.
- understanding that \_\_\_\_\_ is made up of sounds.
- developed from \_\_\_\_\_ units of sound (words) to \_\_\_\_\_ units of sound (phonemes).
- also referred to as \_\_\_\_\_.

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## **Rationale**

### **Phonological awareness**

- is a key predictor of later reading success
- begins before children have sorted out letter learning
- is successfully taught to children
- develops along a continuum in which being able to attend to the larger units of sound sets the stage for learning to attend to the smallest units of sound
- is a key understanding for the alphabetic principle.

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## **Phonological Awareness is Not Phonics**

Phonics is the study of the relationship between sounds and letter symbols (International Literacy Association, 2018).

Phonics is not part of phonological awareness since phonological awareness does not involve connecting sounds to letters in print. The moment we connect speech sounds to letters or words in print, we have shifted our instructional focus from phonological awareness to phonics. Phonological awareness instruction is a powerful support for phonics learning.

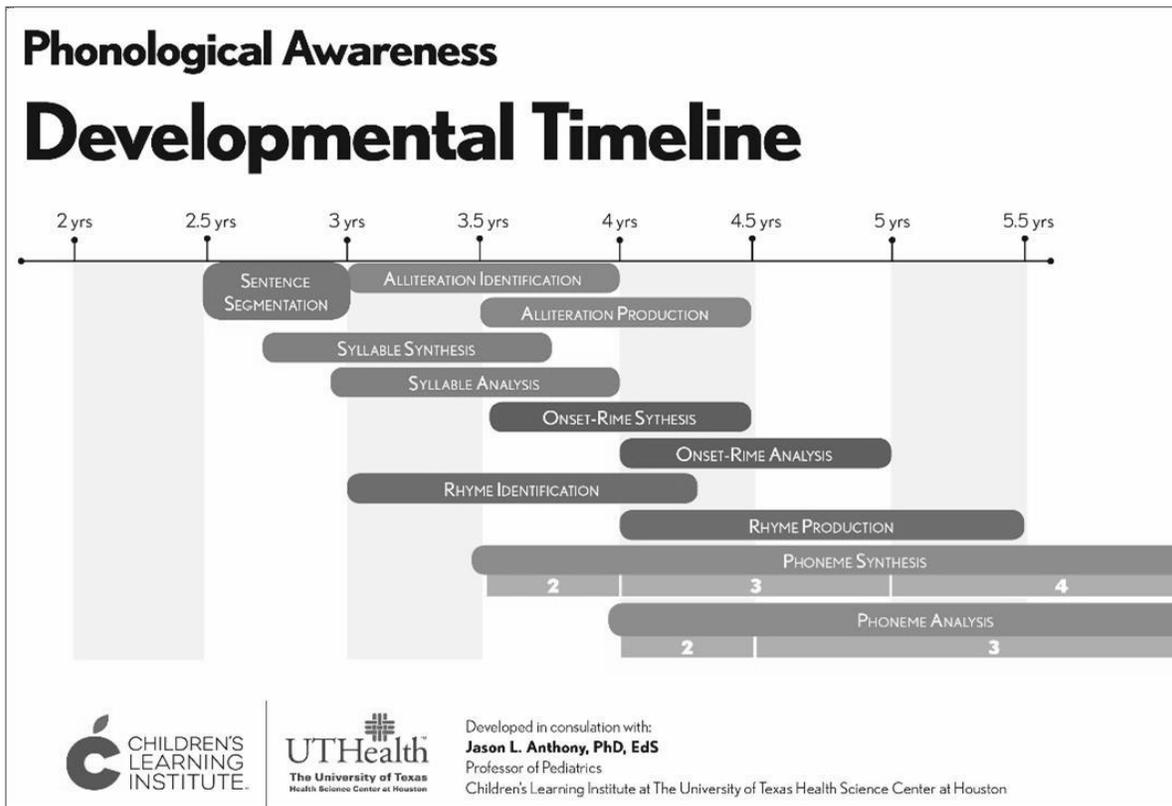
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# How Do We Teach Phonological Awareness

## Phonological Awareness Growth

When we consider how to approach instruction on phonological awareness, it's important to understand how these skills develop over time. The developmental timeline represents current research concerning when children typically develop various phonological awareness skills.



