

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Sound Bingo

PARENT

Directions:

Draw your child's attention to the sounds of his/her language with silly songs and poems. Driving home from daycare, to and from sports practices, and vacation travel time are all great occasions to "pop in the CD" and enjoy! Include favorites such as:

♪ *Down by the Bay and Shake My Sillies Out*  
by Raffi

♪ *If You're Happy and You Know It*  
by Nicki Weiss

♪ *Sing Hey Diddle Diddle: 66 Nursery Rhymes with Their Traditional Tunes*  
by Beatrice Harrop

♪ *Six Sick Sheep: 101 Tongue Twisters*  
by Joanne Cole.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Read Alouds

TEACHER/PARENT

Directions:

Read **and reread** stories that play with language. Nursery rhymes, chants, and Dr. Seuss books usually play a large role in this development. "Only when children realize that words can be changed and how changing a sound changes the word are they able to profit from instruction in letter-sound relationships." (Month by Month Phonics for First Grade, Patricia M. Cunningham and Dorothy P. Hall, 1997, p. 17, Carson-Dellosa)

Some excellent book titles are:

- Any Dr. Seuss book
- Good Night Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
- I Was Walking Down the Road by Sarah Barchas
- Is Your Mama a Llama? By Deborah Guarino
- Jessie Bear, What Will You Wear? By Nancy Carlstrom
- The Lady with the Alligator Purse by Nadine Westcott
- More Spaghetti, I Say! By Rita Gelman
- Pickles Have Pimples and Other Silly Statements by Judi Barrett
- Sheep in a Jeep by Nancy Shaw
- Sing Hey Diddle Diddle: 66 Nursery Rhymes with Their Traditional Tunes by Beatrice Harrop
- Tickle Toe Rhymes by Joan Knight
- Anna Banana: 101 Jump-Rope Rhymes
- I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly by Nadine Westcott
- Miss Mary Mack by Joanna Cole

Tips: Dramatize your voice as you read! Your child will delight in hearing words "come to life." Take turns reading different parts, or invite your child to act out each role as you share stories aloud.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Getting to Know You

TEACHER/PARENT

Directions:

1. Use this activity at the beginning of the year to help children learn classmates' names. Have children practice phoneme matching by asking a partner to name his or her favorite hobby or treat. Explain that "favorites" must begin with the same sound as the child's name. For example, "Patty and peanut butter.)  
VARIATION: Parents, you can use this activity at home by using your child's friends' names!
2. Invite children to introduce partners to the class, telling what he or she likes. For example, *Sam likes soccer and salamanders.*
3. Extend learning by having children draw pictures of their classmates on connect paper dolls. Write each child's favorite on the bottom of his or her doll.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills.* Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Rhyme Time

PARENT/TEACHER

Directions:

1. Read aloud a rhyming story or poem.
2. Reread the selection, omitting the matching rhyme, and have students "fill in the blank." For example,  
*See the frog jump over the \_\_\_\_\_.* (log)
3. Invite students to think of new rhyming words to fit each sentence. For example,  
*See the frog jump over the \_\_\_\_\_.* (dog, hog)
4. Additional rhyming sentences:
  - Look at that man jump over the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - See the frog sit on a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Did you ever see a whale with a polka-dot \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Look what I see! A yellow and black \_\_\_\_\_!
  - Do you see the fly sitting on the \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Can you imagine a bear with purple and green \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Watch the cat playing with the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - See the bug holding a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Can you imagine pigs wearing \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Look up in the sky and see a bird flying \_\_\_\_\_.
  - "OK," said dad, "I'm really \_\_\_\_\_.
  - The clumsy ox tripped over the \_\_\_\_\_.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills.* Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Draw-a-Rhyme Story 2: The Clown

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Tell children they are going to draw a chalk picture together. Read each rhyme with the words in parenthesis left out. Have children fill in the blanks (either orally or in writing), then add those parts to the chalkboard drawing.
2. VARIATION: Give each child a piece of paper and coloring tools. As you read through the rhyme together each child can draw his/her own clown!

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

When making a clown, it is said,  
Always start with his big, round \_\_\_\_ (head).

Make it real messy 'cuz clowns don't care.  
On the top of his head, give him red curly \_\_\_\_ (hair)

When people laugh, he wants to hear,  
So on each side, give him a great big \_\_\_\_ (ear)

Now make him look very wise,  
By giving him two wide-open \_\_\_\_ (eyes).

And yes, of course, everyone knows,  
Give him a big, fat, rounded \_\_\_\_ (nose).

Now make a line as long as a mile,  
And turn it into a great big \_\_\_\_ (smile).

Look at his clothes – the clown suit he's in,  
It has a ruffle right under his \_\_\_\_ (chin).

All over his suit are big colored spots,  
So give him lots of \_\_\_\_ (polka-dots).

Now look at that, can you believe?  
He has purple stripes on each long \_\_\_\_ (sleeve).

He has two hands – one left, one right,  
One's painted yellow, and the other \_\_\_\_ (white).

The bottom of his funny suit,  
You can see one big, black \_\_\_\_ (book)

And the other foot has not a shoe,  
'cuz he just painted his toenails \_\_\_\_ (blue)

Now, if you listened and did everything right,  
Your little clown is a funny \_\_\_\_ (sight).

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Draw-a-Rhyme Story 3: The Alien

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Tell children they are going to draw a chalk picture together. Read each rhyme with the words in parenthesis left out. Have children fill in the blanks (either orally or in writing), then add those parts to the chalkboard drawing.
2. Variation: Have each child draw their own "alien" as the blanks are filled in.

When drawing a Martian, it is said,  
Always start by making his \_\_\_\_ (head).

Don't give him hair on top of his head,  
Give him a shiny, round helmet that's \_\_\_\_ (red).

Look at his eyes, so scary and mean,  
Since he's from Mars, they must be \_\_\_\_ (green).

Right by his nose his eyeballs hide,  
'cuz he just happens to be \_\_\_\_ (cross-eyed).

Just look at his nose, can you imagine that!  
It has three holes and it's really \_\_\_\_ (flat).

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

His mouth is crooked with lots of teeth,  
Jagged on top and flat \_\_\_\_ (underneath).

Not only is his neck double-jointed,  
But look at his ears – they're \_\_\_\_ (pointed).

I'm sure he has a body like you and me,  
But a Martian's space suit is all you \_\_\_\_ (see).

Now, remember, Martians are not to be feared,  
They're not really dangerous, they just look kind of  
\_\_\_\_ (weird)!

