

# Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® Early Literacy Workshop For Four- and Five-Year Olds Pre-Readers

## Introduction for Presenters

Current research has proven the critical role of parents and caregivers in developing language and early literacy skills in children beginning at birth.

Early childhood and early literacy research is not always easily accessible to parents and caregivers — or even to library staff. The Public Library Association and the Association for Library Service to Children, in cooperation with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the National Institutes of Health, have partnered to bring important information about early literacy to library systems around the country. Libraries will play a key role in disseminating information about the importance of early literacy to parents, child care providers, early childhood educators, children's advocates and political decision makers.

Making parents and others in your community aware that you are a resource for early literacy information and guidance will help position your library as a community partner in the common public goal of helping children become successful readers and learners.

Use the resources on this website to educate yourself and your community about the critical goal of libraries in making Every Child Ready To Read.

## **How to use the following script for presenting the workshop for Early Literacy for Four- and Five-Year Olds:**

- Use this script as a guide when making presentations to parents and caregivers.
- Feel free to substitute books and rhymes that are more familiar to you or your audience.
- Scripts with additional, supplemental information to incorporate into your presentation are also here on the website. Use these if you feel they are appropriate for your audience. Supplemental materials are indicated in the script with this symbol:

**S#**

- Instructions for presenters are within brackets: [ ]
- Workshop activities to do with your audience are marked with this symbol: ☀
- Every Child Ready to Read brochures and posters can be ordered from PLA. The brochures are also downloadable.
- You can refer to the training DVD that is available for purchase for additional information and help.

Counter timings from the DVD are indicated in a box:

0:01:01

## **Program Background**

Learning to read and write is essential to school success. Children who are proficient readers are usually the most successful learners.

Studies point to a relationship between shared reading experiences, language development and reading achievement. Children who are read to from an early age have more advanced language skills at age four. They also have a greater interest in books and enjoy reading activities to a greater extent. A child's interest in reading is an important predictor of later reading achievement.

## **Goals of *Early Literacy for Four- and Five-Year Olds***

- Define early literacy and explain its importance.
- Present the six pre-reading skills that help children get ready to read.
- Offer ideas to make book sharing an enjoyable experience so that parent and child read together more often.
- Suggest books, rhymes and other resources that are age appropriate
- Learn how to play the Say It Slow, Say It Fast and other games to help four- and five-year olds become better at hearing the sounds that make up words (phonological awareness)

## **Organizing sessions**

PLA and ALSC suggest the following for workshop sessions:

- Register up to 35 participants per session. The sessions are intended for parents and caregivers only, although children may come. Have books and toys on hand for children who attend.
- Choose a self-contained room, if possible, for the sessions.
- Offer sessions during the day and the evening or weekend to make them available to stay-at-home and working parents.

## **You will need:**

*Every Child Ready To Read* poster (In kit or order more from website, [www.ala.org/everychild](http://www.ala.org/everychild))

Say It Slow/Fast demonstration cards (In kit)

## **Handouts:**

*Every Child Ready To Read* brochure for pre-readers (In kit; order from website, [www.ala.org/everychild](http://www.ala.org/everychild))

*Say It Slow, Say It Fast* instructions and game pieces (In kit; also downloadable from website)

*Language of Literacy* (In kit; also downloadable from website)

*Letter Day* game instructions (In kit; also downloadable from website)

*Willowby, Walloby* or other rhyme (In kit; also downloadable from website)

## **Materials** [Substitute others if you wish]

*Busy Buzzing Bumblebees and Other Tongue Twisters* by Schwartz

*Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Martin Jr.

*Jump, Frog, Jump* by Kalan

*I Love Trains* by Sturges

*Napping House* by Wood

*Potluck* by Shelby

*Something from Nothing* by Gilman

*Turtle Splash! Countdown at the Pond* by Falwell

*Name Game* on album *Shakin' a Tailfeather* by Taj Mahal

**Video/DVD:**

*Playing Around with Words: Games and Activities to Develop Phonological Awareness in 4-5 Year Olds*

Order from: Every Child Ready to Read @ your library  
PLA/ALSC Project  
50 East Huron Street  
Chicago, IL 60611  
800-545-2433

Individually at [www.alastore.ala.org/SiteSolution.taf?\\_sn=catalog&\\_pn=product\\_detail&\\_op=2164](http://www.alastore.ala.org/SiteSolution.taf?_sn=catalog&_pn=product_detail&_op=2164)

In kit: [www.ala.org/ala/alsc/ecrr/orderinginfoa/orderinginfo.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/ecrr/orderinginfoa/orderinginfo.cfm)

**Equipment:**

Television and VCR or DVD player

Flipchart or blackboard

**Optional:**

Laptop with projector OR overhead projector (if you use powerpoint or overheads)

*Letter-Sounds for Letter Day Activities* handout (In kit; also downloadable from website)

Foam letters

3 items, two alike, one different

Flannel board of Mother, Mother I Want Another

Mother, Mother I Want Another by Polushkin

Alphabatics by MacDonald

Lot at the End of the Block by Lewis

Gunnwolf by Harper

Early Literacy Bibliography (In kit; also downloadable from website)

# Every Child Ready to Read @ your library®

## Early Literacy Workshop

### For Four- and Five-Year Olds

### Pre-Readers

0:48:16

#### **Welcome & Introduction**

**[WELCOME PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS.** Glad they came. Give brief introduction to library services and resources.]

This workshop is about early literacy and what you can do to help four- and five-year olds become aware of and comfortable with books and language. We will emphasize games you can play to develop phonological awareness.

Let's start with a rhyme that young children enjoy. Keeping books and language fun will keep them coming back for more. [

0:48:38



**[DEMONSTRATE the following rhyme or song or one of your choice]**

*The More We Get Together*

1:15:03

Tip: What do I do if I can't sing?

Parents can help children grow up to be successful readers and learners beginning at birth. You can give your child a life-long advantage if you start now to develop a love for books and reading.

**[PROVIDE background information to parents and caregivers.]**

Learning to read and write is essential to school success.

Children who are good readers are usually the most successful learners.

Children get ready to read long before they start school.

You can help your four- or five-year old learn important pre-reading skills now. That will make it easier for your child to learn to read when he or she starts school.

