

STORY TIME FOR BIG KIDS

As kids begin learning to read, they still enjoy (and benefit from!) hearing stories read aloud. By making some slight adaptations to a traditional story time, you can host a “story time for big kids/beginning readers” that supports phonological awareness and makes learning to read fun!

SUGGESTED PROGRAM STRUCTURE (30-45 min).

- **Welcome song** or name activity
- 1-2 **activities** BEFORE reading to warm up their brains thinking about the skill they’ll be exploring when you read
- **Read** one picture book or beginning reader; ask [comprehension questions](#) before, during, and after
- 1-2 **activities** to reinforce the skill that was in the story
- **Open play** with phonological awareness activities

Tips:

- This program works for lots of ages but is best for ages 5-8 or kids in kindergarten and above.
 - These kind of activities tend to require a little more executive function than story time
- Parents are welcome in this program, just like in traditional story time! They make open play easier, and they are also learning ways to support phonological awareness at home.
- Use a welcome/name song as a phonological awareness activity (try “Clap a Friend’s Name” or “Syllable Name Clap” from the Phonological Awareness Activity Cards)
- Don’t forget the “language comprehension” side of the reading rope, ask questions about what you read!

Places to Find Phonological Awareness Activities:

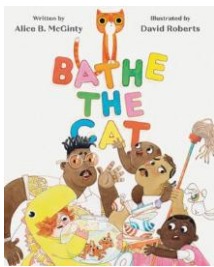
- CPL’s Phonological Awareness Cards
- [FCRR Student Center Activities | Florida Center for Reading Research](#) (pre-K and K-1st grade)
- [Phonological and Phonemic Awareness: Activities for Your Kindergartener | Reading Rockets](#)
- [Phonological Awareness Activities for Pre-K and Preschool - PreKinders](#)
- [11 Fun Activities for Boosting Phonological Awareness - Brookes Blog](#)

Open Play Material Ideas:

- Letter magnets on the felt board
- Rhyme matching cards
- Phonological awareness games (Amazon has a lot) and word games like Bananagrams
- CPL Word Play activity sheet

More Read Aloud Ideas:

- [13 Picture Books for Teaching Phonological Awareness and Phonics - Tejeda's Tots](#)
- [10 Inviting Phonemic Awareness Books Your Students Will Love](#)
- [Picture Books for Phonemic Awareness from Kenton County Public Library](#)



Bathe the Cat

Alice B. McGinty

TIPS FOR READING:

This book plays with language in lots of ways—it changes the beginning sound of words, uses rhyme, and more. Understanding that words are made up of individual sounds is an important part of learning to read!

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

BEFORE READING:

Phoneme Fun: Changing Sounds

“We are going to play with the sounds we hear in words.”

(when you give these directions, say the SOUND you want them to change, not the letter).

- Say mop. Now say mop but change /m/ to /h/.
- Say pat. Now say pat but change the /p/ to /c/.
- Say fish. Now say fish but change the /f/ to a /d/.
- Say floor. Now say floor but change the /fl/ to a /d/.
- Say rug. Now say rug but change the /r/ to a /h/.

Song: Pepperoni Pizza

I Like to Eat Pepperoni Pizza

(Tune: Apples and Bananas)

I like to eat eat eat pepperoni pizza.

I like to eat eat eat pepperoni pizza.

Change the initial sound of pepperoni pizza.

“Now let’s try the /m/ sound.”

I like to eat eat eat mepperoni mizza.”

I like to eat eat eat mepperoni mizza.”

TIP: Use the magnet letters and pull out randomly to choose your next letter!

AFTER READING:

Initial Phoneme Go Fish

- [Instructions and printable here](#)
- Hand out 5 cards to each kid.
- Place the rest of the cards in a “pond” in the center.
- Play like traditional Go Fish, each child asks one player “do you have any cards that start with the /f/ sound?” If yes, that player gives over the card. If not, the player selects one from the pond.
- The cards can be tricky—if kids need help identifying the picture on the card, they can ask you!

