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☆☆ Introduction ☆☆☆

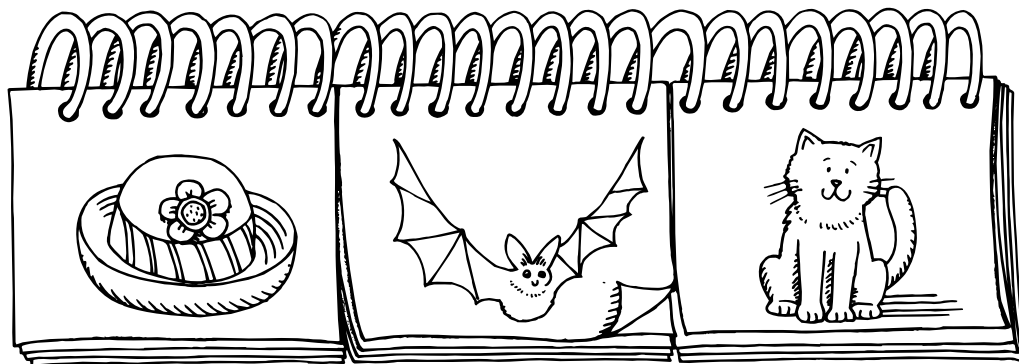
Children develop basic reading skills long before they are introduced to written language. As children learn to speak, they experiment with individual sounds and then connect those sounds to make words. Consequently, children do not understand the letter–sound relationship in written language until they learn to hear, reproduce, and manipulate the separate sounds within words (phonemic awareness). These skills are prerequisites for learning to read.

Getting Ready to Read directly addresses the phonological needs of preschool students, emergent readers, second-language learners, and other children who have not made these connections because of limited exposure to oral language. The center activities in this book help children learn how to analyze and apply the five levels of phonemic awareness (rhythm and rhyme, parts of a word, sequence of sounds, separation of sounds, and manipulation of sounds) in isolation before applying those levels to written language.

Getting Ready to Read offers over 40 center activities presented pictorially and in print. Children working at centers can look at the illustration on an activity card and immediately identify the requirements of the task. A self-correcting feature provides positive reinforcement and enables children to learn from their mistakes. Each activity also includes a card with clear, written directions for an adult volunteer to read in a small-group setting or for a parent to follow when you send the activity home for extra practice.

There could not be an easier way to help children develop a phonological foundation for reading. Simply copy the directions card, and gather the materials necessary to complete the activity. Then, introduce the activity to the class, model it, and place the directions and the corresponding materials at a center for children to explore on their own. At the end of the day, encourage individual children to take home the activity for some additional oral language practice.

You can maximize the value of the activities in this resource with minimal effort. As children in your class practice and master the phonological skills presented in this book, they will be *ready to read!*



☆☆ All about Phonemic Awareness ☆☆☆

It is important to understand what phonemic awareness is and how it impacts the way a child learns to read. Phonemic awareness concentrates on oral language and precedes phonics instruction.

What Is Phonemic Awareness and Phonics?

Phonemic awareness focuses on the sound units (phonemes) used to form spoken words. *Phonics* associates sounds to written symbols (i.e., the alphabet). Together, both forms of instruction help children develop critical word-recognition skills. Children can then apply the sound–symbol relationship to read print.