Research shows the development of early literacy skills through early experiences with books and stories is critically linked to a child's success in learning to read. Children who are read to from an early age have a larger vocabulary and better language skills when they start school.

[Source: Catherine Snow. "The Contacts of Literacy: What Children Learn from Learning to Read Books" in W. H. Teale *Emergent Literacy: Writing and Reading*, Norwood.]

They also have a greater interest in books. Children who want to have books read to them are more likely to want to learn to read. A child's interest in reading is an important predictor of later reading achievement.

[Source: Adam Payne, Grover Whitehurst, and Andrea Angell. "The Role of Home Literacy Environment in the Development of Language Ability in Preschool Children for Low-Income Families". *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* v. 9 issues 3-4 (1994) p.422-440.]

**[EXPLAIN *what parents will learn.*]**

- § We're going to talk about things you can do with your preschooler to help him or her enjoy language, books and reading.
- § We will tell you about six very important skills that you can begin teaching right **now** to help your child get ready to learn to read when he or she begins school.
- § We'll suggest some great books, songs and word games that you can use to help your child learn these pre-reading skills.

0:49:33

**Importance of Parent/Caregiver:**

Parents and other caregivers are in the best position to help young children get ready to read because:

- You know your children best and can help them learn in the ways that are easiest for them.
- Young children learn best by doing things, and love to do things with YOU.
- Young children often have short attention spans and enjoy repeating favorite activities. You can read to your child and share early literacy activities for short bits of time throughout the day.
- Parents are tremendous role models—If your children see that you value and enjoy reading, they will follow your lead.
- Children learn best by doing things—and they love doing things with YOU. So read with your child every day.

Four- and five-year olds are already busy learning language and getting ready to read. What are some of the things your children do now during a typical day?

0:49:33

 **What Four and Five Year Olds Do**

Think of children who are four or five years old.

What are some of the things they do?

**[WRITE RESPONSES** on flipchart or blackboard.]

Some responses might include:

Play, like go to the park  
Talk a lot  
Curious and ask you questions  
Cook or do whatever you are doing  
Pretend to read books

Draw pictures  
Know the alphabet song  
Like to build things  
Like to play make-believe  
Like to know how things work

1:17:11

Tip: How do I facilitate a response?

As we will see, many of these relate to early literacy!

0:51:39

**[DEFINE early literacy.** Show definition on poster, flipchart or powerpoint (downloadable from website)]

You may have heard this term used. The definition we will use is this:

Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read or write.

**[REPEAT** definition.]

## INTRODUCE the Six Skills to Get Ready to Read

[REFER TO THE POSTER Six Pre-Reading Skills Your Child Can Start Learning from Birth or use powerpoint]

[HAND OUT the brochure, *Parents' Guide to Early Literacy: Pre-Readers, Four- and Five-Year Olds*

HAND OUT Bibliography on Early Literacy (optional) downloadable from this website under Research]

There are six skills that reading research has determined children must know before they can learn to read. Parents can help even very young children learn these skills, which are:

***Print Motivation***

***Vocabulary***

***Narrative Skills***

***Print Awareness***

***Letter Knowledge***

***Phonological Awareness***

[TALK ABOUT EACH SKILL]

0:51:58

**PRINT MOTIVATION is a child's interest in and enjoyment of books.**

***Why is this important for children to find books interesting and enjoyable?***

Children who enjoy books and reading will be curious about how to read. They will read more.

Studies show that when the interaction around a book is negative (sit still; listen; harsh language) then the young child likes reading and books less. He associates the negative interaction with the book and reading. When the experience of sharing a book is pleasurable for both the parent and the child, the child will be more attentive and responsive. The more pleasurable book sharing is, the more regular and frequent an activity it will become.

[Source: Adriana Bus, Jay Belsky, Marinus H. van IJzendoorn, Keith Crnic. "Attachment and Bookreading Patterns: A Study of Mothers, Fathers, and Their Toddlers," *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 12,81-98 (1997)]

"Promoting literacy does not mean creating a school-like setting in your home, but taking advantage of all the opportunities that are present in everyday life."

[Source: *Straight Talk About Reading: How Parents Can Make a Difference During the Early Years* edited by Susan Hall and Louisa Moats. Contemporary Books, 1999.]

☀️ **[READ** a book you enjoy, **MODELING** how to read it in a cheerful voice.

For example: *Something From Nothing* by Phoebe Gilman

1:25:26

Tip: How do I demonstrate with a book?

**What can parents do to help four- and five- year olds enjoy books and want to read more?**

- § Read often and make it enjoyable.
- § Make sure you and your child are in good moods, so the experience is a positive one.
- § Stop reading when your child becomes tired or loses interest.

0:52:36

## **VOCABULARY is knowing the names of things**

### ***Why is it important for children to hear a wide range of vocabulary and to expose them to many words?***

- § Children need to know the meaning of words to understand what they are reading.
- § When you think about it, you know if you are reading a word correctly if you have heard it before. You are sounding it out. The more words children hear, the more ready they will be to make connections when they read.

See  
Early  
Talker  
0:16:36

[**GIVE EXAMPLE OF SOUNDING OUT CARROT.** Write “carrot” on a flipchart or blackboard. As you sound out the word, you don’t know if you are saying it correctly unless you have heard it before.]

### **What can parents do to help preschoolers learn vocabulary?**

The best way to help children learn new words is to talk and read with them.

0:53:22

Reading to children is especially important in building a larger vocabulary because children hear more new words when you read books.

☀[**READ an excerpt from *Napping House*** as an example of this. Point out all the words that are used to convey sleeping.]

- Expand on what you read or talk about.  
For example, “What is the child doing?”  
“Yes, that’s right, carrying a blanket to the bed. You have a blanket too. What do you like to do with your blanket?”
- Label feelings, both yours and your child’s. This will help your child express how he or she feels and become less frustrated.
- Talk about concepts like more/less/same; before/after; above/below; time and seasons; also ideas like fairness, friendship, honesty. This helps children develop vocabulary about things that are real but cannot be seen.
- Explain unfamiliar words to your child rather than substituting familiar words; this exposes children to many more words.

If you are more fluent in a language other than English, research shows that it is best for you to speak to your child in the language you know best. This allows your child to hear language spoken fluently and allows you to explain many things to the child that you might not be able to do in English. By learning concepts and discussing thoughts and ideas, the child is exercising his mind. Then he will be able to translate what he knows when he gets to school, rather than having to learn both the concept and the English word at the same time.

