

Early Phonemic Awareness Games to Play with Your Preschooler at Home

Objective: The family will incorporate games during home activities that focus on the development of phonemic (early letter sound associations) awareness activities.

Importance: This is a critical skill that all children need to know as they enter their kindergarten year. This skill leads to literacy development and reading fluency.

Game 1: Sound Hopscotch

Parents draw a hopscotch board on the basement or garage floor. One letter of the alphabet is chosen during a practice session. Mom writes "s" and says the sound associated with the letter. Mom writes s on several squares. The child jumps on a square. When the child jumps on a square with the letter /s/ the child produces the sound. Change the letter and practice saying the new sound associated with the next letter. Once two sounds are mastered write both sounds on squares of the hopscotch board.

Variation: The child says the sound and the parent jumps on a square with the corresponding sound. Parent tosses a bean bag or a sock filled with lima beans that the child helps fill which is then tied off with a shoelace. The sock is tossed to a square with a letter sound heard.

Game 2: SACK-n- Sound Sort

Parents label brown grocery bags with two different sounds, such as /k/ and /m/. Mom or dad says the sound and the child places an object in the bag of the sound heard. Fill the bags with Duplos, wooden blocks, beanie babies, rolled up pairs of socks,

Variation: Gather objects from your home that start with the same sound, for example, /s/ sock, scissors, soap, celery, soup, sack, seed, cut out sun, salt, sucker. Fill the /s/ bag with objects that start with the /s/ sound.

Note: think about the sound, not the beginning letter of the word. Don't

place shoes in the letter sound bag for /s/. Do look for objects with different vowel sounds, a, e, I, o and u as you find objects to fill the bag.

Variation: Cut out magazine pictures to place within the sound sorting bag.
HINT: First cut out the pictures for your child. Next, draw a marker circle around an object for your child to cut out. Finally, let your child cut while you watch him/her. Say a word and then let your child run and touch the bag with the same sound heard in the beginning, NOT THE END of the word! Place a sticker on the bag. Place a bean bag in the bag... and most importantly have fun!

GAME 3: Using a set of 8 3x5 cards, write a sound on 4 of the cards and write a second sound on 4 of the cards. Hide the cards in a room of your home. Let your child become a detective and search for the cards in the room. Sort the cards by sound.

Variation: Play go fish with the letter sound cards by placing a paper clip on the card and use a magnet to pick up a card, turn it over and say the sound. Make it harder....turn it over, say the sound and name an object that begins with the same sound.

GAME 4: Go on scavenger hunt at home. Take a white pillowcase and cut out a letter/sound to tape to the front of the pillowcase. Walk around the rooms of your home and collect objects that begin with the same sound as the letter you've placed on the pillowcase.

Variation: Mom fills up a pillowcase with three surprise objects that all begin with the same sound. Child dumps out the objects and names the sound that they begin with. Mom fills up a pillowcase with four objects that begin with the same sound and the fifth one begins with a different sound. The child is to identify the sound that does not belong with the others.

GAME 5: BREAK the word apart game!!! Grab a set of Tupperware/Gladware bowls and a couple of wooden spoons. Write out the names of each family member on the front of an envelope....include family pets, siblings, and parent names. Have the child tap out the number of syllables in each name on the Tupperware drum. For example, Mom-my two

taps on the drum. Dad-dy two taps on the drum. Fi-do two taps on the drum.
Sam one tap on the drum.