

Onset and Rime – the interchanging of the first part of a word to make new words with a specific letter pattern such as “at” (rime) and “s” the onset make sat, change the onset to “f, h, p, m or b” and you have many words from the one “rime” pattern.

Phoneme – the smallest unit of sound.

Phonemic Awareness – the ability to discriminate sounds as in rhyming words and patterns, and hearing beginning, middle and ending sounds in words.

Segmenting – taking words apart sound by sound.

Sentence – a complete thought that begins with a capital letter and ends with punctuation.

Syllables – the number of sounds in a word.

Synonyms – words that have similar meanings.

The Parent Handbook

Reading and Writing Activities

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alliteration – two or more words beginning with the same sounds, e.g. Peter Piper picked a peck . . .

Antonyms – words that have opposite meanings.

Blending – putting two or more sounds together.

Digraphs – two letters that when combined form a special or unique sound together such as “sh.”

Diphthongs – two letters, one of which must be a vowel, form a whiney sound such as “oi.”

Directionality – knowing that the printed text is read from left to right and sweeps back again to the left until the text is complete.

Homophone or Homonyms – words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings such as “to, too, and two.”

One-to-One Correspondence – pointing to words as you read them and matching fingers to words.

PREFACE

Understanding the importance of the reading, writing and the spelling process and how they are connected instructionally is key to the success of every student as they become readers. Reading and writing are mutually supportive and interactive processes. Students who are good readers tend to be good writers and vice-versa. To be a good reader and writer, students must understand that print has meaning. They have to focus on and think about print and the relationship between letters and sounds. They must also have a working vocabulary from which they can draw upon to make the connection that oral language can be written. This handbook contains some fun activities you can do at home to promote strong readers and writers.

Possessives and the Apostrophe

- Make up riddles about each other that are answered by possessives. For example, “I am something that my mom has. I am blue. Mom can drive me.” (*mom’s car*)
- Label things at home using post-it notes to show “belonging.” For example, *Jenny’s room, the cat’s dish*.

Syllabication

- Read rhymes or sing songs clapping out the syllables.
- Play “I Spy” with other family members, using environmental print such as product labels and street or shop signs. For example, “I spy a two syllable word that names a kind of road.” (*freeway*)

DEFINITIONS

Phonological Awareness – an understanding of the sound structure of the spoken language, including rhyming and alliteration. It involves the understanding that oral speech can be divided into sentences, phrases, and words, and that words can be divided into syllables, onset (*p*) and rimes (*ack*), and phonemes.

Concepts of Print – is the understanding that print carries a message. These concepts include the understanding of books and how they work; directionality of print, speech to print matching and an understanding that print is made up of sentences, words, letters, and punctuation marks.

Phonics – the ability to connect sounds to letters and letter clusters (chunks), blend these sounds to decode words, and decode new words by using recognizable parts or spelling patterns.

Structure – recognizing and analyzing words and their structure with regards to syllables, plurals, contractions, root words, prefixes, suffixes, possessives, compound words, synonyms, antonyms, and homophones.

Homophones (words that sound the same but have different meanings)

- Create a book of homophones (*blew, blue*). Add to the book as your child learns more homophones.
- Make up homophone silly poems or phrases. For example, “Why can’t I, look at my eye, or even hear, when you are here?”

Words with more than one meaning

- Create a multiple meaning word file with your child. Add words as you find them and use this file to refer to when you are writing.
- Play “Guess the Word” with family members, giving meaning clues to multiple meaning words. For example, I am thinking of a word that means “an animal that can fly” and “a stick that you hit a ball with.” What’s the word? (*bat*)

Compound Words

- Create compound word equations like sun + shine = _____ . (*Sunshine*)
- Go on a compound word hunt. Look for household objects whose names are compound words, such as *oatmeal, bathtub, newspaper, and dishpan*.

- Play “Guess the Word” with family members. For example, I am thinking of a word that begins with “re” and means “build again.”

Contractions

- Create contraction equations to solve. For example, do + not = _____.
- Listen for contractions while a family member reads to you. Identify the words that make up the contraction.

Antonyms (opposites)

- Find antonyms in environmental print. Make a collage of opposites with the words you find.
- Play games such as “Hide and Seek,” “Red Light, Green Light,” “Giant Steps, Baby Steps.”

Synonyms (words with similar meanings)

- Play “Synonym Call Out.” One person says a word and the other person has to think of a synonym.
- Play synonym concentration. Create a list of synonyms on cards and children have to match those words to the cards with their synonym words.