The Make New Words Show (THIS IS ADVANCED)

Divide into two teams and welcome them to “The Make New Words Game Show!” Have them take turns being the contestant. Ask the contestants questions. Kids consult their team and “buzz in” when they have the answer. Keep score and the first team to 5 wins! Sample questions:

What do I have to take off plant to make plan? /t/

What do I have to take off great to make grey? /t/

What do I have to take off time to tie? /m/

What do I have to take off teeth to make tea? /th/

What do I have to add to pink to make pink? /k/



Pig in a Wig

Emma J. Virján

TIPS FOR READING:

Rhyming is an important skill! It encourages kids to listen carefully to the sounds in words, honing their auditory discrimination skills. Rhyming also prompts kids to repeat sounds and patterns, reinforcing their grasp of word sounds. It can also help children remember and understand longer strings of words!

You can also use printable activity sheets available online during open play: [Pig in a Wig Activities](#)

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

BEFORE READING:

Phoneme Fun!

"We are going to play with the sounds we hear in words."

Initial sounds:

- Say pinch. Now say pinch, but don't say /p/.
- Say toad. Now say toad, but don't say /t/.

Ending sounds:

- Say cat. Now say cat, but don't say /t/.
- Say fish. Now say fish but don't say /sh/.

Changing sounds:

- Say mop. Now say mop but change /m/ to /t/.
- Say pat. Now say pat but change the /t/ to /d/.

AFTER READING:

"What This Book Club Needs is a ____."

- Use a pig puppet or wig.
- Sit or stand in a circle.
- Choose one child to start. Give him or her the prop.
- He or she says "what this book club needs is a ____" and tosses the prop to someone else in the circle who finishes the sentence with a rhyme

Song: Down By the Bay

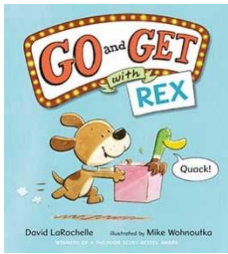
Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home
I dare not go
For if I do
My mother will say
"Did you ever you ever s a fly wearing a tie?"
Down by the bay

- a whale / With a polka dot tail?
- a moose / kissing a goose?
- a bear / Combing his hair?
- a llama / wearing pajamas?"
- a time/ when you couldn't make a rhyme?

Silly Simon Says (THIS IS HARD)

You will need sets of rhyming cards. Print some [here](#) or buy on Amazon.

- Get as many words as you have kids (i.e. 10 kids = 5 sets of rhymes).
- Pass out cards and tell kids to keep it secret.
- Move around the room and try to find the matching rhyme to their card.
- When all the partners have been found, go around the room and have the kids say the phrase "What this story needs is a ____ in a ____!"



Go and Get with Rex

David LaRochelle

TIPS FOR READING:

This book focuses on **onset**, the beginning sounds of words, and helps kids practice letter sounds. When reading, take lots of time to pause and say the sound each letter makes (“find something that begins with the letter F. /f/.”) Also take time to have kids make predictions!

You can also use this printable activity page during open play: [Go and Get Letter B](#)

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

BEFORE READING:

Song: I Know an Old Dino Who Swallowed a “B”

Prop: puppet and letter magnets.

(Tune: *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*)

Feed the dinosaur different letter!

I know an old Dino who swallowed a “B”

What would he say if he swallowed a “B”?

(Say the B sound twice)

What would he eat if he swallowed a “B”

(Bananas? Berries? Bread?)

- Continue with other letters

[Watch Miss Beth demo this!](#)

I Spy

- Play a game of “I Spy” with starting sounds.
- “I spy with my little eye something that starts with the /p/ sound.”
- You can also have kids say what they spy.

AFTER READING:

I’m Going on a Trip

- Tell kids that you’re going on a trip (to the beach, camping, on a picnic, etc.). Ask them to think of one thing they want to bring.
 - “I’m going camping and I’m bringing my tent.”
- Then ask them to think of a word that describes what they want to bring that starts with the same sound as the word they are describing.
 - “I’m going camping and I’m bringing my tiny tent.”
- Go around and have each child share.

Play Rex’s Alphabet Challenge!

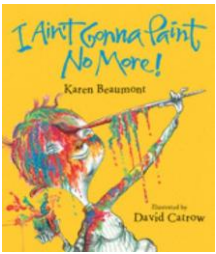
Print page one: [REXAlphabetChActivity1.pdf](#)

Print page two: [REXAlphabetChActivity2.pdf](#)

- Prep the game ahead of time by cutting out each page and putting them in 2 bowls, one for letters and one for prompts.
- On their turn, kids draw one letter and one prompt. They get to keep their letter if they can think of something that starts with it to fit the prompt.
- See the printable sheets for more instructions!