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Silly Willy Song

TEACHER

1. Teach the following verse to the tune of "Skip to My Lou." Invite children to sing along, completing the last line using words that rhyme with students' names.  
*Silly, Willy, who should I choose? (repeat 3x)*  
*I choose \_\_\_\_\_ . (Terri, berry)*
2. Continue the song, substituting new student names. Have everyone sing the main verse, and invite volunteers to say the new rhyming names.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Oddball Out

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Ask children to listen carefully as you say three words. Explain that only two of the three words share a common sound. Have children identify the word that does not belong. Example: **dog fog boat** (boat is oddball)
2. Say the words one at a time, then have children hold up one, two, or three fingers to indicate whether the first, second, or third word is the "oddball." Ask a volunteer to repeat the oddball word aloud.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Clap, Snap, or Tap

TEACHER

1. Have a child say his or her first name and clap, snap, or tap the syllables as he or she speaks. Ask the rest of the class to silently count the number of claps, snaps, or taps, then repeat the hand motions while saying the child's name.
2. Continue the activity, inviting each child to choose whether to clap, snap, or tap the syllables in his/her name.
3. Extension: Have children clap, snap, or tap the number of syllables they hear in other multiple-syllable words such as *baseball*, *snowman*, and *under*.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Sing a Song of Sounds

TEACHER

1. Have children sing the following song to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It."  
*If your name begins with /m/, stand up,*  
*If your name begins with /m/, stand up,*  
*If your name begins with /m/, stand up and take a bow,*  
*If your name begins with /m/, stand up.*
2. Repeat with different phonemes and movements such as clapping your hands, turning around, touching your toes, or jumping up and down.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Hink Pink

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Explain to children the definition of a hink pink – a pair of rhyming words that answers a riddle. Read aloud the following riddles, and invite children to guess the hink-pink answer.

*What do you call a chubby kitty? (a fat cat)*

*What do you call a crying father? (sad dad)*

*What do you call a desk that doesn't fall down? (stable table)*

*What do you call a rabbit who tells jokes? (funny bunny)*

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Who Did You Catch?

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Practice blending onsets and rimes (e.g. *p-at* to form *pat*, *sw-ing* to form *swing*), then have children sing the following verse to the tune of "A-Hunting We Will Go."

*A-searching we will go, a-searching we will go,*

*We'll find a /h/ and add a /orse/,*

*And now we have a horse!*

2. Repeat the verse using other onsets and rimes. To begin, use animal names (a more familiar context), then switch to word families such as *bat*, *hat*, and *mat*.

Tip: On onset is the initial consonant(s) in a word

A rime is all letters that come after the initial consonant(s)

Example: *frog*: the onset is "fr", the rime is "og"

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Bubble Gum Words

TEACHER/PARENT

1. This activity helps children slow down the verbal pronunciation process, enabling them to hear sounds or components that make up words. Begin by saying words one at a time.
2. Have children repeat each word slowly, putting their hands to their mouths and pretending to s-t-r-e-t-c-h bubble gum out in front of them.
3. Invite volunteers to share “bubble gum” words for others to stretch.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Name Chant

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Say the following chant to children:  
*It begins with /t/,*  
*And it ends with /im/.*  
*Put them together,*  
*And they say \_\_\_\_\_ . (Tim)*
2. Have children blend the sounds together and chorus the correct answer
3. Repeat the chant using each student’s name. Invite children to stand and bow when their names are spoken.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: The Sounds in the Word

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Using two-and three-phoneme words or picture cards, have children sing the following verse to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus."  
*The sounds in the word go /c/ /a/ /t/; /c/ /a/ /t/; /c/ /a/ /t/.*  
*The sounds in the word go /c/ /a/ t/,*  
*Can you guess the word?*
2. Repeat with other two-and three-phoneme words. Move into written language by writing targeted words on the chalkboard or piece of paper after guessing a word.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: What Do You Hear?

TEACHER

1. Teach the following song to the tune of "London Bridge Is Falling Down."  
(Teacher Verse)  
*What's the last sound that you hear?*  
*That you hear, that you hear?*  
*What's the last sound that you hear?*  
*In dog, dog, dog*  
  
(Student response)  
*/g/ is the sound that I hear*  
*That I hear, that I hear.*  
*/g/ is the sound that I hear*  
*at the end of dog.*
2. Repeat the song using other words. Modify the verse to identify initial and middle sounds (e.g. What's the **first** sound that you hear? What is the **middle** sound that you hear?) Invite volunteers to choose word and play the teacher' role.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Color-Coded Sounds

TEACHER

1. In advance, draw three horizontal fill-in-the-blank lines on each index card to designate beginning, middle, and ending sound positions of a word. Give a card to each child and have him or her color the first line green, the middle line blue, and the last line red.
2. Designate a target sound. Ask children to listen to a word containing the target sound, then place a counter on the index card to indicate where they hear the sound – on the green line if it's a beginning sound, the blue line if it's a middle sound, or the red line if it's an ending sound. Repeat with other words.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: I Spy

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Have children identify “spied” objects by listening to your phoneme clues. Invite them to guess after each clue is given. For example:
  - *I spy an object with three sounds in its name.*
  - *I spy an object with three sounds in its name and the first is /b/.*
  - *I spy an object with three sounds in its name. The first sound is /b/, the last is /k/.*
  - *I spy an object with three sounds in its name. The first sound is /b/, the last is /k/, and it rhymes with look.*
2. Repeat with different objects. Invite volunteers to provide “I Spy” clues for their classmates.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Count the Sounds

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Say a word of your own choosing.
2. Have students mentally count the number of phonemes (individual sounds) they hear in the word.  
Example: "cat" has 3 phonemes /c/ /a/ /t/, "ship" has 3 phonemes /sh/ /i/ /p/, "frog" has 4 phonemes /f/ /r/ /o/ /g/
3. On the count of three, have students hold up the number of fingers to indicate the number of sounds they hear.

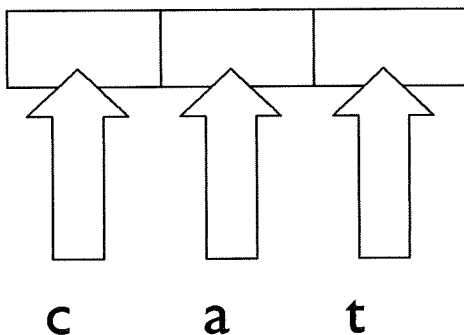
Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Eat Your Words

PARENT/TEACHER

1. Say a word containing two or three sounds. Have children move food pieces to form a horizontal line, one for each sound they hear in the word. Ask them to say the phonemes as they move the food pieces to the line.
2. Have each child "sweep" his or her finger under the food line and blend the sounds together to say the word.
3. Repeat steps 1-2 using other words. When finished, children may eat the food pieces!

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.



## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Zippity – Bippity

PARENT/TEACHER

1. Teach children the following verse to the tune of “Zippity-Do-Dah.”  
*Bippity-bo-bah, Bippity-bay*  
*My, oh my, what a wonderful day.*  
*Plenty of sunshine coming my way.*  
*Bippity-bo-bah, Bippity-bay.*
2. Have children repeat the song several times, substituting the initial sounds in the verse with other sounds. For example, *mippity-mo-mah, wippity-wo-wah, tippity-to-tah.*

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills.* Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Animal Fun

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Teach the following verse to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”  
*Freddy Frog had a log,*  
*Had a log,*  
*Had a log,*  
*Freddy Frog had a log,*  
*He stayed and played all day.*
2. Repeat the verse using other alliterations, (Henry Hen, friend; Carlos Cat, hat; Polly Pig, twig; Sammy seal, wheel; Frieda Fox, box; Skitter Skunk, trunk).
3. End with the verse, *Poor Charlie Chick, he was sick (repeat).*  
*He couldn't play all day!*
4. Invite children to add their own alliterations to the song.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills.* Creative Press.

## PHONEMIC AWARENESS: Drop Off, Add On

TEACHER/PARENT

1. Read words from the list below one at a time. Ask children what sounds needs to be dropped to uncover the "hidden word." For example, *What sound do you drop to change meat to eat?*
2. Increase the difficulty by using words with blends and clusters (sweep to weep, craft to raft, glitter to litter).
3. Vary the activity by having children add letters to given words (e.g. add /c/ to the beginning of row to make \_\_\_\_.)

### Sample Word List:

|       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|
| WILL  | MUST  | BUS   |
| THEN  | CALL  | DONE  |
| FAST  | SLIP  | FIT   |
| BALL  | MEAT  | CHILL |
| CANDY | COLD  | PINK  |
| FIST  | WIN   | THIS  |
| THEN  | TENT  | LIST  |
| THAT  | PLANT | HORN  |

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

**PHONICS: Sound Switch**      **TEACHER**

Directions:

1. Place letters in a pocket chart to form a simple one-syllable word (e.g. cat). Distribute other letters to students.
2. Point to each letter in the pocket chart and have the class say the sound. Ask children to segment and blend the sounds together to form the word.
3. Invite volunteers to create new words by placing their letters over those in the pocket chart, such as placing the letter *m* over the letter *c* to form the word *mat*. Have children blend the new sounds together and decide whether or not the new word makes sense.
4. Place new one-syllable words in the pocket chart and repeat the process.

Source: Cunningham, Patricia M. and Hall, Dorothy P., (1997). *Month-by-month phonics for first grade*. Carson-Dellosa.

**PHONICS: Alphabet Song**      **TEACHER/PARENT**

Directions:

1. Teach and reinforce the traditional “Alphabet Song” that most children enjoy and typically come to school already able to sing. Let them sing it and teach it to everyone else
2. Once the children can sing the song, you may want to point to alphabet cards (usually found above the whiteboard) as they sing.
3. Variation: Children enjoy “being the alphabet” as they line up to go somewhere. Simply pass out laminated alphabet cards – one to each child, leftovers to the teacher – and let the children sing the song slowly as each child lines up. (Be sure to hand out the cards randomly so that no children are repeatedly assigned the A or the Z.)

Source: Cunningham, Patricia M. and Hall, Dorothy P., (1997). *Month-by-month phonics for first grade*. Carson-Dellosa.

## PHONICS: Tongue Twisters PARENT/TEACHER

Directions:

1. Tongue twisters are wonderful for review of consonants because they give lots of word examples for particular sounds and are such fun to say.
2. Say the twister and have the students repeat them after you (not while you are saying them.) Have students say them as fast as they can and as slowly as they can.
3. Write tongue twisters on a chart or poster and call attention to the first letter or letter cluster of each word. Have students read the tongue twisters several times.
4. Leave the chart or posters displayed and refer students to them if they forget or become confused about a sound.

Examples:

Initial Consonants:

- Billy's baby brother bopped Betty.
- Carol can catch caterpillars.
- Dottie dawdled during dinner.
- Gorgeous Gail gets good grades.
- My mother makes marvelous macaroni
- Peter Piper picked a peck of picked peppers

Blends:

- Blondie's blueberries bloomed and blossomed
- Bruce's brother Brian brought brown bread for breakfast.
- Crabs, crickets and crocodiles are creepy creatures.
- Freddie and Fran fry French fries.
- Stephanie Stegasaurus stepped on Steven's stuff
- Skinny skunk skipped over a skeleton.

Tongue Twister Books:

- Alphabet Annie Announces an All-American Album, by Susan Purviance and Marcia O'Shell. (Houghton-Mifflin, 1988.)
- Animalia, by Graeme Base. (Abrams, 1987)
- The Biggest Tongue Twister Book in the World, by Gyles Brandeth. (Sterling, 1978)
- Busy Buzzing Bumblebees and other Tongue Twisters, by Alvin Schwartz. (HarperCollins, 1992)
- Six Sick Sheep, by Jan Cole. (Morrow, 1993)
- A Twister of Twists, A Tangler of Tongues, by Alvin Schwartz. (Harper-Collins, 1972)

Source: Cunningham, Patricia M. and Hall, Dorothy P., (1997). *Month-by-month phonics for first grade*. Carson-Dellosa.

## PHONICS: Guess the Covered Word PARENT/TEACHER

1. Write sentences on the board or chart and cover the word to be guessed with two sticky notes. The first note should cover the first letters of the word up to the first vowel. (onset) The second sticky note will cover the first vowel and all the other letters in the word. (rime)
2. When covering the words, tear or cut your sticky notes so that each is exactly as wide as the letter or letters it covers. By doing so, you will provide students with the additional clue of word length.
3. Show the children the sentences and explain that they will read each sentence and guess the covered word.
4. Allow students to try to guess the covered word of the first sentence. Use a space on your whiteboard or chart paper next to the sentence to record each guess that makes sense. **If a guess does not make sense, explain why, but do not write this guess.** (We are reinforcing that reading must make sense!)
5. When you have written several guesses, remove the paper which covers the first letter. Draw a line through each guess which does not begin with this letter and ask if there are any more guesses which make sense and start with the letter. Write these down. Guesses must make sense and begin with the correct letter.
6. When you have written all guesses that make sense and begin correctly, uncover the word. Let the children see if the word is one they guessed.

Example:

Carl likes to eat c  apples  
candy  
salad

Paula likes to eat   corn  
cupcakes

Source: Cunningham, Patricia M. and Hall, Dorothy P., (1997). *Month-by-month phonics for first grade*. Carson-Dellosa.

## PHONICS: What's in a Name?

## TEACHER/PARENT

Use your child's name to develop an interest in the world of print.

**What you'll need:** Paper, Pencil, crayon, or marker.

Directions:

1. Print the letters of your child's name on paper.
2. Say each letter as you write it, "K...A...T...I...E" or "M...I...K...E."
3. When you finish, say, "That's your name!"
4. Have your child draw a picture.
5. When finished, say, "I have an idea! Let's put your name on your picture." As you write the letters, say them out loud.
6. If you have magnetic letters, spell out your child's name on the refrigerator door.
7. Print your child's name on a card and put it on the door of your child's room or special place.