THE STAGES OF READING

Engage

- _____ Conversations
- _____ Lap reading
- _____ Experience with print and books

Explore

- _____ Hold books
- _____ Pages through books
- _____ Talks while looking at books
- _____ Comfort with books

Construct

- _____ Tells story using pictures
- _____ Discriminates words in a sentence
- _____ Memorizes stories
- _____ Recognizes some letters
- _____ Recognizes some common words
- _____ Generally connects print and spoken words
- _____ Early, phonemic awareness
- _____ Knows that text does not change from one reading to the next

Internalize

- _____ Has concept of word
- _____ Phonemic awareness (can discriminate sounds)
- _____ Alphabet knowledge
- _____ Word recognition of frequently used words
- _____ Vocabulary increasing
- _____ Matches spoken word with text
- _____ Consistently reads own writing
- _____ Perceives patterns in print
- _____ Retells story in own words
- _____ Reads aloud to self
- _____ Makes predictions about stories
- _____ Notices punctuation

Generalize

- _____ Increased word recognition
- _____ Sounds out words
- _____ Points to text when reading
- _____ Recognizes patterns in print
- _____ Reads silently to self
- _____ Shares opinions about what was read
- _____ Understands use of punctuation
- _____ Makes corrections

STRUCTURE AND WORD MEANING ACTIVITIES

Plural Nouns

- Engage in word play of various kinds, such as making up riddles for plural nouns or playing Concentration with word cards by matching singular and plural.
- Challenge each other to find singular and plural nouns in environmental print, such as street and shop signs and posters. The finder calls out the noun, and other family members have to give the plural if it is singular or the singular if it is plural.

Basic Words with Endings (*s, es, ed, ing, ly, est, er, y*)

- Create equations to solve. For example, sun + n + y = _____ or hide – e + ing = _____.
- Make a favorite recipe. Have your child write or dictate what you did and look for words that end with suffixes.

Prefixes (*un, re, dis, etc.*)

- Create a prefix word bank. Find words from magazines, books, fliers, and newspapers.

Word Families (ack, ick, uck, ock, etc...)

- Family members and children might work together to create two or four-line poems using the featured word family. Encourage children to bring their poems to class to share with their classmates.
- Create a “Word Family Tree.” Choose a word family rime (like “at”) and think of as many words as you can find and write them down. Put them on your tree. For example, *cat, fat, hat, sat, bat, etc.* (*at* is the rime and the consonant you change is called the onset).

WRITING AND SPELLING STAGES

Engage

_____ Drawing/Coloring/Scribbling

Explore (*pre-phonemic spelling*)

_____ Horizontal scribbling
_____ Random letters formed
_____ Repetitive shapes
_____ Draws pictures with letters

Construct (*early phonemic spelling*)

_____ Copies letters
_____ Copies environmental print
_____ Early phonetic spelling
_____ Uses beginning consonants
_____ Sees letter stands for something

Internalize (*later phonetic spelling*)

_____ Represents medial and final consonants
_____ Uses spaces between words
_____ Uses both uppercase and lowercase
_____ Represents vowels
_____ Can write independently

Generalize (*transitional spelling*)

_____ Learning spelling patterns
_____ Uses sentence structure and punctuation

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

Sentence Awareness

- Children can invite family members to play a show-and-tell sentence game. Have everyone take turns showing their favorite objects and using complete sentences to tell about them.
- After children and family members finish reading a story together, go back and point out where each sentence begins and where it ends.

Word Awareness

- Family members can choose a particular word to listen for and slap their knees, or snap their fingers, or make some other sign whenever they hear it. You might do this while having dinner, or during some other family activity.
- Family members can take turns choosing a word and challenging each of the other members of the family to use that word in a sentence.

Syllable Awareness

- At dinner, family members can count the syllables in the names of the food they are having. You might even make a guessing game of asking people to pass things by tapping the syllables instead of saying the name.

Vowel diphthongs (whiners, ou, ow, oo, oi, oy...)

- Be on the lookout for words that contain the featured vowel diphthongs.
- Play “Guess the Word” by acting out or giving clues for words that contain vowel diphthongs.

R-controlled Vowels (ar, ir, ur, or, er...)

- Be on the lookout for words that contain
- r-controlled vowel sounds.
- Look for pictures or objects whose names contain an r-controlled vowel and then label each one with a word card or post-it note. Use the words to create riddles, word search puzzles, or tic-tac-toe games.

Special Sounds (soft c & g, and y as a vowel)

- Create riddles or pantomimes for words that contain the featured special sound. As a word is acted out or as clues are given, others try to guess the word.
- Select a “Special Sound of the Day.” Look for and list words that you come across and think of the sound they contain.

PHONICS ACTIVITIES

Beginning Consonants

- Make an accordion book with your child. On the front, print the featured consonant. Ask the child to invite family members to help them fill the book with drawings or cut out pictures of words whose names begin with the letter. Encourage the child to bring their fold-up books to class to share and compare.
- Go on a “Beginning Consonant” hunt to search for items around the home whose names begin with the featured consonant. Using cards or self-sticking notes, children can label those items with the appropriate letter.

Short Vowels

- Go word shopping. Every time you go to the store, look for words with the short vowel sound in product labels, signs, and advertising fliers.
- “Read the Room” at home, going from room to room to look for objects whose name contains the featured short vowel. Have your child create a list of words and share the list in class.

