

PHONEME SEGMENTATION FLUENCY

An Activities Guide for Families

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At Home Activities

When you see slashes like /m/, it means make the letter sound, don't say the letter name.

- Say "mmmm" (like something tastes good)
- Not "em" (the name of the letter M)

Robot Talk

Speak like a robot who can only say sounds. Ask your child to "translate" back to human language.

Parent: "Please pass the /c/.../u/.../p/."

Child: "Cup!"

Head, Shoulders, Knees

Touch a body part for each sound in a word.

Word: "Hop"

Action: Touch head for /h/, touch shoulders for /o/, touch knees for /p/.

Finish This Rhyme

Recite or read a nursery rhyme your child knows well. Stop right before the rhyming word and wait for them to shout it out.

Parent says, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you..."
(Pause).

Child says, "Are!"

Rubber Band Words

Have your child pretend to hold a giant invisible rubber band. Say a word like "dog," and ask them to slowly stretch their hands wide as they say the separate sounds "/d/.../o/.../g/." Then, quickly snap their hands back together to say the whole word "Dog!"

Clean Up Sounds

While cleaning up, have your child say the sounds of the item they are putting away.

Adult: "Clean up a sock and say the sounds in sock."

Child: "/s/, /o/, /k/." Puts the sock in the laundry hamper.

Sound Toss

For a more advanced practice, ask the child to "throw a sound away."

Adult: "Say slap without the /s/."

Child: "Lap."

Adult: "Say farm without the /f/."

Child: "Arm."

Did You Know?

If your child is good at nursery rhymes, they are prepping for reading! Recognizing that 'bees' rhymes with 'knees' shows their brain can separate sounds from meanings, a critical pre-reading skill.



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Finger Counting

Adult: "Say and count the sounds in 'cat'."

Child, while putting up a finger for each sound: "/c/, /a/, /t/." Child should be holding up 3 fingers after saying each sound.

Rhyme Tennis

Pretend to serve an invisible tennis ball while saying a word like 'cat'. Your child has to "hit it back" with a rhyming word, such as 'hat'. Continue back and forth until someone gets stuck. Then start with a new word!

Odd One Out

Adult: "I'm going to say three words. Two start with the same sound, but one is an imposter. Listen: Ball... Bear... Cat. Which one doesn't belong?"

Child: "Cat."

Adult: "Why?"

Child: "Because cat starts with /k/ and the others start with /b/."

Bubblegum Middles

Have the child pretend to have bubblegum in their mouth. Say a word like "pig," and ask them to slowly "pull" the gum out of their mouth as they say the separate sounds "/p/.../i/.../g/." Parent says, "What was the sound in the middle?" Child says, "/i/."

Word Wizard

Wave your hand as if it's a magic wand and tell your child you are the "Word Wizard." Say a word like "cat," wave your wand, and announce, "Zap! I change the /c/ to a /b/—what is it now?" The child then "reveals" the magic new word by saying, "Bat."

Hand Squeezes

Hold hands while walking. Child squeezes for each sound they say. Adult: "What are the sounds in sun?" Child: "/s/." Squeezes hand. "/u/." Squeezes again. "/n/." Squeezes a 3rd time.

Did You Know?

Reading actually starts in the ears, not the eyes. A child's ability to hear the difference between sounds (like cat vs. bat) is one of the strongest predictors of future reading success—even more than knowing their ABCs!