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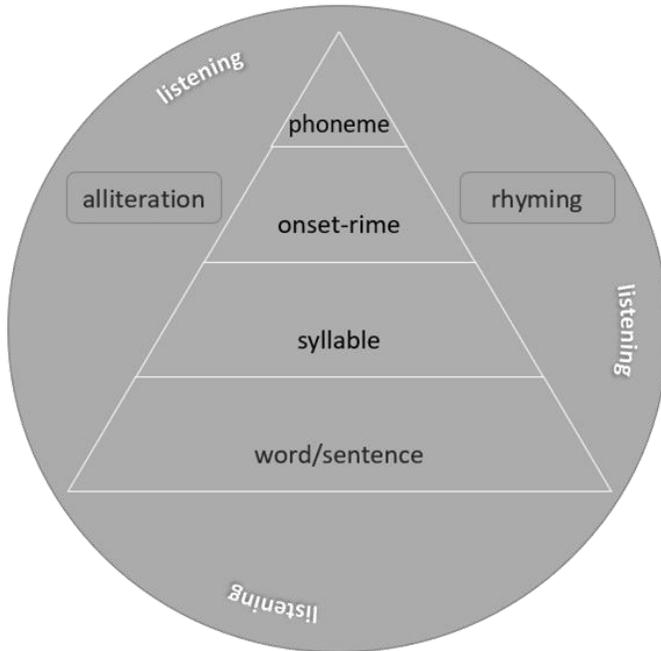
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## Levels of Linguistic Complexity

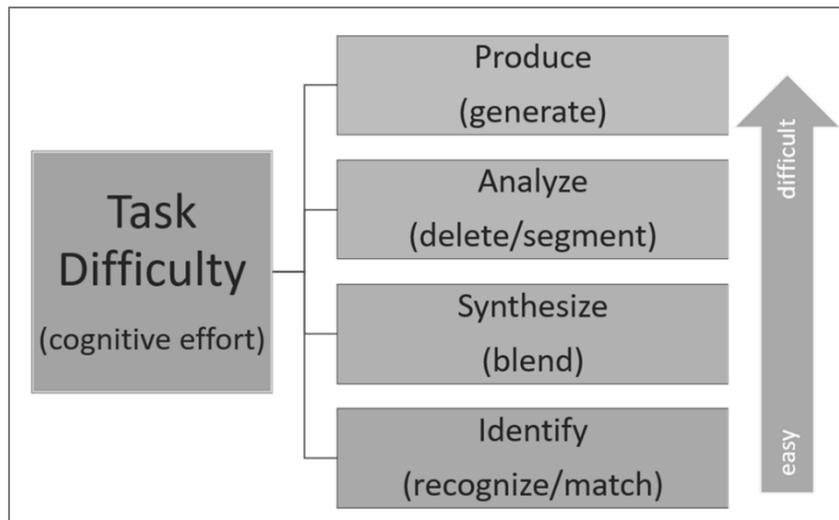


We can help children be successful by teaching skills at the word-level before the syllable-level, at the syllable-level before the onset/rime-level, and at the onset/rime-level before the phoneme-level.

Phonological awareness develops from sensitivity to large units of sound to sensitivity to smaller units of sound. This does not mean that we must wait until one is completely developed before we expose children to another. We do, however, want to be aware of how these skills build upon one another and ensure we are building a strong foundation for one before expecting children to be successful with the next, more complex skill.



## Task Complexity





## Scaffolding

Scaffolding helps students successfully complete the task at hand. Phonological awareness tasks can be scaffolded by:

- drawing attention to your lips, or to the child's own lips.
- having the student repeat the sound.
- stressing sound parts.
- connecting to a known sound, such as a classmate's name.

Use of body scaffolds, (e.g., clapping for each syllable), concrete objects, and picture cards are also scaffolds used to support children so that they can be successful with the phonological awareness task at hand.

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## Listening

Listening is the ability to screen out other noises and selectively focus attention on a specific sound.

Teaching young students to attend to sounds sets the stage for all other phonological awareness skills.

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## Word/Sentence Level

Segmenting sentences is the act of separating the words of a sentence into the individual words.

- Count each word in the sentence.
- Shuffle or reorder children or objects.
- Make silly phrases by deleting words.



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## Syllable Level

Blending and segmenting syllables is the ability to separate words in syllable parts and combine parts back into a single word.

- Blend syllables in student's name.
- Segment student's name; clapping each
- Blend and segment compound words.

### Busy, Busy, Bumble Bee

Busy, Busy, Bumble Bee

Won't you say your name with me? Lin-da,

(echo) Lin-da

Clap it-Lin-a

Yell it. Lin-da

Whisper it: Lin-d

Yell it-Lin-da



### Syllable Shopping

Pick a pretend food item from a basket. Say and clap its syllables.

