

Learning together

Phonemic Awareness in Reading: Blending Sounds into Words

ACTIVITY #2

SEQUENCE: SPELLING AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE
1ST CYCLE – PRIMARY

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Purpose of the activity

The aim of this activity is to suggest a way to support your child's first steps into the reading world. We're going to discover the strategy of listening to sounds and blending them together into a word!

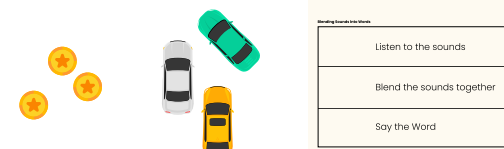


Relevance of the activity

To be a successful reader, we must develop phonological skills. The one we'll practise during this activity is called *phoneme blending*. To read a word, we need to know the sounds of its letters (phonemes) and be able to pronounce them together (blending) to discover what that word means. This ability is the basis of early reading. It's through this process that your child will be able to recognize written words.



Supplies



- The Blending Memory Aid (see Appendix)
- Your child's vocabulary list
- Words from a text or book your child has read, including a picture book
- Objects found around your home

LET'S GO!

What?



Today, we are going to discover how to put sounds together to make a word when we speak.

Why?



Letters make sounds so you must use your mouth and your ears to read, not just your eyes! For example, if you're reading and see the letters d-o-g, you make the sound of each letter and pronounce them together to hear the word. This strategy is the basis of all reading.

When?



This is the first strategy you need to learn to read words. It's used to read words that you have never seen before or words that you don't recognize instantly. By saying the letter sounds and blending them together, you will be able to build the meaning of the word in your head.

How?



The first stage of reading is to blend letter sounds together and build word meaning in your head.

This happens very quickly when you're reading, but today we're going to take the time to observe what goes on in our heads when we must read a word.

I will show you how it works. I will say 2, 3 or 4 sounds that make up a word, and you will blend them together to find out what the word says. Let me show you.

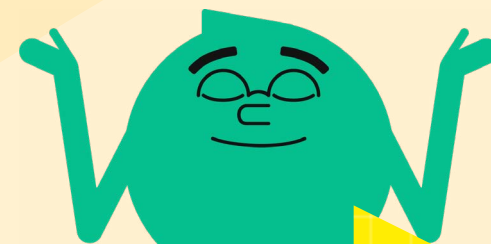
- I say the sounds m – e then I blend the 2 sounds together, “*mmmmeeee*” to make the word **me**.
- I say the sounds f – a – n then I blend the 3 sounds together “*ffffaaaannnn*” to make the word **fan**.
- I say the sounds g – o – h – s – t then I blend the 4 sounds together “*gooooosssstttt*” to make the word **ghost**.

Do not hesitate to stretch out each sound so your child can hear it clearly.



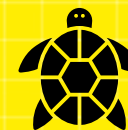
This strategy will help you read all kinds of different words that have different sounds in them. But there are words that don't follow the letter-sound rules so to read those, we'll learn other strategies a little later.

*Remember to start with 2, 3 and 4 sounds before moving on to words with 5 sounds or more. In this activity, don't worry about spelling. Your child is listening to the sounds in words, not reading them. You can use any word with 2, 3, or 4 sounds, even if the spelling is complex. For example, the word **through** has many letters, but it only has 3 sounds: /th/ /r/ /oo/.*



Don't forget!

If your child has trouble remembering a sound, use a keyword. For example, t says /t/ like turtle. Choose a word that creates a clear mental image and, if possible, begins with the target sound.



Here are some examples of questions you could ask your child:

If I say the sounds /a/ /p/ /l/, what word can you hear?

Can you repeat the sounds I just said?

Can you stretch them out slowly one after the other to find the word they make?

Let's try putting together 3 sounds. Can you repeat the sounds, stretch, and blend the 3 sounds into a word?

Let's try putting together 4 sounds. Can you repeat the sounds, stretch, and blend the 4 sounds into a word?

Do you think you can blend 5 sounds together?

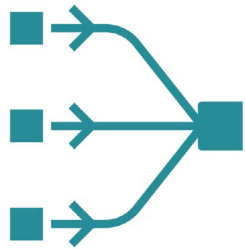
Can you use this strategy to read some words?

Put the sounds of each letter together and see if you can decode this word?

Put the sounds of each grapheme (groups of letters) together and see if you can decode this word?

Blending Sounds into Words

Listen to the sounds



Blend the sounds together



Say the Word

Blending Sounds into Words

Listen to the word



Repeat the word

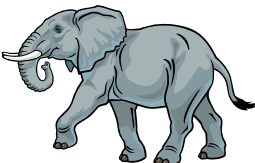


Stretch the word out like a robot



Say each sound

Vowel Sounds

Vowel	Short Sound Keyword	Long Sound Keyword
a	 apple	 ace
e	 elephant	 equal
i	 insect	 ice
o	 octopus	 open
u	 up	 unicorn

Lexie's lessons – short vowels

Lists 1, 2 and 3

LIST 1 (CVC)	LIST 2 (CCVC)	LIST 3 (CVCC)
/a/ like apple		
cat	crab	past
mad	flat	sand
fan	slam	lamp
sad	flag	mask
bag	snap	grand
/e/ like elephant		
hen	step	rest
bed	flex	felt
leg	stem	bend
vet	dress	desk
yes	smell	spend

/i/ like insect

fin	flip	mint
big	slim	list
dip	trip	disk
fix	twin	wisp
sit	still	milk

/o/ like octopus

dog	stop	bond
pod	slot	lost
hop	snob	soft
fox	prom	bond
boss	blog	stomp

/u/ like up

fun	drum	lump
hug	glum	bulb
gum	stub	dust
bus	plug	bump
rub	bump	crust

Lexie's lessons – Magic E syllables

Lists 4 and 5

LIST 4 (CVCe)		LIST 5 (CCVCe/CVCce)	
/a/ like ace			
made	rake	paste	
same	lame	blame	
fade	safe	waste	
base	tape	crave	
cave	shave	trade	
/e/ like equals			
here	mere	Steve	
eve	theme	complete	
meme	these	concrete	

/i/ like ice

fine	hive	bride
bike	ice	drive
ride	wife	pride
size	side	spike
time	five	twine

/o/ like open

bone	rose	clone
code	home	drove
hole	nose	slope
pose	joke	stone
zone	pole	strobe

/u/ like unicorn

cube	rude	brute
mute	June	fluke
pure	tube	plume
use	dude	flute
cute	rule	prune