[Source: Patton O. Tabors. *One Child, Two Languages*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes, 1997.]

0:55:08

## **Narrative skills the ability to describe things and events and tell stories.**

### ***Why are narrative skills important to learning how to read?***

Being able to talk about and explain what happens in a story helps a child understand the meaning of what he or she is reading. Good narrative skills lead to good reading comprehension.

### ***What can parents do to help four- and five-year olds develop narrative skills?***

- § Name things (real objects and pictures in books) as you go through the day
- § Make sure your child has lots of opportunities to talk with you, not just listen to you talk. Some ways of talking are better at developing narrative skills. For example:
  - Ask your child to tell you about something that happened to him today; ask for more details so he can expand on his narrative.  
Ask questions that cannot be answered with “yes” or “no.” This encourages your child to think and increases comprehension.
  - Add description: [**Example from *Napping House***: “What is Granny wearing to bed?” “Yes, that’s right, a nightgown, a nightgown with ruffles and puffy sleeves.”]
  - Tell your child stories to help her learn how a story is told.
  - As you go through your day, talk about some of the things you are doing.
  - Choose a book you’ve read a number of times. Read it again and at certain points in the story, let your child tell you what happens next.
  - Let your child tell a story using props or puppets.
  - Have your child draw and tell you what is happening in the picture.
- § Listen as child tries to talk, be patient

S1

S2

S3

0:56:45

**PRINT AWARENESS** is noticing print everywhere; knowing how to handle a book; knowing how we follow the words on a page.

### ***Why is print awareness important?***

- § Children must become aware of words before they can read them.
- § They also must be familiar with how books work: books have a cover, you begin reading at the top of the page and from left to right (in English), books have words and pictures to tell the story. We read the text/print on the page, not the pictures.
- § When children feel comfortable with books, they can concentrate on reading.

### ***How can parents help children notice print and understand how books work?***

- § Let your child turn the pages as you read a book
- § As you read, point to words from time to time so your child learns you are reading text, not the pictures
- § Hold book up-side-down and see if the child knows it has to be turned around.
- § If a book has a word or phrase that repeats, point to it on the page and let the child say it, and you point to the words
- § Have your child make a book; talk about the different parts: cover, words, pictures, beginning, middle, end
- § Print is everywhere—help your preschooler recognize it: names of restaurants and stores, food, movies, stop signs and street signs and other types of print that you see as you walk and drive.

0:57:47

**LETTER KNOWLEDGE** is knowing that letters are different from each other and that they have different names and sounds.

***Why is letter knowledge important?***

To read written words, children must understand that the written word is made up of smaller parts, individual letters, and that each letter has its own name and is related to sound.

***What can parents do to help children learn about letters?***

Children learn about letters in stages:

1. They first learn the names of letters.
2. They then begin to recognize the shapes of different letters
3. Finally, they match letter names with their sounds

[Susan Hall and Louisa Moats. *Straight Talk About Reading: How Parents Can Make a Difference During the Early Years*. Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1999.]

■ Help children learn about letters by singing the alphabet song and playing games about letters, reading ABC books, using magnetic plastic or foam letters, forming letters with clay or playdough, tracing letters in sand, etc.

■ Talk about the letters that are most interesting to your child — like the first letter of his or her name. If your child's name begins with "T," help your child find the letter T on signs, food boxes, mail and on other objects. When you find a word that begins with the letter T, say the word and have your child repeat. Ask what else begins with T.

Repeat this activity using the beginning letters of other things your child likes.

- Let your child see his name written; let him write letters using thick crayons or pencils.
- Find letters in signs all around you.

S4

1:01:41

**PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS** is the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.

Phonological awareness is what will focus on today.

Young children are much better at hearing different sounds or phonemes than adults. This is why children are wired for learning multiple languages in the early years.

***Why is it important for children to be able to hear the different sounds in words?***

Being able to hear the beginning and ending sounds that make up words will help children sound out words when they begin to read. This helps children break the code between written language (letters) and spoken language (sounds).

***Most children who have difficulty reading have trouble with phonological awareness.***

It's important to help develop this skill in four- and five-year olds so they are reading to learn to read when they begin school.

Phonological awareness includes:

- The ability to say whether or not two words rhyme (cat and bat; dog and cat)
- The ability to say words with sound or word chunks left out (ti-ger without the ti = ger)
- The ability to put two word chunks together to make a word (tie + ger = tiger)
- The ability to say one-syllable words without the first sound (bat – buh = at)

S5

Children's phonological awareness begins to develop during the preschool years. Unless children are given help from teachers, parents, or other adults, those with low levels of phonological awareness will continue to be delayed in this skill from the late preschool period forward.

[Source: Marilyn Adams. *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.]

☀ [DEMONSTRATE reading an excerpt of a rhyming book like *Turtle Splash!*, allowing participants to fill in rhyming words.]

### What can parents do to help four- and five-year olds hear and play with the smaller sounds in words?

One of the best, and most enjoyable, ways is to sing and to say nursery rhymes, and to sing songs. You can also repeat rhymes, say tongue twisters and play word games.

- ☀ ▪ Hearing words that rhyme helps your child learn that words are made up of smaller parts.
  - § Most songs have a different note for each syllable. This helps children break down words into separate parts. [Example: Use the “Name Game” on *Shakin’ a Tailfeather*.]
  - § Read rhyming books like *I Love Trains* or *Turtle Splash!*  
[READ from one of these books or others of your choice or HAND OUT words to Willowby, Wallowby and have participants make up new rhymes.]
  - § Read books with alliteration and tongue twisters like *Potluck* or *Busy Buzzing Bumble Bees* and *Other Tongue Twisters*.  
[READ from one of these books or other of your choice.]
  - § Play games like “I Spy”. “I spy something black that rhymes with (or sounds like) sat. What is it? CAT.”

1:03:40

1:25:26  
Tip: How do I demonstrate with a book?

1:05:57

☀ [NOW REFER to the list of things that they say four- and five-year-olds do. For some of the activities they mentioned, see what early literacy skill it relates to. If you have the skills and their definitions written on posters on the wall, it helps them make the connections.]

1:17:11  
Tip: How do I facilitate a response?