It's hard to overemphasize the importance of writing and displaying your child's name.

Source: <http://abc-read.com/write2.html>

## PHONICS: P.S. I Love You!

## TEACHER/PARENT

Something important happens when children receive and write letters. They realize that the printed word has a purpose!

Directions:

1. **What You'll Need:** Paper, Pencil, crayon, or marker.
2. Send your child little notes (by putting them in a pocket or lunch box, for example). When your child shows you the note, read it out loud with expression. Some children will read the notes on their own.
3. When your child expresses a feeling or thought that's related to a person, have your child write a letter. Have your child dictate the words to you if your child doesn't write yet. For example:

Dear Grandma,  
I like it when you make ice cream. It's better than the kind we buy at the store.

Your grandson,  
Darryl

P.S. I love you.

4. Ask the people who receive these notes to respond. An oral response is fine--a written response is even better.
5. Explain the writing process to your child: "We think of ideas and put them into words; we put the words on paper; people read the words; and people respond."

Language is speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Each element supports and enriches the other. Sending letters will help children become writers, and writing will make them better readers.

Source: <http://abc-read.com/write2.html>

**PHONICS: Letter Tracing**

**PARENT/TEACHER**

Directions:

Have children trace letters on multi-sensory surfaces such as cloth, and, pudding. Ask him/her to say the **corresponding sound** as each letter is written. (This part of the activity is crucial as learning letter sounds is a key component in the reading process)

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

**PHONICS: Build a Letter**

**TEACHER/PARENT**

Directions: Construct letters using various materials such as macaroni, clay, or pipe cleaners. Have your child say the **corresponding sounds** as he/she feels each letter. (This part of the activity is crucial as learning letter sounds is a key component in the reading process)

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## **PHONICS: Refrigerator Words**                      PARENT

Directions: Place magnetic letters on the refrigerator for your child to practice letter names and sounds, form words, and/or create messages.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## **PHONICS: Read Alouds**                                      PARENT

Directions: Some tips for when your child reads to you:

1. As your child reads aloud, give him/her sufficient time to “sound out” unfamiliar words. Offer hints and suggestions before saying the word. For example, looking at initial and final consonant sounds, trying short vowel sounds before using long ones, looking at other words in the sentence to see what makes sense.
2. As your child reads aloud, be patient and supportive. Allow time for him/her to self-correct and reread mispronounced words. Oftentimes, children will recognize mistakes as they continue to read the rest of the sentence. Give them the opportunity to go back and fix their own mistakes!
3. Break unfamiliar words into syllables so your child can focus on one syllable at a time. Use your hand or a paper strip to cover up extra syllables as your child sounds out each part.

## PHONICS: Word Line

## PARENT/TEACHER

### Directions:

1. Using colored chalk or whiteboard markers, write one vowel on the board three times. (You will be building a separate word around each vowel.) Have children identify the letter name **and sound**.
2. Using another color chalk or whiteboard marker, add the same initial consonant to each vowel – three identical versions. Have children say the letter sounds together.
3. Use different colored chalk or marker to add different ending consonants to each word in the line. (e.g. man, map, mad). Have children read the words.
4. Create more “word lines” on the board (rat, ran, rag; fat, fast, faster). Maintain a fast pace to hold children’s attention.

Example: **map**     **man** **mat**

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## PHONICS: Making Words

## TEACHER/PARENT

Supplies: Letter cards – consonants on white paper, vowels on red

### Directions:

1. Student or teacher chooses 2 consonant cards and one vowel card.
2. Place the letter cards in a consonant, vowel, consonant pattern.

For example,



1. Have child read the word by segmenting each sound, c – a – t, then blending the word together as a whole, “cat.”
2. Repeat steps 1-4 with other letter cards. The goal is for child to read the words quickly, with freedom from letter sound identification problems.
3. Variation: teacher/parent switches the letter cards quickly so that child may concentrate on reading the words. Example: Sat, sap, sop, top, pot, pit, pet... changing one letter at a time.

**\*\*Remember:** Nonsense words are great too! Words such as vat, zam, sot are perfectly fine as the reader is working on the **sounds letters make** and increasing his/her speed at letter sound recognition.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## **PHONICS: Color Coded Reading**      **TEACHER**

### Directions:

1. Make color-coded word cards – one color for letter combinations that make the same sound (e.g. ow and ou) and another color for all other letters. For example, red for ow and ou in the words cow , and all other letters in black.      **cow out**
2. Using only one “family”, show a word card (cow), and have children respond by saying only the color-coded sound of the word (/ow/). Once the children understand the process, show other cards in rapid succession.
3. After combinations are identified consistently, show the cards again. Have children read the word after the color-coded sound is identified. For example, ow, cow. Repeat with other words.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## **PHONICS: Change That Vowel!**      **TEACHER**

### Directions:

1. Choose a one-syllable word (e.g. big) and place each letter, one by one, in a pocket chart. Have children say each phoneme (sound) separately as you place letters in the chart, then blend the sounds together to form the word.
2. Use other vowel cards to replace the middle sound, creating new words (beg, bag, bog, bug). Discuss whether words created make sense or are “nonsense” words.
3. Repeat with other one-syllable words.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

**VOCABULARY: Brainstorming**                      TEACHER/PARENT

This strategy is designed to measure a child's knowledge about a topic by determining what they associate with that topic.

2. Teacher or parent states the vocabulary term.
3. Children simply write down or verbalize as many words as they can think of in association with the key word. They may write or state things, places, events, ideas, or whatever comes to their mind when they see or hear the key word.
4. This process gives the adult some general measure of what the child already knows about the term and how they can best correct or extend the child's knowledge.

**VOCABULARY: Word Association**                      TEACHER/PARENT

This strategy is particularly helpful when trying to remember a list of vocabulary terms in science or social studies.

1. Take the first letter of each targeted word
2. Try to make a word or words out of the first letter of each word

Example: If your child is trying to remember the five themes of geography:

|                         |     |                     |
|-------------------------|-----|---------------------|
| <b>M</b> ovement        | = M |                     |
| <b>R</b> egion          | = R |                     |
| <b>L</b> ocation        | = L | "Mr. Lip" is the    |
| <b>I</b> nterdependence | = I | key to remembering! |
| <b>P</b> opulation      | = P |                     |

**VOCABULARY: 4 Square**

TEACHER/PARENT

This strategy is very useful for learning new vocabulary terms, particularly in science and social studies (nonfiction) kinds of texts.

4. Divide an index card into 4 squares.

5. Write the targeted word in the top left hand square.

Write the definition in the bottom left hand square.

Write a personal association for the word in the top right hand square. It should be a word that helps you remember the new word.

Draw a picture to help you remember the word.

