



Games that Build Phonemic Awareness

Make games out of sounds. You can play sound games almost anywhere: the dinner table, the bathtub, the car. Word play with sounds is a very direct way to build phonemic awareness. Following are some ideas which you may modify to fit your time and situation. For instance, when played during a car ride, the answers may be found as objects on the side of the road. Start each game with a few examples so everyone gets the idea.

1. **Rhyming Sounds:** "What words rhyme with pan? For instance, man rhymes with pan."
2. **Beginning Sounds:** "How many words can you make that start with the "b" sound?"
3. **Ending Sounds:** "How many words can you make that end with the "t" sound?"
4. **Rhyming Beginning Sounds:** "What word rhymes with cat but starts with the "b" sound?"
5. **Dropping Sounds:** "What happens when you drop the "m" sound off of Mike's name?"
6. **Substitute Sounds:** "What happens when you change the "t" in Tom to the "m" sound?"
7. **Counting Sounds:** "How many sounds can you hear in the word pig?" Say each sound.
8. **Common Sounds:** "What sound do all of these words have in common: snake, sit, sleep?"
9. **Blending Sounds:** "What word is made of these sounds: "d" and "o" and "g"?"

In all of these examples, the sound of "b" means the sound that the letter b makes. Just say the sound, not the name of the letter. Students should be comfortable with voicing the sounds. The next step is to have them transfer the sounds to paper with beautiful handwriting, of course!