### ☀ GAMES FOR PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

There are many games you can play that help your child with phonological awareness. In this video you can see these in a variety of settings.  
[SHOW VIDEO Activities and Games for Phonological Awareness (7 minutes)]

1:06:34

#### ☀ SAY IT SLOW, SAY IT FAST GAME

Here is another game that you can take home with you. It’s called the *Say It Slow, Say It Fast* game. It helps children hear the different parts or syllables that make up words. Here’s how it works.

#### Say It Slow, Say It Fast game — Level 1: Imitation

Use words that are familiar to your child.

Play the game often, but not longer than 10 minutes at a time.

When you first play the game with your child, go slowly enough so that your child can easily follow what you do.

This is a game — keep it fun and praise your child often.

**[PASS OUT the *Say It Slow, Say It Fast* handouts.]**

**Here's how to play:**

- Choose a two-syllable game piece. (Example: hot — dog, mon — key, air —plane).
- Show your child the whole picture and say the word. Have him say the word.
- Then you say, "I'm going to say this word slowly. I'm going to break it apart."
- Separate the two pieces as you say the word again, this time slowly (e.g. "hot — dog"). Point to the first part of the picture as you say "hot" and the second part as you say "dog." It is easiest to lay the pictures down on a table or on the floor, so you can see them easily together.
- Ask him to say the word after you, as you point to the picture.
- When he says the syllable, hand him that piece.
- Practice saying the word fast (normal speech: "hotdog") and slowly (broken apart: "hot" — "dog") as you take apart and put the word together.
- After your child can say one word this way, practice several different two-syllable words game pieces this way.

**Say It Slow, Say It Fast game — Level 2: Production**

- Lay out a word that your child has practiced and ask, "Can you say this word slowly?"
- Take the word apart and ask her to say the word broken apart ("air" — "plane," "mon" — "key").
- Give help as needed.
- When she is able to say the words broken apart without your help, your child is ready to try some of the following:
  - § Lay out three, two-syllable words that she has practiced. Mix up the pieces and ask the child to put the pieces together and say what the word is.
  - § Lay out three, two-syllable words (put together) and have her say one slowly while you try to "guess" which one she is saying.
  - § Ask your child to put the words together backwards and make a "silly" word out of it (e.g., "monkey" becomes "key-mon," "hotdog" becomes "dog-hot").
  - § To make the game easier, use fewer words. To make the game harder, use three-syllable picture puzzles (el - e - phant, tel - e - phone, kan - ga - roo, but - er - fly).

S6

Once your child is comfortable playing the "Say It Fast, Say It Slow" game, try the Letter Day Game. This game helps children with the most difficult phonological awareness skill: hearing the smallest sounds in words called phonemes.

## ☀ LETTER-SOUND DAY GAME

Play the **Letter-Sound Day** game often, but for only a few minutes at a time. If it is too frustrating play other word games and come back to this one later.

The **Letter-Sound Day** game will:

- § Help your child hear the first sounds in words.
- § Improve your child's ability to say whether or not two words have the same or different first sound.
- § Introduce your child to letters, letter-sounds and letter-names.

[**PASS OUT** *Letter-Sound Day* game handout.]

You can play this game while looking at picture books, playing or doing everyday activities such as eating, bathing, dressing or driving. For your child to succeed at this game, he or she should:

- § Be able to play the *Say It Slow, Say It Fast* game.
- § Understand the concepts of "same" and "different."

To do this, use items that your child is familiar with, two that are the same and one that is different. Then, ask your child to point out which two are the same and which one is different. You can use 2 cups and a plate, 2 forks and a spoon. Once you are sure they understand same and different, you can move on to word sounds.

### **Letter-Sound Day Game— Level 1: Imitation**

- § Point to the picture of the bed on this sheet and say, "This is a bed. I can say it slow like this "buh – ed."
- § You should say "bed" with an emphasis on the first sound—the "buh" sound—and a pause between saying the first sound and the last part of the word, "buh" — "ed." Ask your child to imitate saying the word this way, bed: "buh," — "ed."
- § Explain that the first sound is the "buh" sound. Have your child imitate this sound. Tell your child that "buh" is the first sound in the word "bed" and is the sound that the letter B makes. Ask him or her to think of other words that begin with the "buh" sound. You can pick objects from around the house or look for words that start with the "buh" sound in picture books. (Remember to say "buh" sound, not the name of the letter—bee.)
- § Now say a word that begins with a different sound, and do the same thing.

Sounds for **Letter-Sound Day** game

[**USE** an overhead or handout of sheet with order of sounds learned.]

This shows the way children learn sounds. Some sounds are easier for children to say. You should start with the easier sounds when playing the **Letter-Sound Day** game. The sounds associated with the letters w, p, b, d, t, m, n, h, y are the easiest for children. (*These are the first column on the handout.*) Start with these sounds.

### **Letter-Sound Day Game — Level 2: Production**

After your child can do the imitation part of the game easily, you can move on to the production part of the game.

- § Tell your child that today is the letter \_\_\_\_ day. [**REFER** to the handout to pick the best letter-sounds to start with.]
- § Tell your child that you both are going to look for things that begin with that sound.
- § This activity is similar to that described for the imitation part of the game, but here your child is required to think of or find words on his or her own that have the same sound—again, using picture books, things around the house, or things you and your child can see anywhere.

[**DEMONSTRATE** this activity using a picture book.]

- § You can say to your child, “Let’s look at this book. You pick a page. Find something on this page that starts with the ‘buh’ sound.”
- § Praise your child’s success or give him or her a little help if needed. For example, if your child is having a hard time, you might say, “Well, here’s a bird. Bird starts with the ‘buh’ sound. What else do you see on this page (or what else can you think of) that starts with the ‘buh’ sound?”
- § You can extend this activity to make it more interesting for you and your child in lots of ways that are fun. For instance, you can help your child make collages of pictures cut from magazines that focus on one sound — like all words that begin with a “kuh” sound like car, cat, cow, cup, can.
- § You and your child can have fun by naming all of his or her stuffed animals or dolls with names that begin with that day’s letter sound.
- § Another game is to make up silly words by changing words to begin with that day’s letter sound. For example, if it is letter “P” day, you might say to your child, “What word would ‘milk’ be if we took off the ‘mmm’ sound and made it a ‘p’ sound? Pilk!”
- § Can you think of some other silly words that your child could help make up?