Example:

|               |                       |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| cottage       | Cabin at the lake     |
| A small house | (draw a picture here) |

**VOCABULARY: Picture Dictionaries**

TEACHER/PARENT

Children are instructed to make their own personal "dictionaries."

2. Staple several sheets of white paper together to form a booklet.

3. Direct children to decorate the front cover of their "Personal Dictionary."

4. For each targeted vocabulary word, children are instructed to write the term, definition if appropriate, and draw a picture to complement each word.

**VOCABULARY: First Letter Pattern**

TEACHER/PARENT

This is a strategy that is particularly helpful when trying to remember a list of vocabulary terms in social studies and science.

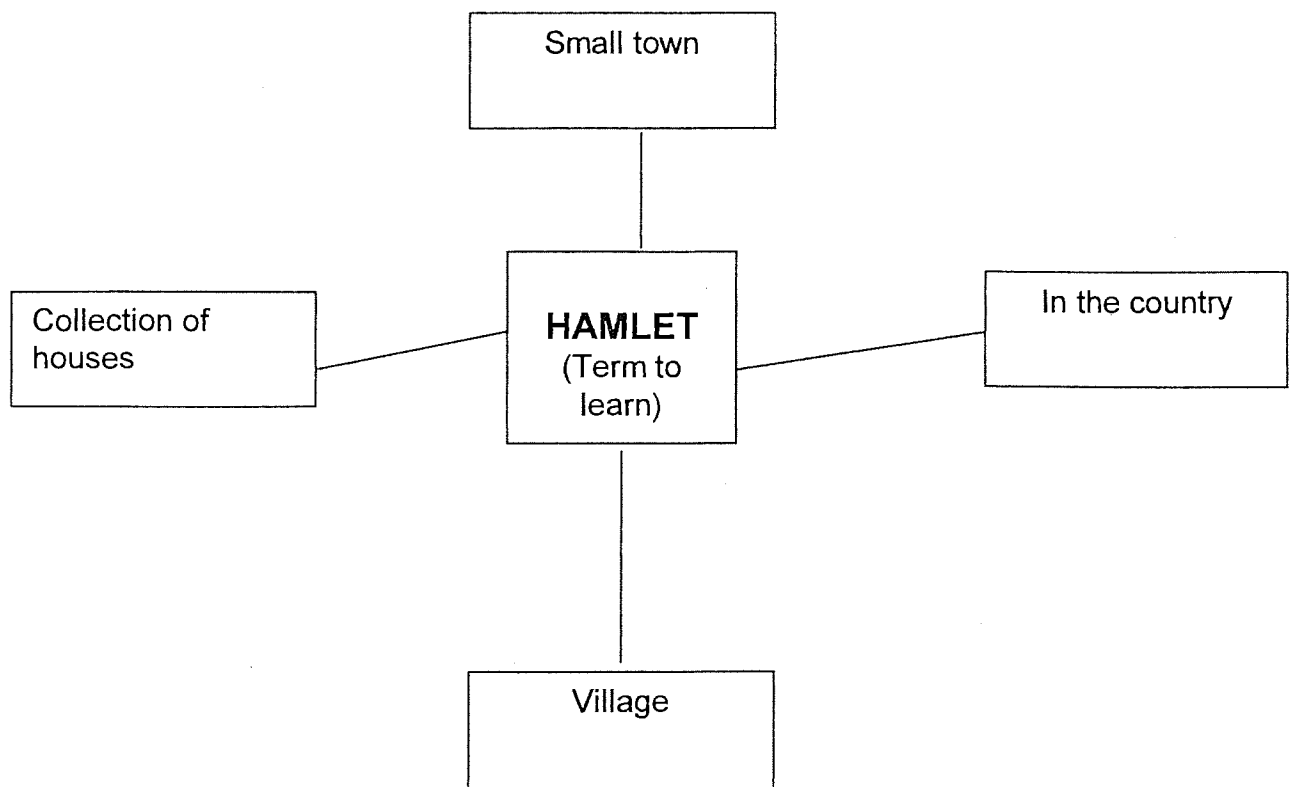
Take the first letter of each targeted word.

Practice remembering the letters in some order that seems to be easiest for you

Example: Four types of landforms – M, H, P, P = mountains, hills, plains, plateaus

**VOCABULARY: Concept Map**

TEACHER/PARENT



**VOCABULARY: Clues and Questions**

TEACHER/PARENT

Take a small index card and divide it into 4 sections.

1. On the front side, write the vocabulary term.

2. On the back, side, write a question in which the answer is the vocabulary term.

Example:

Side 1: Plains

Side 2: What are large areas of fairly level or gently rolling land called?

**VOCABULARY: Word Map**

TEACHER/PARENT

A word map is a visual representation of a definition. It displays three categories of knowledge:

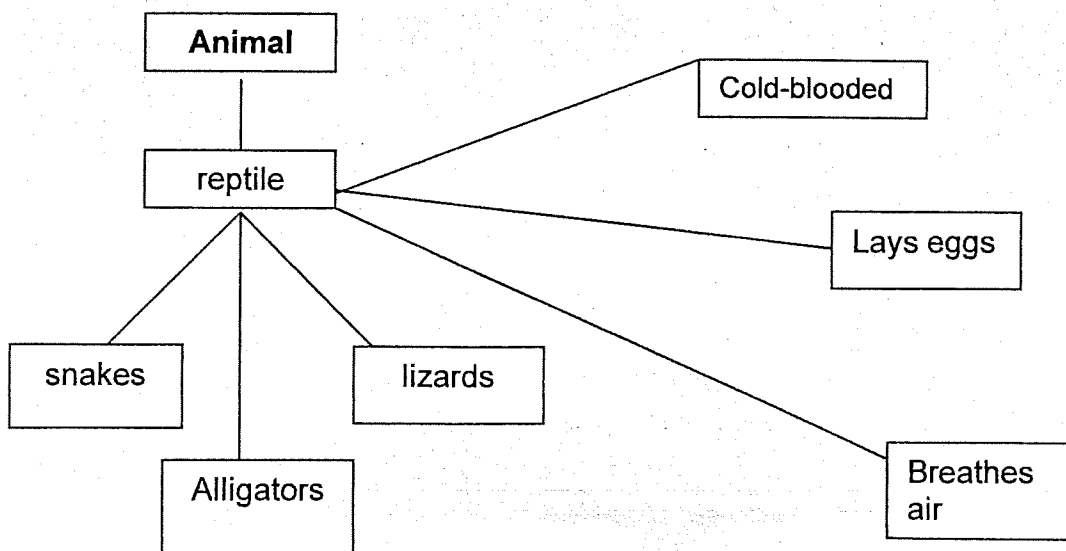
1. General class or category to which the concept belongs
2. The primary properties of the concept and how these properties distinguish it from other members of the class