Use words from the story!



I Ain't Gonna Paint No More!

Karen Beaumont

TIPS FOR READING:

This book is a lot of fun to read when you ask kids to predict the rhyming word!

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

BEFORE READING

What Am I Going to Paint?

I'm going to say what I'm NOT going to paint, but it rhymes with something in this room. When you know what it is, walk to it (but don't say it out loud!).

- Not gonna paint the lable, gonna paint thetable
- Not gonna paint the floor, gonna paint the....door
- Not gonna paint the bug, gonna paint the....rug
- Not gonna paint my hair, gonna paint the....chair

Song: Rhyme Superhero

(Tune: *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*)

I'm the superhero of rhyme
My words rhyme all of the time.
I need help to write my song
Guess the words that don't belong
I'll say three and you'll choose one.
Pick the right one and you're done.

(Say three words, two should rhyme and one should not.)

Song, lamp, ramp	add, sing, pad
Chill, bill, dog	snail, plop, whale
Sad, red, make	red, bank, thank
Hop, hill, mop	place, race, day

AFTER READING

Circle Game: I'm Going to Paint a Picture

- Sit in a circle with something to toss, such as a small ball or beanbag.
- To begin the game, say, "I'm going to paint a beautiful picture of cheese" then toss the ball to a kid. The kid must repeat the phrase and change the word at the end, such as "I'm going to paint a beautiful picture of peas (or trees, fleas, bees, knees, and so forth)."
- That kid tosses repeats the original phrase with a new rhyming word (e.g., "I'm going to paint a beautiful picture of a snake.")
- Move quickly to keep interest!
- Good words to try: snake, dog, house, box, cat, nose, jar, tree, chair, star

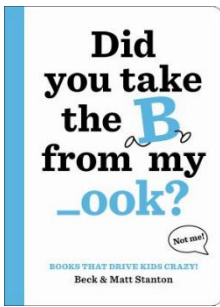
Silly Simon Says (rhyme edition)

"This game uses words that rhyme with real body parts. Figure out what body part rhymes with Simon's silly rhyming word and touch that part (but only if Simon Says!)"

Simon says touch your belbow

What he means is touch your _____ (elbow)

Care/hair	zears/ears
Flea/knee	sand/hand
Hose/nose or toes	marm/arm
Mummy/tummy	jelly mutton/belly button



Did You Take the B from My _ook?

Karen Beaumont

TIPS FOR READING:

Make sure you read this one through once ahead of time—it's all in the delivery with the jokes!

This book focuses on phoneme awareness of the /b/ sound. These activities explore lots of phonemes!

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

BEFORE READING

Sound Toss Game

Stand in a circle.

Tell kids you're going to toss a ball around the circle saying words that start with the same sound (for example /b/).

Say a word and toss the ball to a kid.

That kid says a word and tosses the ball to another kid.

You can make this more challenging by racing to see how many words you can think of in a minute!

Song: What's the Sound That Starts These Words?

(Tune: Old Macdonald Had a Farm)

What's the sound at the start of these words?

Rattle, ride and run? (wait for response)

/r/ is the sound that starts these words

Rattle, ride and run.

With an /r/, /r/ here and an /r/, /r/ there,

Here an /r/, there an /r/, everywhere an /r/, /r/

/r/ is the sound that starts these words:

rattle, ride and run.

Repeat with other words or try using ending sounds instead!

AFTER READING

I'm Going on a Picnic

- Tell kids that you're all going on a picnic and everyone needs to bring something, BUT the thing you bring must start with the same sound the person before you ends with.
- "I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring a blanket. Blanket ends with /t/."
- "I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring a tomato soup. Soup ends with the /p/ sound."
- "I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring pepper. Pepper ends with the /r/ sound."
- TIP: This can be difficult for kids who haven't learned about blends yet.

I Spy with Letter Sounds

Just like you had to find the /b/, find other sounds in the room.

I spy with my little eye

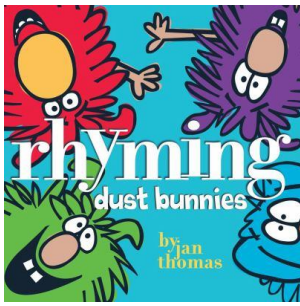
Something that starts with the /c/ sound.

That's right! Clock starts with the /c/ sound.