☀️Let’s look at some ways to have fun while helping your child develop phonological awareness.

[**SHOW** *Games and Activities to Develop Phonological Awareness in Four- and Five-Year Olds* video.]

Helpful hints for both the ***Say It Slow, Say It Fast*** and the ***Letter-Sound Day*** games

- Children will enjoy these games most if they are not too easy or too difficult.
- Pay close attention to what your child can and cannot do, so that the game will not be too boring or too frustrating.
- Follow your child’s lead. Use toys, books and words that interest your child.
- Make it enjoyable. Always stop before you or your child become frustrated.
- Be helpful. Praise your child for all efforts even if the answers are not always correct. Say the correct answer and do not expect perfection.
- Do not correct speech errors at this time. The goal is to learn that words can come apart, not perfect speech.
- Encourage the whole family to play!

## **Willowby, Wallowby**

Willowby, Wallowby Woo  
An elephant sat on you.  
Willowby, Wallowby Wee  
An elephant sat on me.

### **Make up your own rhymes like this:**

Willowby, Wallowby Wary, an elephant sat on Mary  
Willowby, Wallowby Wuzzle, an elephant played with a  
puzzle.  
Willowby, Wallowby Woo, an elephant went to the zoo.  
Willowby, Wallowby Weetah, an elephant ran with a  
cheetah, etc.

## **Willowby, Wallowby**

Willowby, Wallowby Woo  
An elephant sat on you.  
Willowby, Wallowby Wee  
An elephant sat on me.

### **Make up your own rhymes like this:**

Willowby, Wallowby Wary, an elephant sat on Mary  
Willowby, Wallowby Wuzzle, an elephant played with a  
puzzle.  
Willowby, Wallowby Woo, an elephant went to the zoo.  
Willowby, Wallowby Weetah, an elephant ran with a  
cheetah, etc.

# Say It Slow/Say It Fast

## Level 1: Imitation

**Goal:** To improve your child's ability to "take words apart" (say it slowly) and put them "back together" (say it fast).

**When:** During playtime, 10 minutes  
Adjust this time depending on your child's attention span.  
Stop before she or he becomes frustrated or bored.

### STEPS

1. Choose a two-syllable word puzzle (hot - dog, mon - key, air -plane). Show your child the whole picture and say the word. Have your child imitate the word.
2. Say, "I'm going to say this word slowly. I'm going to break it apart."
3. Separate the two pieces as you say the word again, this time slowly (e.g. "hot -- dog," pause between the "hot" and "dog"). Point to the first part of the picture as you say "hot" and the second part as you say "dog".  
Be sure the picture is facing the child.
4. Ask your child to say it after you as you hold up a piece of the picture. When your child says the syllable, hand him or her that piece of the puzzle.
5. Practice saying the word "fast" (normally, "hotdog") and "slowly" (broken apart; i.e., "hot" -- "dog") as you take apart and put the puzzle together.
6. After your child can imitate one word this way, practice all the two-syllable words this way, one at a time.

# Say It Slow/Say It Fast

## Level 2: Production

**Goal:** To improve your child's ability to "take words apart" (say it slowly) and put them "back together" (say it fast).

**When:** During playtime, 10 minutes.  
Adjust this time depending on your child's attention span.  
Stop before she or he becomes frustrated or bored.

### STEPS

1. Lay out the puzzle of a word that your child has already practiced with (e.g., "airplane") and say, "Can you say this word slowly?"
2. Take the puzzle apart and ask your child to say the word "broken apart" (slow; i.e., "air" -- "plane"). Give help as needed.
3. When your child is able to say the words "broken apart" without your help you are ready to try some of the following:
  - \* Lay out three puzzles of two-syllable words that he or she has practiced. Mix up the pieces and ask your child to put the puzzles together and tell you the word normally and broken apart.
  - \* Lay out three two-syllable word puzzles (put together) and have your child say one of the words slowly while you try to "guess" which one she or he is saying.
  - \* Ask your child to put the words together backwards and make a "silly" word out of it (e.g., "monkey" becomes "key-mon," "hotdog" becomes "dog-hot").
  - \* Introduce the three-syllable word picture puzzles (i.e., el - e - phant, tel - e - phone, kan - ga - roo, but - er - fly).

# Letter-Sound Day Activity

## Level 1: Imitation

- Why:**
- \* Helps your child hear the first sounds in words,
  - \* Helps your child hear whether or not two words have the same or different starting sounds
  - \* Introduces your child to letters, letter sounds, and letter names.

- When:**
- \* During playtime. 10 minutes
  - \* Adjust this time depending on your child's attention span. Stop before she or he becomes frustrated or bored.
  - \* You can play this game while looking at picture books, playing, or doing everyday activities such as eating, bathing, dressing or driving.

### STEPS

1. Point to the picture of the bed on this sheet and say, "This is a bed. I can say it slow like this "buh – ed."  
(Say "bed" with an emphasis on the first sound--the "buh" sound--and a pause between saying the first sound and the last part of the word, "buh" -- "ed." )
2. Ask your child to imitate saying the word this way, bed ... "buh," -- "ed."
3. Now, let's think of letter sounds.  
What is the first sound in bat? It's /b/ "buh".  
(It is not "bee". Bee is the name of the letter, not the sound.)
4. Explain that the first sound is the "buh" sound. Have your child imitate this sound.  
Tell your child that "buh" is the first sound in the word "bed." It is the sound that the letter B makes.
5. Ask your child to think of other words that begin with the "buh" sound. You can pick objects around the house or look for words that start with the "buh" sound in picture books.
6. Now say a word that begins with a different sound, and do the same thing.

### Helpful Hints/Keep It Fun

- Children will enjoy these games most if they are not too easy or too difficult.
- Pay close attention to what your child can and cannot do.
- Follow your child's lead. Use toys, books, and words that interest your child.
- Have fun! Always stop before you or your child become frustrated.
- Praise your child for all efforts even if the answers are not always correct.  
Teach the correct answer but do not expect perfection.
- Do not correct speech errors at this time. The goal is to learn that words can come apart, not perfect speech.
- ***Encourage the whole family to play!***

## **Letter-Sound Day Activity**

### **Level 2: Production**

- Why:**
- \* Helps your child hear the first sounds in words,
  - \* Helps your child hear whether or not two words have the same or different starting sounds
  - \* Introduces your child to letters, letter sounds, and letter names.