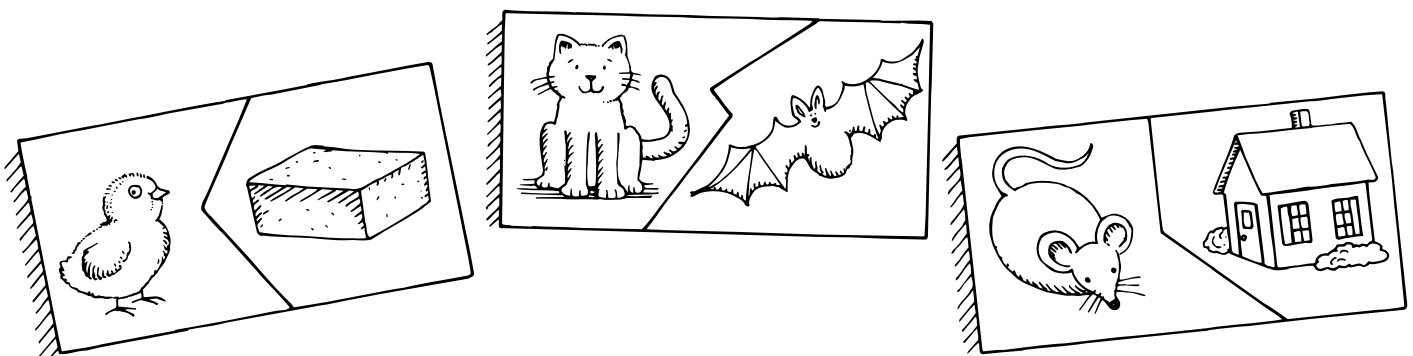
Phonemic awareness is essential because children must be able to hear and manipulate oral sound patterns before they can identify these patterns in print. Reading programs that include systematic instruction for connecting oral language to print lead to higher achievement in word recognition and spelling.

Why Teach Phonemic Awareness?

Children must first be able to hear the sounds and patterns in words before they can identify what letters represent those sounds. Therefore, children must be given extensive experience learning phonemic sounds and applying them repeatedly. Children who recognize the connection between oral language and print become successful readers. Phonemic awareness is the first essential step in this process.

How Is Phonemic Awareness Taught?

The goal of phonemic awareness is to help children hear specific sounds, identify sound sequence, and understand the role phonemes play in word formation. Phonemic awareness is basically oral in nature. Meaningful, interactive games and activities give children the best practice in phonemic awareness. Because phonemic awareness is multileveled and progresses through sequential stages, individual progress will vary and improve as children intermittently repeat a variety of activities at each level.



☆☆ Five Levels of Phonemic Awareness ☆☆☆

The activities in this book are grouped according to the following five developmental levels.



Rhythm and Rhyme

This level helps children develop stronger auditory discrimination and awareness. Level 1 activities give children exposure to and experience with hearing and identifying similar word patterns (sound matching) and listening for and detecting spoken syllables (counting syllables).



Parts of a Word

This level encourages children to listen for sounds within a word. As children discover that speech can be broken down into smaller sound units—words to syllables, syllables to onsets and rimes, and onsets and rimes to phonemes—they begin to blend these sounds together to form spoken words. Level 2 activities encourage children to identify onsets and rimes (syllable splitting) and blend individual sounds to form a word (phoneme blending).



Sequence of Sounds

When children reach level 3, they learn to direct their attention to the specific positions of sounds within a word. The activities at this level help children identify where they hear a given sound in a word (approximation) and identify beginning, middle, and ending sounds in a word (phoneme isolation).



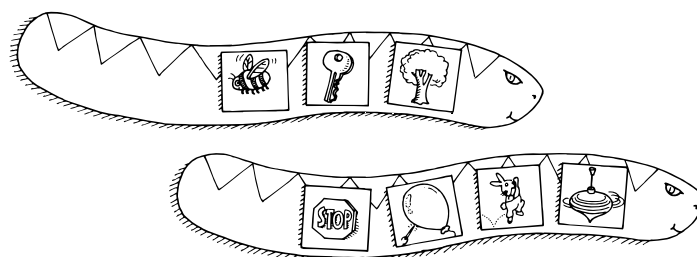
Separation of Sounds

At this level, children are ready to acoustically divide words into separate sounds or phonemes. Level 4 activities help children count the number of phonemes in a word (phoneme counting) and identify individual sounds within a word (phoneme segmentation).



Manipulation of Sounds

As children reach this highest level of phonemic awareness, they begin manipulating sounds within words. The activities at level 5 give children experience substituting beginning, middle, and ending sounds of a word (phoneme substitution) and omitting beginning, middle, and ending sounds of a word (phoneme deletion).



★★★ Getting Started ★★★

Each activity in this book has three different sections, including a self-correcting feature that allows children to check their work independently. Read the information below to learn how to prepare an activity for use in a center or to be sent home for extra practice.