Examples of the concept

**What is it like?**

**What does it do?**

**What does it have?**



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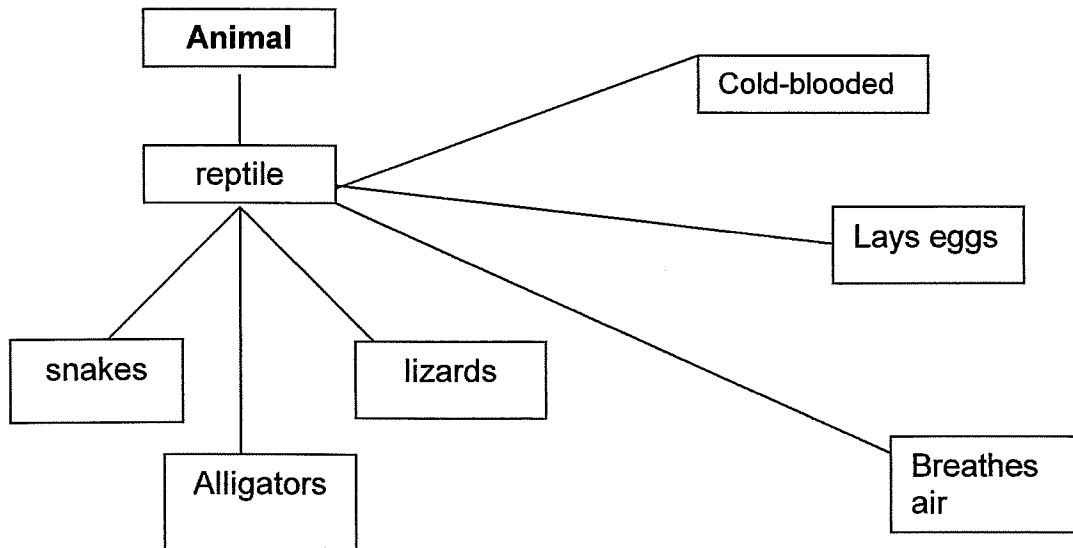
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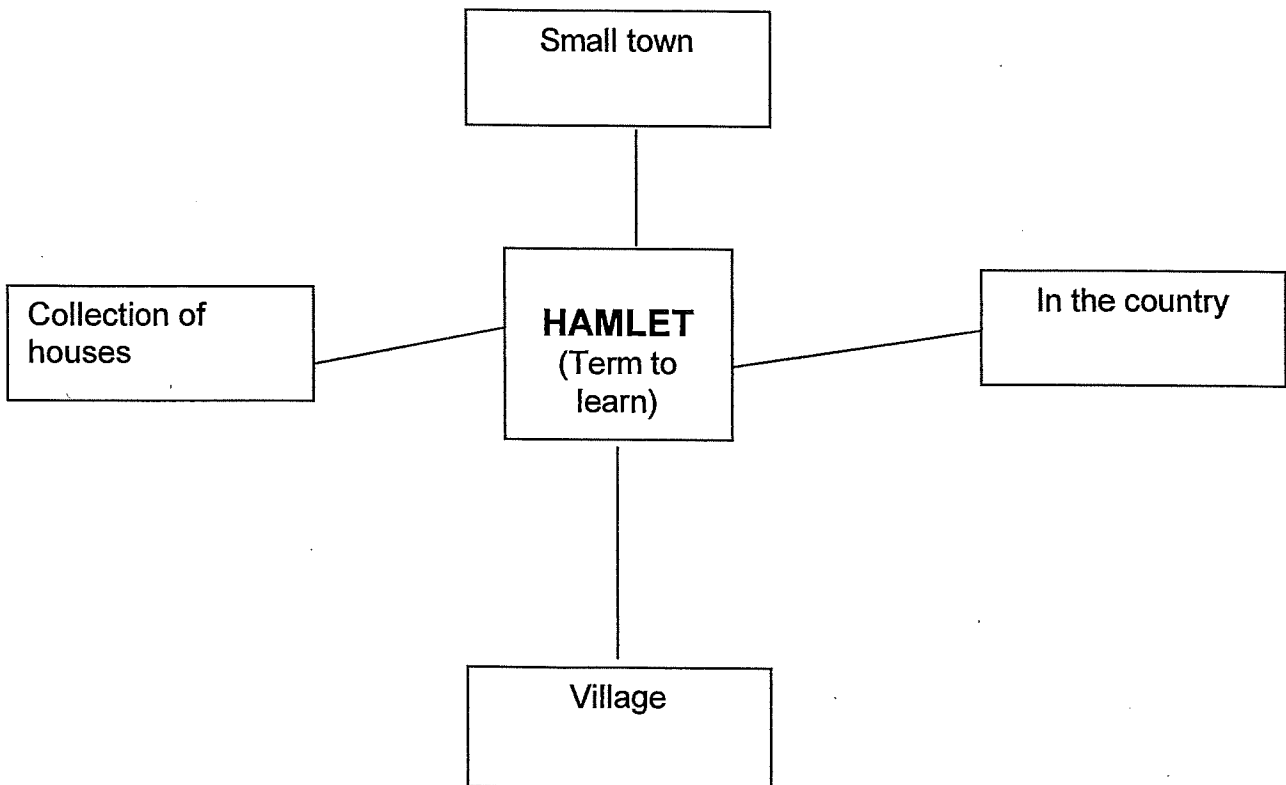
**What does it do?**

**What does it have?**



**VOCABULARY: Concept Map**

TEACHER/PARENT



## **FLUENCY: Read Alouds**

## **TEACHER/PARENT**

### Directions:

1. Dramatize your voice as you read. Your child will delight in hearing words “come to life.” Take turns reading different parts, or invite your child to act out each role as you share stories aloud.

Source: Fitzpatrick, Jo. (1997). *Phonemic awareness: playing with sounds to strengthen beginning reading skills*. Creative Press.

## **FLUENCY: Readers' Theatre**

## **TEACHER**

“This is another very natural and authentic way to promote repeated readings. It does not rely on costumes, movement, props, or scenery to express meaning - just performers and their voices as they face their audience with script in hand.” (The Reading Teacher, October 2000.) These performances are a form of play reading, a dramatic reading that depends largely on voice and gestures to convey meaning.

### Directions:

1. A literary text is transformed into a script through teacher/student collaboration. **Published scripts may also be used.**
2. Students are assigned or choose parts. Discussion focuses around exploring characters, and their thoughts, emotions, and actions.
3. Students practice their scripts until they are reading their lines with confidence and fluently (good expression, intonation, flow, smoothly).

On the performance date, students use their scripts to perform, often sitting in a semicircle and simply rising to speak.

