

# Kindergarten Ready: Literacy & Phonemic Awareness



Before your child learns to read and write, he or she needs to develop the building blocks for literacy; the ability to speak, listen, understand, watch and draw. One of the stepping stones to literacy is Phonemic Awareness.

## WHAT IS PHONEMIC AWARENESS?

Phonemic awareness is the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words. Manipulating the sounds in words includes blending, stretching, or otherwise changing words. Children can demonstrate phonemic awareness in several ways, including:

- recognizing which words in a set of words begin with the same sound ("Ball, bat, and boy all have /b/ at the beginning.")
- isolating and saying the first or last sound in a word ("The beginning sound of dog is /d/." "The ending sound of doll is //".)
- combining, or blending the separate sounds in a word to say the word ("/c/, /a/, /t/ – cat.")
- breaking, or segmenting a word into its separate sounds ("cup – /c/, /u/, /p/.")

Phonemic awareness and phonics are not the same thing. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that the sounds of our spoken language work together to make words. Phonics is the understanding that there is a relationship between letters and sounds through written language. Children who cannot hear and work with the phonemes of spoken words will have a difficult time learning how to relate these phonemes to letters when they see them in written words.

## LITERACY/PHONEMIC AWARENESS SKILLS READINESS KIT

Check out our Literacy/Phonemic Awareness Readiness Kit that has been carefully cultivated to provide hours of education and entertainment for your preschooler. This kit includes books, games, flashcards, and more to hone in on these important literacy skills!



# Kindergarten Ready: Literacy & Phonemic Awareness



## ACTIVITIES TO TRY AT HOME

### RHYMING

Rhyming is a great phonemic awareness activity. Most children easily grasp the concept of rhyme, though some may need a little help. Using word-play with rhyming helps children notice that sounds in our language have meaning and follow certain patterns. The easiest way rhyming to your child is by reading lots of fun rhyming books, poems, and songs. Act silly and have fun! The poem book “Chicka Chicka Boom Boom” and the poem “Down By the Bay” are great examples of how rhyme can be entertaining and fun! [Click here for access to more online rhyming games!](#)

### ALPHABET SEARCH

When you are out driving, at the park, or at the zoo, etc., ask your child to search for a letter of the alphabet (on signs, windows, or books, etc.) Whoever finds the letter first gets to choose the next letter to find.

### “I SPY” RHYMING GAME

Play “I Spy” using rhyming pairs. For example, if you see a cat, then you can tell your child, “I spy something that rhymes with hat.” Once your child guesses what you see (sometimes additional hints are needed), take turns letting your child pick what is seen and give the clue as a rhyme. Rhyming games help kids begin to hear that words are made up of smaller sounds put together.

### MAKE YOUR OWN ALPHABET BOOK

Alphabet books are a great way to introduce your child to the letters in the alphabet. Making your own alphabet book can take this learning one step further to create a unique art project that your child can be proud of. Start by writing each letter on separate sheets of paper (you could also have your child practice writing the letter as well), then help your child decorate each letter page by drawing items or cutting out magazine pictures that begin with the letter on the page. For more inspiration on your DIY Alphabet Book, [check out this parent’s letter page ideas](#) that include paint, stickers, and even a little dirt!