Section One

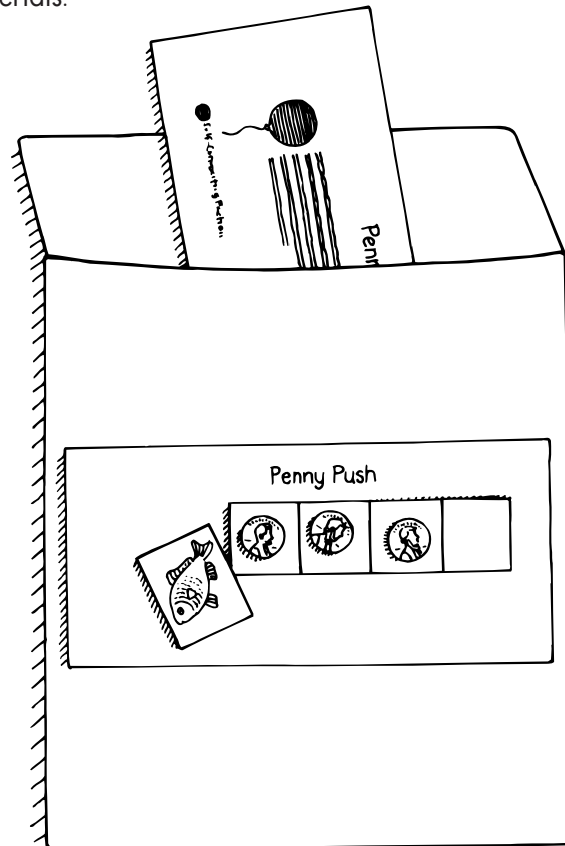
The top of the activity page features the level, title, and task involved in the activity, a list of materials, and the directions for preparing the activity and applying the self-correcting feature. Cut apart this top section, and retain it for your own reference. Copy the reproducibles on card stock, and laminate them for durability. Make a few extra sets of cards, and keep them on hand in case some of these materials become lost or damaged.

Section Two

The activity directions for a parent or adult volunteer to read appear in the middle of the page. Cut apart this middle section, and place the directions in a large envelope along with the materials for the activity.

Section Three

An illustration that shows children how to independently complete the activity appears at the bottom of the activity page. Cut apart this bottom section, and tape or glue it to the front of the envelope that contains the directions and materials.





Rhyming Chain

Task: rhythm and rhyming

Materials

- ☆ Rhyming Chain Cards (pages 8–9)
- ☆ scissors
- ☆ hole punch
- ☆ plastic links
- ☆ paper lunch sack (optional)

Preparation

Copy the Rhyming Chain Cards. (Each page includes two sets of six cards.) Cut apart the first six cards, write the same number on the back of each card, and laminate the cards. Repeat this process with the remaining three sets of cards. Punch a hole before and after the picture on each card.

Rhyming Chain



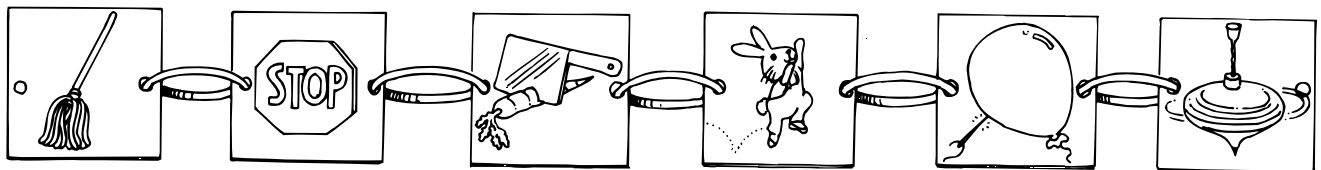
Scatter the cards faceup on a flat surface. Invite a child to find two pictures of words that rhyme and attach the cards with a plastic link. Tell the child to continue linking other rhyming cards until he or she has linked six cards. Invite the child to find two different pictures of rhyming words and begin a new chain. For play with two or more children, give each player a different rhyming picture card and place the remaining cards in a paper sack. Have one player draw a card. If the card rhymes with the card in his or her hand, that player may use a link to attach the cards together and take another turn. If the card does not rhyme with the card in his or her hand, the player places the card back in the sack and passes it to the next player. Tell children to continue playing until each child has attached six rhyming cards.

