

Early Phonics Ideas

Some children, for various reasons, do not have the foundation skills needed to develop their literacy when starting at school. Phase One of the 'Letters and Sounds' document is fundamental to the future success of literacy skills for children. Below is a few phonological awareness games and activities to build open children's phonological awareness.

Fishing for sounds- Use your tough tray and shiny paper to create a pool, add some magnetic letters. Show the children a sound card. Give your children magnetic wands to 'fish' for the letter to match the sound.

Sound Dice- Add initial sounds to a regular dice. When the children roll the dice they need to find an item with the same initial sound. This may need to be prepared so items with the sounds on the dice can be easily found.



Sound walk- Take the children on a sound trail. Ask them to listen for sounds they can hear, e.g. Birds, leaves blowing in the wind etc. You can extend this by having a tick sheet for them to mark when they hear the sounds.

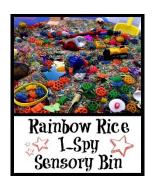
Sounds Sort- Have a variety of objects and ask the children to sort them into groups using their initial sounds.

Sand writing-Use flashcards to show children what the letters look like. Ask them to copy the letter into the sand. Give the sand a shake and it is ready for the next letter.



Try adding some glitter to the sand to make it more exciting. Use shaving foam as an alternative.

I-Spy sounds tray- Encourage children to find items with a particular sound within a tray of coloured rice. This can be made more difficult by using items with various sounds as children become more confident. A sheet of items could be made and laminated for children to mark off.



Digging for sounds- Let the children sieve and dig in the sand for items. When they find an item you can tell them

the initial sound and they can repeat it. This could be teamed with the sand writing above to extend.



Hook a duck- Get the children to take turns to hook a duck. On the bottom of the duck write a sound.

Story telling- It is important for children to learn about the written word and the spoken word. Stories with rhyme and alliteration help children to understand the relationships words have with each other.



Box of sounds-Place 6 noisy items into a box, naming

each one as it goes in and demonstrating the sound it makes, i.e. crisp packet. It is important these items are familiar to the children. To the tune of 'old Macdonald' sing, 'Miss......has a box 'ee' 'I' 'ee' 'I' 'o'. In that box she has a.....' At this point stop and ask the children to listen while you make the noise by handling the object. Children take turns to guess the object. The song is continued 'with a' children imitate the sound.

Musical Instruments- Musical instruments can be used in a variety of ways to help develop children's listening skills. You can use instruments for children to make loud and quiet noises. Hide and seek with instruments is a great game. One child is the hider and must take an instrument to a hiding place, the other children need to seek the hider with only the sound of the instrument to help them.



Odd one out- Show the children 4 items, 3 of which will have the same initial sound and one will be different, e.g. cup, cat, car and mouse. These items need to be familiar to the children. Ask them to listen while you hold each item and say its name. Ask them which is the odd one out. If correct say the names again and explain the 3 objects start with a 'c' but the other one starts with a 'm'. Make sure you use letter sounds and not the letter name.

Further Resources:

The Communication Cookbook (ican.org.uk)

Letters and Sounds Phase 1 Introduction (letters-and-sounds.com)

1 4pg cover (essex.gov.uk)

SINGING PHONICS (BOOK 1) by HELEN MACGREGOR AND CATHERINE BIRT | All Year Round Songbooks | 9781408104729 (dotdismus.com)