



Phonological Awareness

What is it?

Phonological awareness is being able to recognize and manipulate sounds in words. It also includes things like rhyming and recognizing when words share the same sound.

What Does it Look Like?

Children can show they have phonological awareness skills in several ways, including:

- Identifying and making rhymes:
 “The pig has a (wig).”
 “Pat the (cat).”
 “The bunny is (funny).”
- Identifying and working with syllables in spoken words:
 “I can clap the parts in my name: An – drew.”
- Identifying and working with parts of words:
 “The first part of sip is s-.”
 “The last part of win is –in.”
- Identifying and working with individual sounds in words:
 “The sounds in sun are s- u- n-.”

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Phonics

What is it?

Phonics teaches students that letters stand for particular sounds. Students are taught to use these sounds to make words. There are different ways to teach phonics. For example, some will teach phonics by teaching individual sounds, some will teach phonics by teaching parts of words (chunks).

What Does it Look Like?

Children can show they have phonics skills in several ways, including:

- Identifying letter sounds
 “Look at this letter S. What sound? /s/”
- Breaking down new words.
 “Read this word MAP. /m/ /a/ /p/. What word? /map/.”

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Fluency

What is it?

Fluency is the ability to read accurately and quickly. This is important because they are not spending a lot of time trying to figure out the words, but can be focusing on the meaning of what is being read.

What Does it Look Like?

Children can show their reading is fluent by:

- Reading effortlessly and with expression.
- Their reading sounds natural, as if they are speaking.

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Vocabulary

What is it?

Vocabulary refers to the words we must know to be able to communicate with others. This can include understanding what words mean when we see them in written materials, like books, or understanding words that people use when they are talking.

What Does it Look Like?

Children can show they have strong vocabulary skills by:

- Recognizing that a new word being read is one they have heard before:
 - **Sounding out a new word d- i- g- and recognizing that they have heard and used the word dig.**
- Using words they know to help figure out when a new word they are reading doesn't make sense:
 - **When reading a new word (hotel) that doesn't sound right when read hot- el- they can use words they know to realize it must be hotel.**
- Understanding what an author is communicating by knowing the meanings of a lot of words.

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Comprehension

What is it?

Comprehension is the reason for reading. Comprehending what is read means that the child understands what he or she has read and is able to communicate it to others.

What Does it Look Like?

Children can show they have strong comprehension skills in several ways, including:

- Setting a purpose for reading such as:
 - **finding an answer to something**
 - **figuring out how to put something together**
 - **completing homework assignments**
 - **experiencing the pleasure of great literature**
- Monitoring what they are reading and slowing down when the material gets difficult.
- Answering questions about what has been read.
- Summarizing what has been read.
- Predicting what will happen next in the story.

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