! Self-Correcting Feature

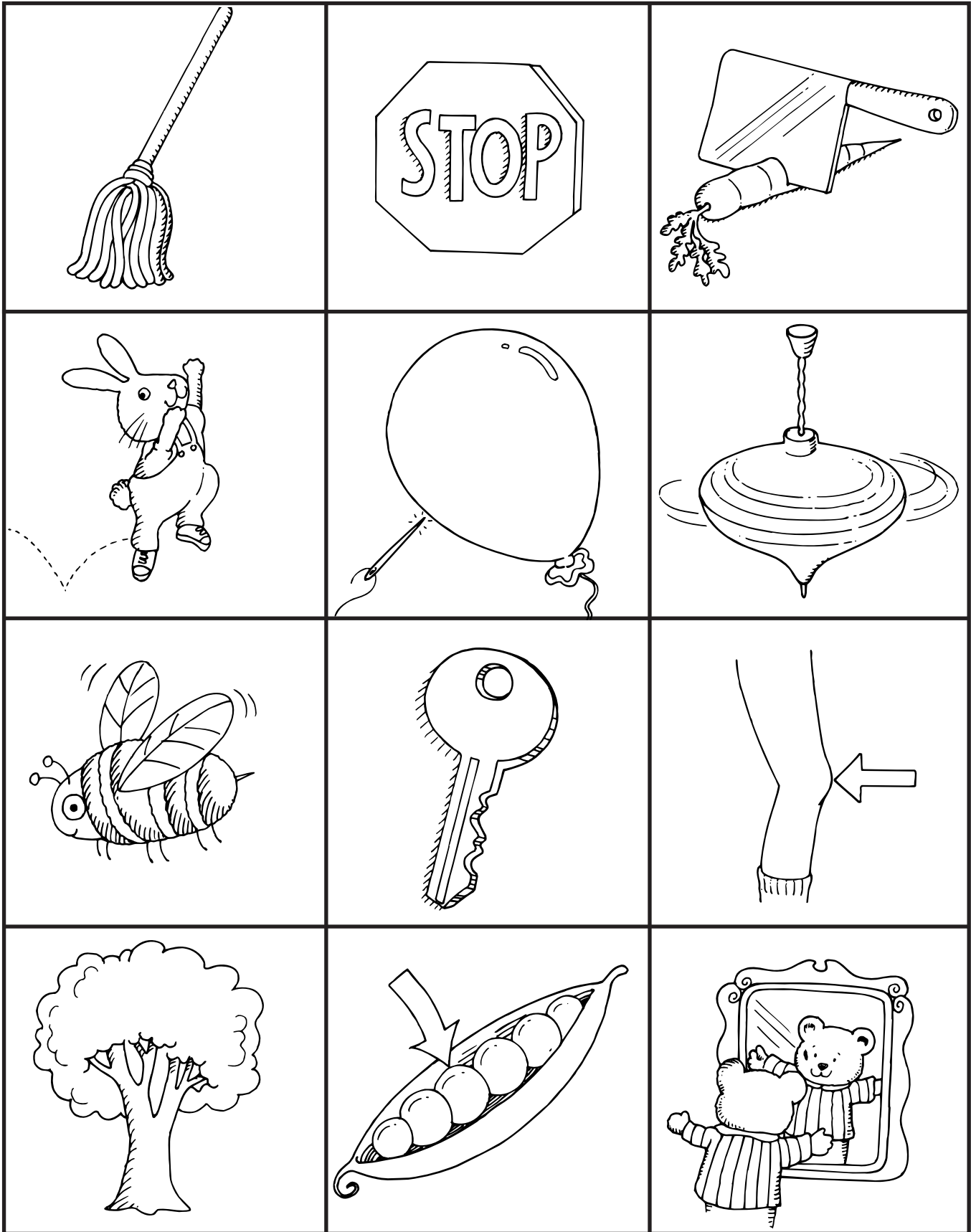
There is a number on the back of each card. Cards with the same number belong in the same chain.

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Rhyming Chain



Rhyming Chain Cards



Rhyming Chain Cards

