



## First Grade Foundational Skills Toolkit

### Isolate Final Phoneme (Sound):

- Tell your child that you are going to play a listening game with them. Give your child three objects like beads that can be used for counting phonemes (sounds). Say a three-phoneme (sound) word such as “pad” and ask your child to repeat it. Then show your child how you can divide the word “pad” into three parts: /p/, /ă/, and /d/. Tell them each bead can be used to “stand for” each part. Show them that you need all three beads to represent the word “pad”. Repeat this activity with a variety of three and four phoneme (sound) words removing the first sound (e.g. cat, hill, man).
- Give your child a smiley sticker to place on the end of their thumb. Tell them to stick their thumb up each time you say a word that ends with a certain phoneme (sound). Say words out loud, one at a time, and monitor your child’s responses.

### Isolate Medial (Middle) Phoneme (Sound):

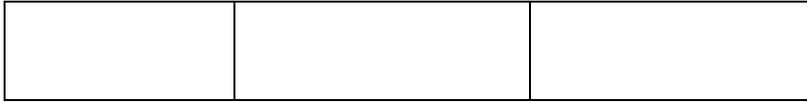
- Play the game "SNAP" using shared sounds. The parent begins by saying two words. If the child hears the same medial (middle) sound, they will "snap" their fingers. If the two words don't share the same medial (middle) sound, your child is quiet. You can begin with initial sounds; proceed to medial (middle) and final sounds when your child can do the first sound well. (e.g. dad, cat).
- The parent and child will tap their index fingers for the beginning sound, middle fingers for the middle sound and ring fingers for the ending sound. The parent says the word **cap**. The children are to tap their index, middle and ring fingers to their thumbs, for every phoneme (sound) in the word. The parent can ask how many sounds are in the word **cap**.

### Blend Phonemes (Sounds):

- You will need a beanbag or ball for this activity. Pronounce a word phoneme (sound) by phoneme (sound) and have the child respond by putting the phonemes (sound) together. Example: If the word is "kite," you would say out loud /k/ /ī/ /t/ (be sure to pause between each phoneme /sound/). Toss a beanbag or ball to your child. Your child catches the bag or ball and responds with "kite" while throwing the beanbag or ball back to you. Use words with easily pronounced phonemes (e.g. avoid phonemes (sound) like /g/ because they cannot be pronounced without adding a vowel sound, as in /guh/).

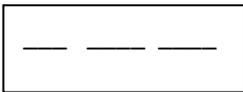
## Segment Phonemes (Sounds):

- Boxes are drawn together in a horizontal line, like this:



They can be drawn on a piece of paper or on an index card. Tell your child that words can be divided into sounds. Model the task by segmenting a word into phonemes and moving a chip into a box after you say each sound. For example, “The word is *go*. What are the sounds? “/g/” (move a chip into the first box). “/o/” (move a chip into the second box. Have your child segment several words with you. See that your child moves a chip with you. See that your child moves a chip into a box for each sound, and listen to determine that they say the right sounds. If your child makes a mistake, stop and have your child watch you model. Then have them segment the word and move chips with you (continue with the task until they are successful). Tell your child a word. Have your child segment it into phonemes (sounds) and respond. Once your child has mastered segmenting two phoneme words, advance to three-, four-, and five-phoneme (sound) words.

- Tell your child that you are thinking of an object and ask them to guess what the object is. As a clue, give the separate sounds in the word. For example, if you’re thinking of a fish, say, “The object I am thinking of is a /f/ /ī/ /sh/.” Your child must then blend the sounds together to discover the object you are thinking of.
- In the case of a Consonant-Vowel-Consonant (CVC) word, the parent is to draw three lines on paper.



The parent says a CVC word (e.g. dog, cat, run) and the student taps his/her finger on a line as he or she says the individual phonemes in the word. Two lines would be drawn for VC or CV words and four lines for CCVC or CVCC words.

- With your child standing, instruct them to listen as you call out words and their sounds. When the first sound is introduced, have your child place their hands on their head. When the second sound is made, your child will place their hands on their hips. As the last sound in the word is made, your child will touch their feet. Use several words containing three sounds until your child consistently identify them.

## Substitute Initial, Final and Medial (Middle) Letters

- Tell your child that they are going to change words by substituting one letter sound at the beginning, middle, or end of the word. Model by changing *fox* to *box*. Your child should now blend the new word. **Take away the *x* in *box*, add a *p*, and you have *bop*. Take away the *b*, add an *m*, and you have *mop*. Substitute the *a* for an *o* and you have *map*.**

## Spelling

- On paper, create a generic race track. Game pieces could include toy cars, one for each player, and one die. You will need a list of the spelling words your child needs to work on. Players roll to see who goes first. Once that is decided, the player is given a spelling word. If they get it correct, they roll the die and move that many spaces. If they get the word wrong they stay where they are.

## Word Reading

- Make football-shaped cards with sight words on them. Place all cards face down. Your child has a football field with ten lines and a small football shaped marker (could be a button). When they have read ten words, they score a touchdown.
- Use large craft sticks (or index cards cut in half). Write one sight word on the end of each stick. For every 25 sticks, add three ZAP sticks. The child will take turns pulling a stick out of a cup. If they can read it, they keep it. If they can't, they put it back in the cup. If they get "zapped" they put all of their sticks back in the cup. At the end of a set time (about 5 minutes), the winner is the one with the most sticks.

## Comprehension

- Make sure your child benefits from doing easy repeated readings. This approach is just what it sounds like; the child reads the same easy book over and over again. Easy repeated readings help children speed up their reading rates, learn new sight words, and develop their abilities to read in a natural voice using more expression.
- Make reading practice an enjoyable thinking activity. Interact with the story as your child reads. Ask questions and react to story events. Summarize events periodically and seek predictions for what may happen next.
- Help your child with difficult words. If your child is stuck on a word for more than three seconds, pronounce the word so your child can maintain the flow in reading. Letting your child struggle for a long time on a particular word interferes with his or her ability to understand the text. After you finish reading the book, you can look back at the words your child missed and review them or practice those words later using flashcards
- Try taking turns. Your child does not have to do all the reading. It is okay to take turns reading, especially if the story is long. Try these strategies: **Echo reading**-You read a selection using proper expression and your child mimics you by reading it again. **Tap-off reading**- Each of you indicates when you want your turn to end by tapping the table or each other.