## **FLUENCY: Cold/Hot Reads**

## **PARENT/TEACHER**

### **Directions:**

1. Select a passage or story of 50-200 words at an appropriate level of difficulty for the student. You will need 2 copies of the passage :
  - Original copy: student reads from this
  - Student copy: adult marks errors on
2. While child is orally reading the passage, the adult should:
  - Time the number of seconds required to complete the reading and record this information on the student copy.
  - Record miscues (errors) by underlining words read incorrectly with the blue pen on the student copy..
3. Using a bar graph, have the student color in blue the amount of seconds required to read the passage. Record number of errors at the top of the blue line. This is considered the "cold read."
4. Choose one topic or area of difficulty the child had on the passage and discuss with the student.
5. Give the child the student copy and have him/her practice the entire passage several times. They may practice with a parent at home, another student, or independently.
6. At a later date (several days) have the student reread the selection orally to the adult using the original copy again. While child is orally reading the passage, the adult should:
  - Time the number of seconds required to complete the reading and record this information on the student copy.
  - Record miscues (errors) by underlining words read incorrectly with the red pen on the student copy..
7. Using the same bar graph, have the student color in red (beside the blue line) the amount of seconds required to read the passage. Record number of errors at the top of the red line. This is considered the "hot read."
8. Note improvements with the child.
9. Repeat the strategy with a new selection.

**VARIATION:** Have the child read a passage while you time him for 1 minute. Record on the graph how many words read per minute.

**NOTE:** The goal is for the fluency rate on the **cold** reads to increase over time.

## **FLUENCY: Buddy/Partner Reading**

## **TEACHER**

### **Directions:**

1. Pair an older struggling reader with a younger struggling reader. The older student will meet with the younger student 3 times per week for 20 minutes and read with him/her a passage appropriate for the younger child.
2. In anticipation of each meeting, the older student needs to practice the assigned passage so that he can read it with accuracy and expression with his partner. This may require 2-5 readings of the passage.

When the partners read, first the older student reads the passage to the younger child, then they read it together once or twice, then if time allows, the younger child reads it while the partner follows along and provides support and encouragement.

**FLUENCY: Paired Reading****PARENT****Directions:**

1. Let the child choose the reading material. Parent should show interest in the chosen book. Talk about the title, cover, and find out if the child has any knowledge about the particular topic. Ask your child what he/she expects might happen during the story.
2. Parent and child read all the words out loud together with the parent adjusting for rate so that the language is still fluent and meaningful.
3. The child should say every word correctly. When an error is made, the parent repeats the word and has the child state the word as well.
4. The parent and child then proceed to reading out loud together again.
5. When the reading is easier, the child makes some prearranged nonverbal signal, such as a nudge or a hand squeeze, to indicate to the parent that s/he wishes to read alone.
6. The child continues to read alone out loud until an error is made, then the same correction procedure is applied (parent simply states correct word and child repeats it), and parent/child read together until the child again signals s/he is capable of reading alone without help.
7. Much emphasis throughout is on praise. This is done for correct reading, the child's own self-corrections, and the signals to read alone.

**Additional Suggestions for Parents:**

- When a child comes to an unknown word, wait 5 seconds to allow the child to figure it out.
- Usually you will be able to finish a chapter or a short book each day. Stop at logical points and place a bookmark in the text. The following day, start by talking about what happened in the story thus far.
- 15-20 minutes per day is the suggested amount of time to spend on this strategy.

**FLUENCY: Poetry Performances****PARENT/TEACHER****Directions:**

1. Teacher/Parent selects a day for a poetry party.
2. Several days prior to the event, students (friends) select a poem to learn from one of the poetry books and anthologies in the teacher's personal collection or from the library, or they may compose their own.
3. Over the next several days, students practice reading their poems, usually from a variety of perspectives (different voices, expressions) in preparation for the party.
4. When the party day arrives, the overhead lights in the classroom are dimmed, a lamp on the teacher's desk is turned on, hot apple cider popcorn are served, and students take turns performing their poems for their classmates and other visitors.

**FLUENCY: Oral Recitation Lesson****TEACHER****Directions:**

1. The teacher selects a text that lends itself to performance. For example, texts with dialogue or stories that require simple props work well.
2. The teacher models a fluent oral reading.
3. The teacher models a second oral reading. The teacher selects a strategy to further develop the students' understanding of the text. For example, sequencing or summarizing the events of the story, creating a story map, comparing and contrasting the story to another familiar text.
4. The teacher focuses discussion on helping students read the text using language patterns that they would use if they were talking. For example, discussion might include distinguishing between question and statement voices; understanding the character's expressed emotion, such as anger, sadness, joy, or disgust; and reading longer phrases with appropriate pausing.
5. Students practice the text as a group as well as individually.
6. Students read a portion of the text for an audience.

**FLUENCY: Echo Reading****TEACHER/PARENT****Directions:**

1. The adult selects a passage and models reading of a small portion fluently. (appropriate speed, smoothness, and expression).
2. On the second reading, child(ren) follow along, reading in a lower voice, hence "echoing" the material.

**FLUENCY: Choral Reading****TEACHER**

Directions:

1. Students read a selected passage in unison. The teacher needs to make certain that several fluent readers are part of the group or that his/her own voice leads the way in the choral reading, hence modeling appropriate fluency (appropriate speed, smoothness, and expression).

**FLUENCY: Automatic Reading****TEACHER/PARENT**

Directions:

1. The teacher/parent records his/her own voice while reading a text fluently.
2. The student repeatedly listens to the tape while reading along, until he/she is able to “sound like the teacher” without the tape.
3. The student schedules a time to read the practiced text to the teacher or parent.

Variation: Books on tape are readily available at the local library and book stores.

**COMPREHENSION: Predicting****TEACHER/PARENT****Help young children prepare to read by:**

- encouraging them to activate what they already know about situations, events, characters, and ideas in the text. (This can be done by looking at the title and illustrations to gain an idea of what the text might be about.)
- providing important background information relevant to the selection in order to expand their knowledge
- explaining any vocabulary employed by the writer that might be unfamiliar to the child
- helping them set purpose(s) for reading. For example, are you reading an informational book that will teach about a particular topic? Perhaps the book is intended for pure fun and silliness! Some books are written to teach a moral or lesson. Books are written for a variety of purposes and children need to have an understanding of this.