Add the food to the correct grocery bag labeled 1, 2, or 3 for the number of syllables. (e.g., ap-ple)

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**Alliteration**

Alliteration refers to two or more words that have the same initial sound (e.g. mop-man). Activities include:

- poems, chants, nursery rhymes, and songs with repeating initial sounds.
- read-alouds using alliterative texts.
- sorting or grouping objects by beginning sounds.
- beginning sound name games.
- calling attention to words with same beginning sounds..

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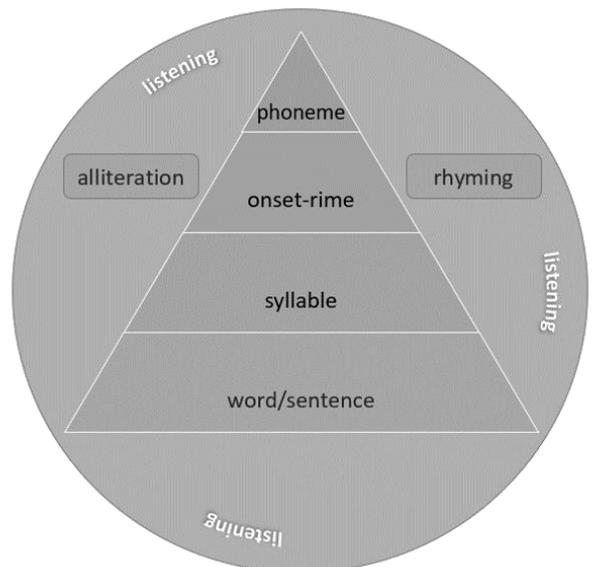
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**Rhyming**

Rhyme involves the ability to hear that two words have the same sound(s) at the end (e.g. sat, cat).

- Rhyming chants, songs, finger plays etc.
- Nursery rhymes and other poems.
- Stories with rhyming text.
- Use of word deletions during repeated readings.



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**Onset-Rime**

The skill of onset-rime involves the ability to divide syllables or words into onset-rime.

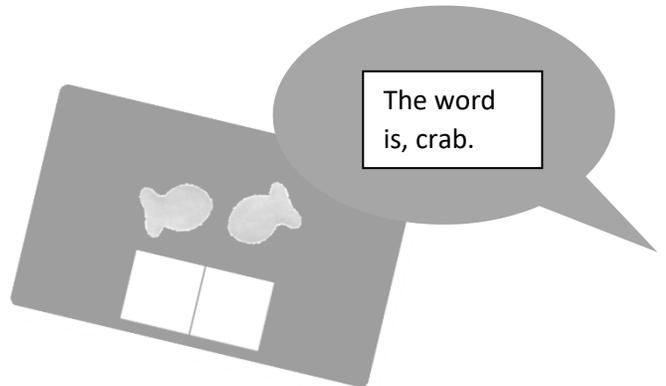
- Onset: initial consonant or consonant cluster of a syllable (everything in front of the vowel)
- Rime: vowel and consonants that follow the onset

Examples:

Word	Onset	Rime
sat	s	at
stop	st	op

- **Always use single syllable words** for prekindergarten onset-rime tasks.

Word	Onset 1	Rime 1	Onset 2	Rime 2
pumpkin	p	ump	k	in



**Notes:**

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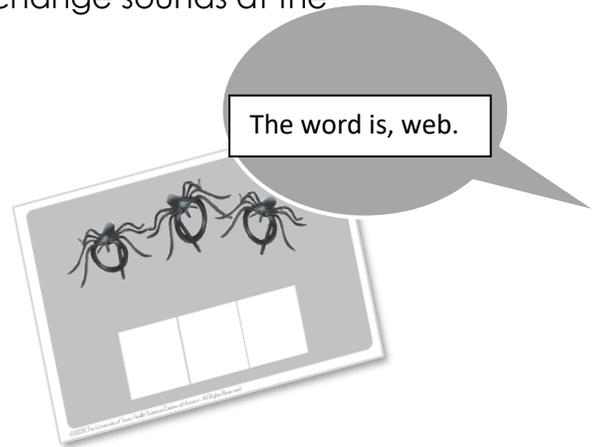
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## Phonemes

Phonemes are the smallest units of sound in language. Phonemic awareness involves the ability to combine, separate, and change sounds at the smallest unit.

- Blending phonemes: /s/ /a/ /t/ = sat
- Segmenting phonemes: sat = /s/ /a/ /t/
- Manipulating phonemes:  
change /s/ in sat to /m/ = mat



### Notes:

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### Remember ...



- Phonological awareness skills are auditory.
- Begin with larger units of sound (words/sentences) and move towards the smallest units of sound (phonemes).
- Phonological awareness and phonics are not the same.
- Teach phonological awareness throughout the day, every day, and at all levels.
- **Make it Planful, Playful, and Purposeful!**



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