CONCEPTS OF PRINT ACTIVITIES

Letter Recognition and Naming

- Go on a letter hunt, while out working, shopping or at home. Look for each letter, in alphabetical order, on signs or on labels and packages. Then use the alphabet list to check each letter off as you find it.
- Come up with different ways of forming letter shapes with food. For example, a slice of cucumber and a carrot stick can be an *a*, *b*, or *d*, and the possibilities for pretzel sticks and spaghetti are unlimited.

Book Concepts and Text Awareness

- Make a little book by folding a piece of paper in half. Have your child identify the parts of the book-front cover, two inside pages, back cover. Then they can write or dictate a story, draw pictures, and write their name as “author.”
- After an adult family member and/or older sibling has read aloud a picture book, children can point out the parts of the book and then use the pictures to retell the story.

Directionality and One-to-One Correspondence

- Make a special pointer with your child and take turns pointing to words in a story book.
- Play board games like *Candy Land* or *Sorry* where children have to move their game pieces the correct number of spaces.
- Children can dictate messages, and family members can write them. Then they can read the messages together. As they do, they should match speech to print by pointing to each word as it is read.

Punctuation

- Make punctuation mark cards and take turns making up sentences that use those marks.
- Play a “Punctuation Hunt” game. Every player should have a magazine or book. The “caller” names a punctuation mark, and everyone looks for an example of it and reads the sentence in which it appears. Players can take turns being the “caller.”

Capitalization

- Write signs and labels for objects and places in your home, using capital letters when they are needed.

- Capital letters are often used in unusual ways in ads and on package labels. Work together to find examples of the rules of capitalization children have learned.

High-Frequency Words

- Go on a “High-Frequency Word” hunt. Choose specific words to look for in books, magazines, newspaper headlines or signs.
- Make word cards for the featured high-frequency words. Take turns choosing two cards, reading the words, and making up a sentence that includes both words.

Consonant Blends (br, tr, cl, bl, sp, etc.)

- Play “Guess the Word” with family members. For example, “I am thinking of a word that begins with *tr*,” and then give clues to help the other person guess the word. For *truck*, they might give clues like these: “It can be big or small. It has wheels. It is used to carry things. It rhymes with duck.”
- Make up a set of self-sticking notes or cards with a blend written on them, such as *tr*. Then go on a *tr* search in the home with a family member, placing a note or card on each object you find that begins with *tr*.

Consonant Digraphs (sh, ch, th, ph, wh, gh)

- Make word search puzzles by “hiding” two, three, or four words with consonant digraphs among other letters going across and down, or perhaps even diagonally. Players can then exchange puzzles and circle each other’s hidden words.
- Play a riddle game by choosing a word with the featured consonant digraph and giving clues. For example, “I am very big. I live in the ocean. I rhyme with sale.” (*whale*) Players can switch roles.

Compare and Contrast

- Compare the beginning, final, and middle sounds of the names of food on the dinner table.
- Collect toys and sort them into those that begin with the same beginning sound and those that don’t. Sort them other ways - those with the same final sound or the same middle sound.

Blending

- Do the “Arm-in-Arm” blending game by choosing an object or food, such as jam, moving apart to say the individual sounds /j/a/m, and linking arms together to say the word *jam*.
- Take turns giving each other “Word Riddles” that are solved by blending. For example, “it starts like *run*. It rhymes with *pain*. It is wet and falls from the sky. What is it?” (*rain*)

Segmenting

- Hunt for things around the house whose names have two sounds, three sounds, four sounds, and so on.

Manipulating

- Make up word blends like *liger* and *tion*, *pustard* and *mickle*.

- Family members can work together to name all the objects in a room or in a cabinet and count the syllables. Use tally marks to record the findings and discover how many household objects have one-syllable names, two-syllable names, three-syllable names, and so on.

Rhyming

- Children can share rhymes they have learned at school. Then children can ask family members to teach them rhymes they know, too.
- Sing songs like “A-Hunting We Will Go” and make up your own new verses for the song. Make a family big book of new verses.

Alliteration

- Children and family members can work together to create tongue-twister sentences or phrases whose words begin with the same sound. For example, pickled peppers and buzzing bumblebees. Take turns saying them three times fast.
- Children and family members can brainstorm characters with alliterative names – some that already exist, like Peter Piper and Willy Wonka, and some you make up yourselves.

Silent consonants (kn, gn, mb, wr)

- Make a silent consonant word poster. Cut out words from discarded newspapers, tape them onto a sheet of paper, post the words for all to see, and then take turns reading the words and using them in oral sentences.
- Be on the lookout for words that contain silent consonants. Encourage your child to write down new words they discover and bring them in to share with the class.

Long Vowels

- Be on the lookout for words that contain the featured long vowel pattern. Have children write the words they find on cards for a family “Word Well” and then go “fishing” for words.
- Look for words with the featured long vowel in environmental print, such as product labels and shop or street signs.

Vowel Digraphs (talkers, ee, ai, oa, ea...)

- Be on the lookout for words that contain the featured vowel digraphs.
- Cut out words from magazines, fliers, or newspapers that have vowel digraph patterns and make a collage.