



# Language Learning Tip for Home - What is Phonological Awareness?

“Phonological Awareness” is an awareness for the *sounds* of speech. It is the bridge between speaking and reading. Paying attention to rhyme, alliteration, and other speech sound properties are parts of phonological awareness. You can take an active part in helping your child acquire these skills in the following ways.

## Using Rhyme:

When reading books or singing songs, emphasize and exaggerate words that rhyme.

- Provide the rhymes yourself or try asking your child to give rhymes to answer riddles you make up:  
“A fish named JIM likes to \_\_\_\_\_”
- Say a string of words that rhyme and then have your child add another one to the list:  
“Play, hay, stay, \_\_\_\_\_”

Be sure to make rhyming games fun - don’t “drill” - your child should enjoy these activities.

## Using Alliteration:

A more challenging task is to choose words that have the same beginning or end sounds. You can use similar games to those described above, but this time match beginning or ending sounds in a word.

Examples of alliterative phrases include:

- Sally sits and sews silently by the sea.
- Mark makes marvelous muffins.

Be sure to emphasize the *sound* and not the letter when playing alliteration. For example, “kite” and “cat” start with different letters, but the same sound.

Another fun activity is to make sound pictures. have your child cut out items from a magazine that all start or end with the same sound.

Phonological awareness relates to beginning spelling and reading skills and therefore is important to a child’s development. Children who are aware of speech sounds seem to do better when reading is introduced. Have fun exposing your child to these activities and watching them grow!