- When:**
- \* During playtime. 10 minutes
  - \* Adjust this time depending on your child's attention span. Stop before she or he becomes frustrated or bored.
  - \* You can play this game while looking at picture books, playing, or doing everyday activities such as eating, bathing, dressing or driving.

### **STEPS**

1. After your child can do the imitation part of the game easily, you can move on to the production part of the game.
2. Tell your child that today is the letter \_\_\_\_ day. For example, the “mmm” sound (See the handout for sequence of letter-sounds to teach to pick the best letter-sounds to start with.)
3. Tell your child that you both are going to look for things that begin with “mmm.”

This activity is similar to the imitation part of the game, but this time your child has to think of or find words that have the same sound on his or her own. Again, use picture books, things around the house, or things you and your child can see anywhere.

4. Praise your child's success. Give him or her a little help if needed. For example, if your child is having a hard time, you might say “Well, here's a ‘bird;’ ‘bird’ starts with the ‘buh’ sound.
5. “What else do you see on this page (or what else can you think of) that starts with the ‘buh’ sound?”
6. You can extend this activity to make it more interesting for you and your child in lots of ways that are fun. For example:
  - Help your child make collages of pictures cut from magazines that focus on one sound -- like all words that begin with a c-sound like car, cat, cow, cup, can.
  - Name all of his or her stuffed animals or dolls with names that begin with that day's letter-sound.
  - Make up silly words by changing words to begin with that day's letter sound. For example, if it is letter “P” day, you might say to your child, “what word would ‘milk’ be if we took off the “mmm” sound and made it a “p” sound? ‘pilk!’”

# LETTER-SOUNDS FOR LETTER DAY ACTIVITIES

The following is the rough order of sounds as they develop in children’s speech. You do not need to teach these sounds in this exact order. However, it is important to do these activities with sounds that the child can articulate easily. Avoid words with the initial letters q, sh, ch and th, because the written letters do not correspond to the speech sounds (e.g., the first sound in “church” is not a “c” sound as in “cat”).

Start with these letter-sounds: w, p, b, d, t, m, n, h, y

Do these letter-sounds next: f, v, s, z, g, \*k/c (\*k and c have the same sound but are different letters. Teach them separately.)

Do these letter-sounds last: j, l, r

Remember that this activity is teaching your child to listen for the *sounds* in words. Often alphabet books choose pictures to depict a letter by the way it is *spelled* not the way it sounds (e.g. “cheese” as a /C/ word; “giraffe” as a /G/ word). If you see this, do not include that word in your game. To reduce confusion, it is important to be consistent. Choose simple words and choose words that sound the way they are spelled. The following is a chart of letters and sounds as they should be taught in this activity.

Letter-Sound	Sample Words	Letter-Sound	Sample Words
W	water, worm, wet, window	F	food, fork, fox, fan
P	pot, paint, pear, pool	V	violin, van, vase, vacuum
B	boy, bed, bike, ball	S	sock, soap, sun, spoon
D	door, dime, doll, dog	Z	zoo, zebra, zipper
T	toe, toy, truck, tree	G	goat, gate, game, grass
M	mop, mail, milk, man	K	kite, kangaroo, king, kiss
N	net, nap, neck, nose	C	cat, cake, cookie, car
H	house, hill, horse, head	J	juice, jar, jacks, jelly
Y	yogurt, yo-yo, yard, yellow	L	light, lion, lip, leg
		R	rake, rain, raisin, rock

Do not write the words on the cards. Children are not reading the words. They are sounding out the words and listening.

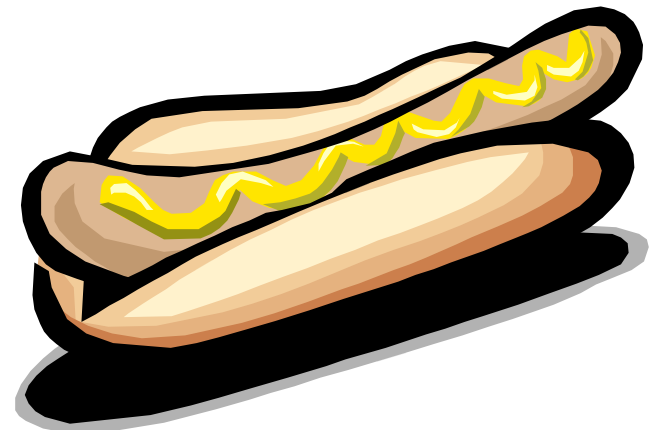
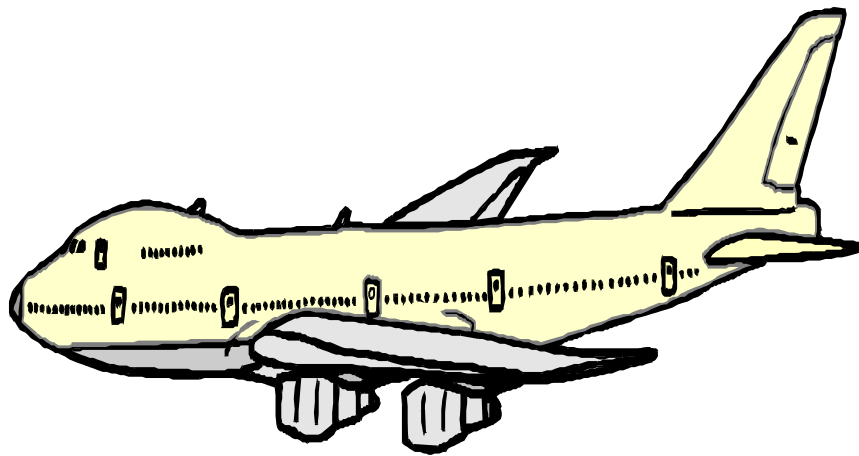
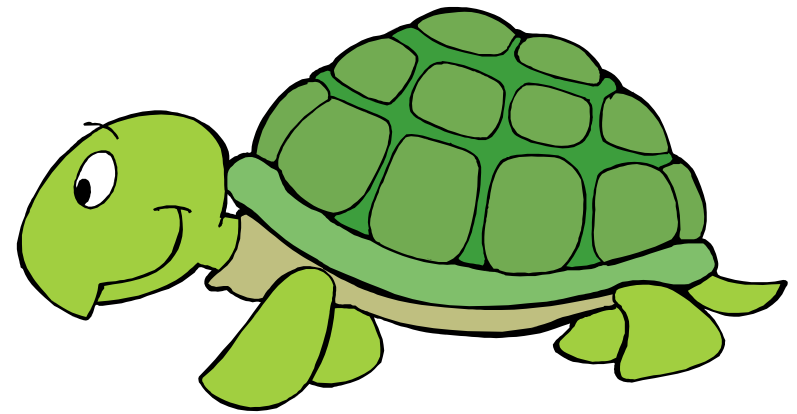
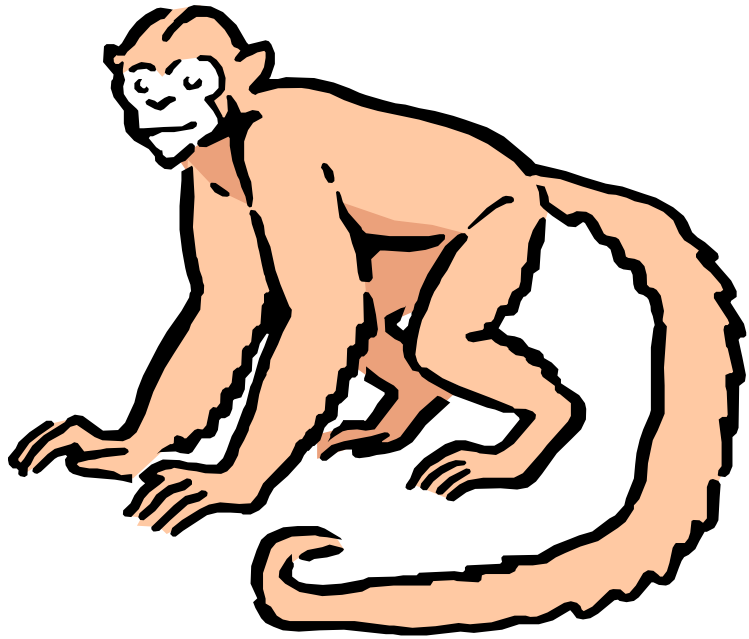
Here are the words for the pictures, so that each word is two syllables, or two parts.

