

In this article you will learn:

- How to encourage phonological awareness in early literacy development

“Family literacy is about the ways families use literacy in their daily lives.

It is about how families:

- learn
- use literacy to do everyday tasks
- help children develop literacy skills
- use literacy to maintain relationships with others and in the community
- interact with organizations and institutions.”

AFLO

Action Family Literacy Ontario

**Kingston Literacy & Skills’
Mission Statement**

Kingston Literacy & Skills furthers the development and growth of adult and family literacy in Kingston and neighbouring communities.

Phonological Awareness

The word phonological has a smaller word in it: “phono”. The word “phono” is of Greek origin and it means “sound” and “voice”. Before children can learn to read and write, they need to develop an awareness of how letters and words are used in oral language.

Phonological awareness refers to what we HEAR in spoken language, as opposed to what we read or write (that’s phonics!)

Listening Skills

Since phonological awareness is about HEARING the smaller sounds in words, listening activities are the first step in developing this pre-reading skill. Here are some activity ideas to help children develop their listening skills:



Simon Says - Give one-step directions to children to follow. For example, “Simon says touch your nose.” If you say “Simon says” first, then the children should follow the direction.

If you do not say “Simon says” then they should NOT follow the directions.

Musical Patterns - Clap or use musical instruments to tap out the rhythm in songs with children. You can also clap out a pattern and ask the child to imitate that pattern.

Sing Sound-Play Songs

For preschoolers:

- Old MacDonald (ei ei o)
- This Old Man (nick-nack paddywack)
- B-I-N-G-O
- Apples and Bananas

For babies:

- Cheek Chin
- Acka Baka Soda Cracker

If you are not familiar with the words to these songs you can easily find them by searching on the internet.

Rhyming

Being able to hear rhymes in words is an important step in learning to read. When you are reading books, stories and riddles, emphasize words that sound similar. It will help a child develop an “ear for rhyme” if you use the songs and poems that rhyme like those shown on the next page.

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Crocodile Poem

If you should meet a crocodile,
 Don't take a stick and poke him;
 Ignore the welcome of his smile,
 Be careful not to stroke him.
 For as he sleeps upon the Nile,
 He gets thinner and thinner;
 Whenever you meet a crocodile,
 He's looking for his dinner.

Down by the Bay

Down by the bay, where the watermelons grow,
 Back to my home, I dare not go,
 For if I do, my mother will say,
 "Did you ever see a fly wearing a tie?"
 Down by the bay.

Alternate Rhymes:

Did you ever see a bear combing his hair?
 Did you ever see a moose kissing a goose?
 Did you ever see a whale with a polka dot tail?
 Did you ever see a llama wearing pyjamas?
 Did you ever have a time when you couldn't make
 a rhyme?

Did you know that nearly 500 words can be made from the 37 word endings below?

These endings can be used to create word families, which will help children understand that knowing rhyming words helps us read. For example, using the ending "-ack" you can make the words **back**, **stack**, **track**, **rack**, **sack** and **pack**.

-ack	-at	-ide	-ock
-ain	-ate	-ight	-oke
-ake	-aw	-ill	-op
-ale	-ay	-in	-or
-all	-eat	-ine	-ore
-ame	-ell	-ing	-uck
-an	-est	-ink	-ug
-ank	-ice	-ip	-ump
-ap	-ick	-ir	-unk
-ash			

Phoneme Awareness

Recognizing beginning, ending and middle sounds in words **helps children learn to associate particular sounds with letters**. Beginning sounds are the easiest to hear – children may learn to do this as early as 3 years old. Here are some activities that will help a child hear the beginning sounds in words:

Green Light, Go!

An adaptation of the old "Red Light, Green Light!". Ask the child to stand on the opposite side of the room from where you are. The child takes one step closer to you when they hear you call a word that starts with the /g/ sound.

Tongue Twisters

Say these fast ten times! Reciting tongue twisters with children will help them hear the smaller sounds in words. They can be tricky because once you say them a few times you start to mix up the sounds. Try one of these tongue twisters:

- toy boat
- unique New York
- red rubber, blue blubber
- a sure sign of sunshine
- Is Ruth's tooth loose?
- Brenda blew big blue bubbles

I Spy

This game can be played anywhere. Find an item to "spy" and say, "I spy with my little eye, something that begins with the sound /d/." See if they can guess the item you are thinking about. Choose a variety of letter sounds for children to guess.

Rhyming Activity Links:

www.kinderplans.com

www.goldendoorschool.org

www.hubbardscupboard.org

www.phonologicalawareness.org

www.enchantedlearning.com