**COMPREHENSION: Sequencing Fun****TEACHER/PARENT****Directions:**

1. Read a short story to your child(ren) or have the child read orally to you.
2. In advance type up key events to the story and cut them out into strips.
3. Have the child(ren) read the strips out loud.
4. Have the child(ren) place the strips in correct order and glue on to paper. (comprehension at the text level)

Variation: Take one of the sentence strips and cut each word into its own individual strip. Have the child put the sentence back together in correct order. (Comprehension at the sentence level)

**COMPREHENSION: Questioning: 5 W's and an H**

TEACHER/PARENT

Directions:

1. After your child/student has completed the reading of a text (fiction or nonfiction) ask questions that will prompt deeper thinking answers. All questions should begin with: **Who, What, Where, When, Why, or How.**

**COMPREHENSION: 4 Square**

TEACHER/PARENT

Directions:

1. This strategy is very useful for learning new vocabulary terms, particularly in science and social studies (nonfiction) kinds of texts.
  2. Divide an index card into 4 squares.
  3. Write the targeted word in the top left hand square.  
Write the definition in the bottom left hand square.  
Write a personal association for the word in the top right hand square. It should be a word that helps you remember the new word.  
Draw a picture to help you remember the word.
- Example:

|               |                       |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| cottage       | Cabin at the lake     |
| A small house | (draw a picture here) |

## **COMPREHENSION: Chunking the Text**

TEACHER/PARENT

Directions:

1. Before reading, adult and child(ren) divide the text up into smaller “chunks”. For example, by paragraphs or by dividing the page into halves or thirds.
2. Child or adult reads the first “chunk” and then stops to summarize what has just been read. This is a great opportunity for the adult to model how to express a good summary, telling only the key points, in correct order, and in his/her own words. Keep this very short!
3. Child or adult reads the second “chunk” and follows with a short summary by the child again.

Variation: Adult writes down the child’s summaries. These are then cut up into strips, mixed up, and the child is directed to put them back in correct order. Child then reads his/her own complete retelling!

## **COMPREHENSION: Comprehension Levels**

TEACHER/PARENT

Students need to respond to questions from all levels of comprehension: literal, interpretative, inferential, and evaluative. Here are some frames for each type:

### **RECALL**

- What is . . .
- Define . . .
- Identify the . . .
- What happens after . . .

### **ANALYSIS**

- What is the main idea . . .
- What are the parts of . . .

### **COMPARE/CONTRAST**

- What is the difference between . . . and . . .
- . . . and . . . are similar because they both . . .

### **INFERENCE**

- The main conclusion from . . . is . . .
- What would happen if . . .

### **EVALUATION**

- What is your opinion of . . .
- What is the best solution to the problem of . . .
- Defend your opinion about . . .

## COMPREHENSION: Preview the Text

## TEACHER/PARENT

Directions:

1. Have students compose very short narratives (stories) based upon a list of key words from an upcoming story you plan to read to them. For example, loose tooth, string, pain, baseball game, tie score, and home run. These words might serve as key words for an upcoming story about a girl who has a loose tooth that will not come out but falls out naturally when she is engrossed in a close baseball game.
2. After students have written their short stories:
  - Several students may share their writings
  - The teacher should read the book to the class.
3. After completing the book, discussion will focus on how their stories were like the original and different (compare and contrast).

**NOTE:** Interestingly, the accuracy of the "prediction" stories prove relatively unimportant in explaining subsequent comprehension of the real stories; apparently, it is the engagement per se that triggers the deeper story comprehension.

Source: [www.abc-read.com](http://www.abc-read.com)

## COMPREHENSION: Teacher Think Aloud:

## TEACHER/PARENT

Teacher think aloud is typically conceived of as a form of teacher modeling. By thinking aloud, teachers demonstrate effective comprehension strategies and, at least as importantly, when and when not to apply them. For example, in this teacher think aloud the teacher demonstrates the use of visualization and prediction strategies:

**TEXT:** That night Max wore his wolf suit and made mischief of one kind and another . .

**ADULT:** *Boy, I can really visualize Max. He's in this monster suit and he's chasing after his dog with a fork in his hand. I think he's really starting to act crazy. I wonder what made Max act like that. . . Hm-m-m . . . I bet he was getting a little bored and wanted to go on an adventure. I think that's my prediction.* (Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Bergman, Almasi, & Brown, 1992, p. 518)

Source: [www.abc-read.com](http://www.abc-read.com)

## **COMPREHENSION: Student Think Aloud**

## **TEACHER/PARENT**

Instruction that entails students themselves thinking aloud has also proven effective at improving comprehension.

Directions:

1. Have your child read a short piece of text.
2. Prompt the child to verbalize what they are thinking. For example:
  - Do they have any ideas about motives of a character?
  - Are there any pictures being created in their mind about what is happening?
  - Do they have any hunches about what might happen next? If so, what is happening that makes them think this?
  - Are they wondering about anything? Is there anything confusing them? If they cleared up something confusing, how did they do so in their mind?

**NOTE:** Repeated teacher modeling of the think aloud strategy is crucial before students should be expected to independently use this strategy.

Source: [www.abc-read.com](http://www.abc-read.com)

## **COMPREHENSION: Make a Book**

## **PARENT**

Turn your child's writing into a homemade book. The effect will be powerful! Suddenly books become a lot more human and understandable. Making books is a multi-step process from planning to writing to producing a final product.

Directions:

**What You'll Need:** Construction paper; Yarn or ribbon; Heavy paper or cardboard; Colorful cloth or wrapping paper; Paste; Safety scissors

1. Paste pages of your child's writings onto pieces of construction paper.
2. Discuss the order the writings should go in. Should all the writings about animals go in one section and the writings about holidays in another? Which writings are the most important and where should they be placed in the book?
3. Number the pages.
4. Make a table of contents.
5. Make covers for the book with heavy paper or cardboard. You might want to paste colorful cloth or wrapping paper onto the covers.
6. Punch holes in the pages and the covers.
7. Bind the book together by lacing the yarn or ribbon through the holes. Make knots in the loose ends or tie them in a bow, so that the yarn or ribbon won't slip out.
8. Add pages to this book as more writings are completed or start a new book.

Source: [www.abc-read.com](http://www.abc-read.com)

## **COMPREHENSION: Story Dictations**                      **PARENT**

All children have stories to tell so use this natural inclination to put their thoughts down on paper!

Directions:

1. Sit down with your child at the computer or with pen and paper. Explain to him/her that you want them to tell you a story and you will write it down. They are going to be an author!
  2. As your child dictates the story, you type or write. Remember, this is their story so don't add your words!
  3. When the child is finished, you read back their story. Ask them if this is what they wanted to say or if they would like to make any changes.
  4. Print off the final copy and encourage your child to draw a picture to compliment the writing. Post it proudly where other family members can read, enjoy, and complement your budding author!
- NOTE;** Even children as young as three years old can engage in this activity! Make it fun and don't get caught up in expecting perfection!

## **COMPREHENSION: Flannel Board Stories**                      **PARENT/TEACHER**

Directions:

1. After reading a story with your child(ren), discuss the following: (This is called a retelling.)
    - Main characters
    - Setting (when and where the story took place)
    - Problem (the main problem of the story)
    - Key events
    - Conclusion (what happened in the end to solve the problem)
    - Lesson Learned (was there a moral to the story?)
  2. Using coloring books or your own artistic talent, draw pictures of the main characters, cut them out, and color them.
  3. Using a flannel board, have the child retell the story using the cut-out "paper dolls" to assist in the reenactment.
- NOTE:** Learning to give a good retelling takes time and practice. Lots of teacher or parent modeling of quality retellings is important!