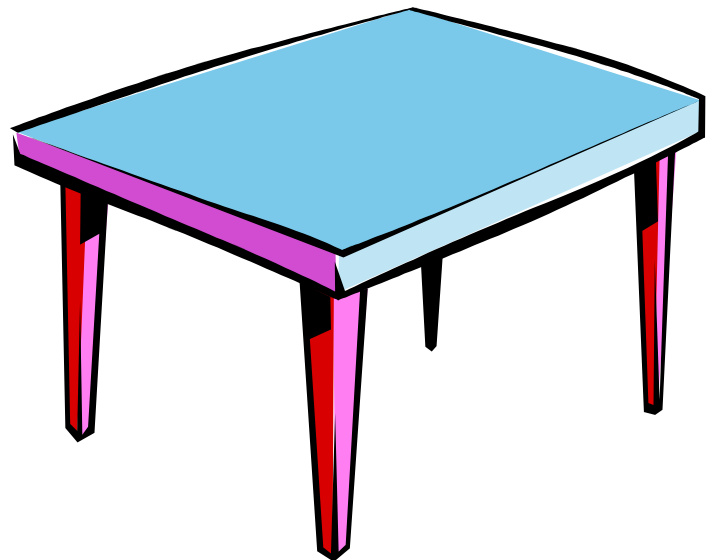
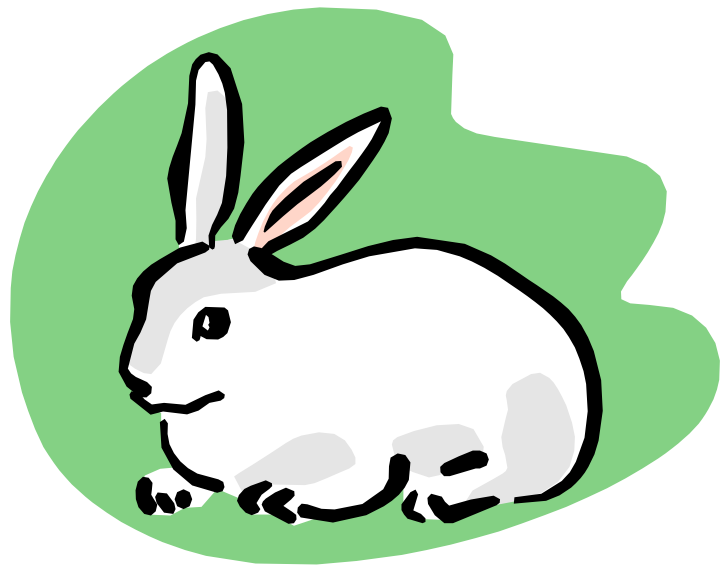
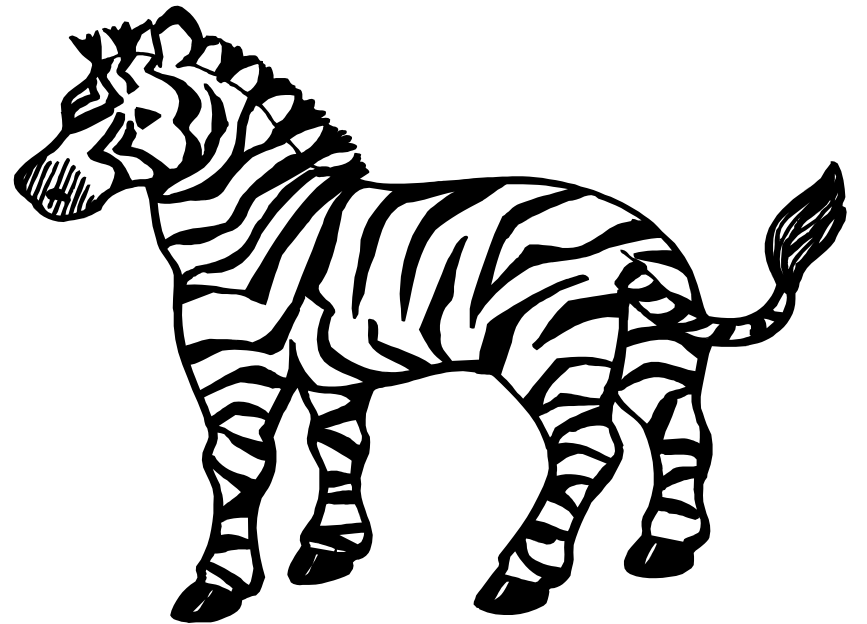
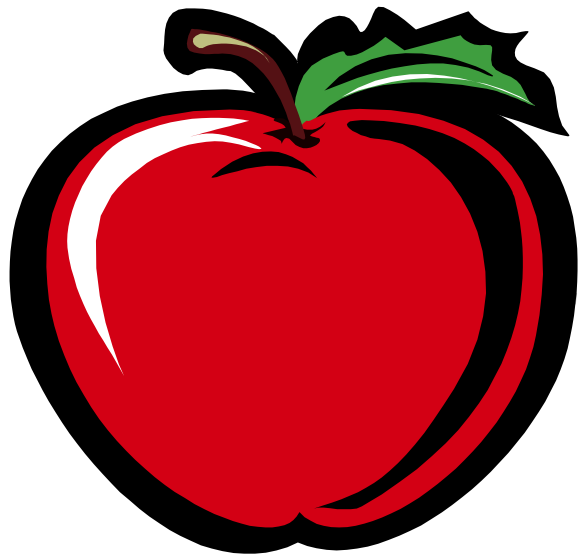
Make your own cards using magazine pictures. Let your child say the name of each picture.

