

## Developing Phonological Awareness



Research tells us that one of the best predictors of reading and spelling success is the child's level of phonological awareness. What is that? It's the ability to play with sounds. This playing includes rhyming, breaking words apart by syllables and individual sounds, and making words by putting all the parts back together again. How well can your child play with sounds? Try some of these activities and have fun.



### • Playing with *Rhyme*

- Share nursery rhymes, sing songs, or read books that have rhyming words. Emphasize the rhyming words as you read or sing. Say the nursery rhyme or read the book again and pause before the second rhyming word. Have your child give a word that rhymes. "Jack and Jill went up the \_\_\_\_." (*hill*)
- Take turns naming things you see when you're driving, and think of words that rhyme. You can make silly rhymes. Example: *park—bark, shark, tark*
- Play odd man out. Say three words, two of which rhyme. Can your child find the one that doesn't? Now let your child take a turn by trying it on you.
- Play "Can you read my mind?" Example: "I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with *drink*. It is something you do when you have something in your eye." (*blink*)

### • Playing with *Syllables*

- Play a guessing game with syllables. Say a word by syllables and have your child guess what the word is. It might represent a person, animal, or place.  
Examples: *oc-to-pus—octopus, Ja-mal—Jamal*
- Have your child say a word in syllables for you to guess.
- For Syllable Take Away, say a word of three to four syllables, for example, *com/pu/ter*. Can your child say the word without the first syllable? (*pu/ter*)

### • Playing with *Sounds*

- Say a word and ask your child to tell you the sound (not the letter) that it starts with.
- Do the same thing, but ask your child to tell you the sound at the end of the word.
- Talk about things you see or do around the house or in a book that start or end with the same sound. Examples: *socks, sandwich, soup, stove* (start with /s/); *wash, dish, splash* (end with /sh/).
- Play "I Spy" but give your clue using the *sound* at the beginning of the word, rather than the letter.
  - ~ "I spy something that starts with the /ssssssss/ sound."
  - ~ Play "Guess What We're Having for Supper?" "Tonight we're having h-o-t dogs. Can you guess what we're having?"