



Kindergarten Foundational Skills Toolkit

Isolate Initial Phoneme (Sound):

- Create a *Guess What?* box by placing items in a box that all have names beginning with or ending with the same phoneme (sound). Your child will reach into the box and try to figure out what the items are without looking -- their only clue is what sound the item's name begins or ends with. Example: Put in some plastic grapes, some gum, a toy goat, etc. and tell them the object begins with a /g/ sound. Put in a doll, a snail, a wheel, etc. and tell them that it ends with an /l/ sound.
- Have your child look for objects in their house or the yard that begin with certain sounds. Have your child say the phrase "I spy with my little eye something that begins with ____." Where the blank is insert the first sound in the word (e.g. something that begins with /s/. (When you see /s/ you are to make the sound of the representation.) Take turns trying to figure out what object the person has in mind.
- Gather a set of three or four magazine pictures of objects whose names start with a particular phoneme (sound) (e.g. fox, foot, feather). Do this for several phonemes. Use only pictures that have single consonants at the beginning. Have your child name each object depicted. After the names of all of the pictures in the set have been agreed upon, ask your child to choose a picture from the set and name it. Then repeat the name, drawing out the initial consonant (e.g., f-f-f-ox). Then, ask your child to repeat the name in the same way. Tell your child to notice and describe what they are doing with their mouths as they make the /f-f-f/ sound (and make sure they notice it is the same sound at the beginning of different words). Continue this process with the other picture cards and make sure that your child understands that all of the picture names start with the same phoneme (sound) (/f/).
- Your child will decide on a place they want to go. Then they think of three things they want to take with them that begin with the same sound as where they are going. Parent: "I'm going on a *picnic*, and I'm taking a *poncho*, *potato chips*, and *punch*." Your child will tell where they want to go and what they will take.

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 Syllables and Onset-Rime:

- Give your child several objects like buttons. Say a word, stretching each sound in the word. Your child will repeat the sounds slowly and move a button for each sound. Then they say each sound faster, moving their fingers below the buttons as they say the word. Parent: “/fffaaannn/.” Now say it again slowly and move one button for each sound in the word.” Your child: “fffaaannn.” (They move one button each for /f/, /ă/, and /n/ sounds.” Parent: “Now let’s say each sound faster this time. Point to each letter. “/f/, /ă/, and /n/.” Move your finger quickly. (In a one-syllable word, the onset consists of the initial consonant or consonant cluster of the word. The rime is the vowel and consonants that follow are the onset.)

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 Onset-Rime:

- In a one-syllable word, the onset consists of the initial consonant or consonant cluster of the word. The rime is the vowel and consonants that follow are the onset. In the word *cat*, the /k/ is the onset, and the /at/ is the rime. Please note: r-i-m-e is not the same as r-h-y-m-e.

Here are some activities to use with your child: “Put these sounds together to make a word: /b/ /at/. What’s the word? Bat. What is the onset? /b/. What is the rime? /at/. In the word *shut*, what is the onset? /sh/. What is the rime? /ut/.”

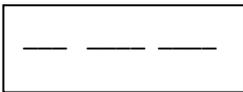
Segment Phonemes (Sounds):

- 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.

Delete Initial Word Part/Phoneme (Sound):

- The parent will give their child a word such as **mart**. The parent will ask their child, “What word will you have if you add a /s/ to beginning of the word?” The parent may also have their child to make nonsense words. Example: “What word will you have if you add a /t/ to the end of **has**?” The child will respond, “**hast**”.

Delete Final Word Part/Phoneme (Sound):

- Use words from any story, for example the word “**midnight**” from the story Cinderella. The parent will ask their child to tell them what the word will be without one part of the word. For example: If you take off mid in **midnight**, what is left? Your child answers: “**night**”.

- Give your child a word such as “**cart**” and ask your child to substitute one phoneme (sound) for another. Example: “What word will you have if you change the /t/ sound to a /d/ sound in the word “**cart**”?” Your child: “**card**”. The parent: “Now substitute the /o/ sound for the /a/ sound. What word do you have now?” Your child: “**cord**”.

Letter Naming and Sounds (Lowercase and Capital Alphabet)

- Letter recognition is an important skill for early learning. Before a child can learn basic words, they need to recognize the letters of the alphabet. Your child may assist you with creating flashcards for lowercase and capital review. You may extend this activity by matching the uppercase with their lowercase.
- Students identify the sound represented by each letter. If students have already mastered the letter/sounds, they could identify a word that begins with the letter. To provide more challenge, have students identify words that END with the given “sound”.

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.