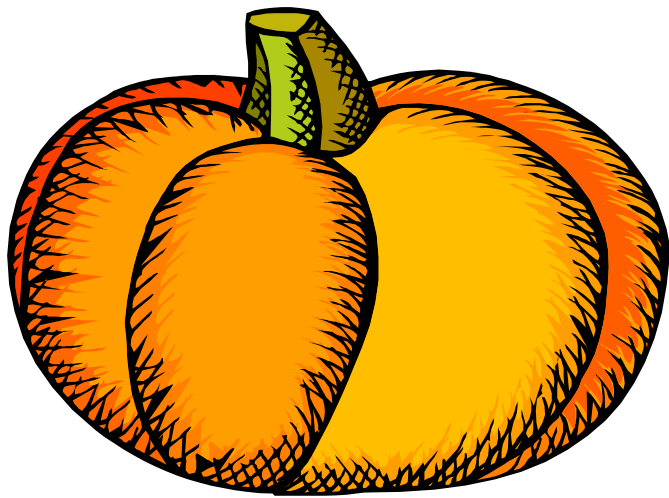
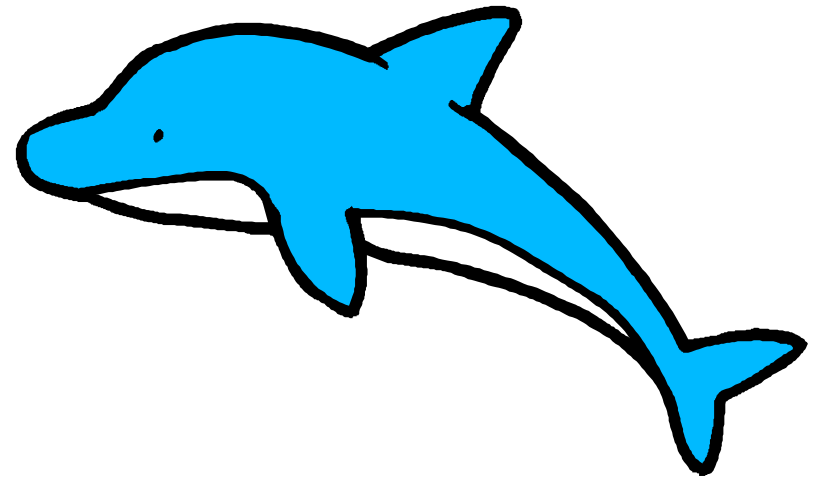
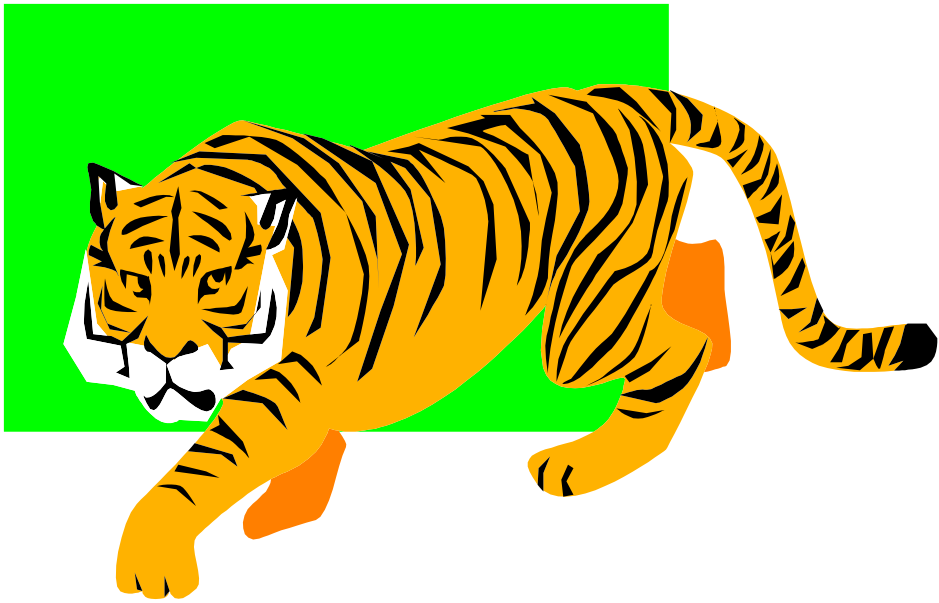
monkey	turtle
airplane	hotdog

apple	zebra
rabbit	table
bunny	

tiger	dolphin
pumpkin	sweater







These are one syllable words to use with Letter Day Game.

Dog, Bed, Car and Lamp

See if your child can give the first sound (not letter).

For dog it would be duh, not dee