Variations:

- Count how many things the group can find for each letter and see what has the most in the room.
- Go around and let each child take a turn saying I Spy.

You can also look for ending sounds. "... something that ends with /u/ (banana)."



Rhyming Dust Bunnies

Jan Thomas

TIPS FOR READING:

This offers lots of opportunities for kids to shout words that rhyme too. There is a dust bunny coloring sheet template on Teams (in the [Jump into Reading Programming Supports](#) folder); have kids color one in and hold it up when they have a rhyming word to add!

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

BEFORE READING

Nonsense Rhyme Name Game

Make up nonsense rhyming words for names.

“If your name rhymes with Rames, touch your head.” “If your name rhymes with fosh, jump up and down three times.”

You can also play this with magnetic letters:

- Write out a child’s name on paper and put it on your felt board. Have the group say it.
- That child comes to the front and chooses a magnetic letter to place on top of the first letter of their name on the whiteboard. (Lauren, Bauren) If their name begins with a vowel, the magnetic letter needs to be placed in front of their name. (Elliot, Pelliot)
- Everyone now says the child’s name and the new rhyming word.

Mystery Object

Put an item in a box or fancy bag.

Give kids clues about the item related to its sounds for them to guess the item

- This item starts with the same sound as...
 - This item has a ____ sound at the end.
 - This item rhymes with....
- e.g., “The mystery object starts like water and it has a /ch/ sound at the end for watch.”

AFTER READING

Sweep Up a Rhyme

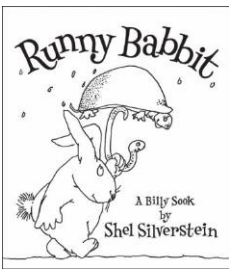
You will need a broom, dust pan, and rhyming words/objects ([printable words on Teams](#))

- Spread out words or items on ground.
- Have the kids line up to take turns
- Say a word from the book (car, bug, dog).
- The first kid sweeps up one word from the floor that rhymes with the word you said.
- Create piles for each word and go through the piles when you’re done!
- You can also sweep random rhyming words or objects instead of images.

Find Your Mate

You will need rhyming words on cards, one per child (if you have an odd number, you play too!). Give each child a word card. Have them find the child who has a rhyming word on their card. You can do this a few ways:

1. Play like musical chairs and play music, kids move around the room and if they find their partner, dance together. When the music stops, partners share their rhyme and sit. Keep going until all pairs are found.
2. Have kids mill around the room and find their rhyme partner, then create a secret handshake with that kid.



Runny Babbit

Shel Silverstein

TIPS FOR READING:

A spoonerism is made when the initial sounds of two words in a phrase are switched. For example:

*You can have a lot of **spun** with **foonerisms**. Kids love to **stead rories** with spoonerisms. They are also a **wood gay** to get kids to look at **wow hords** are put together.*

Choose 3-5 poems ahead of time (page 43 is a library poem!). Read the poem all the way through once, then read line by line and ask kids to “translate” the poem. Try handing out copies of poems for the participants to read along with you or out loud themselves, depending on age.

TIP: Poems intimidating? You can use these same activities with the picture book *Pick a Pumpkin, Mrs. Millie!* by Judy Cox, which also features spoonerisms!

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

BEFORE READING

Phoneme Fun!

“We are going to play with the sounds in words.”

Initial sounds:

- Say pinch. Now say pinch, but don’t say /p/.
- Say toad. Now say toad, but don’t say /t/.

Ending sounds:

- Say cat. Now say cat, but don’t say /t/.
- Say fish. Now say fish but don’t say /sh/.

Changing sounds:

- Say mop. Now say mop but change /m/ to /t/
- Say pat. Now say pat but change the /t/ to /d/

AFTER READING

Spoonerism Telephone

- Sit in a circle or row.
- One person starts with a spoonerism phrase (like “I lent to the wibrary”) and whispers it to the person next to them.
- That person changes it back to the correct phrase and whispers it to the third person.
- The third person makes the correct phrase back into a spoonerism, and so on.
- Can the group get the correct phrase by the end of the line?

Make a Spoonerism!

Define spoonerism. Give examples like in the intro above.

Ask kids to turn these phrases into spoonerisms:

- hot summer day
- jump in a pool
- drink lemonade
- ride a bike.

Silly Simon Says (THIS IS ADVANCED)

Figure out the instruction Simon is giving but only do it if Simon Says!

Try these prompts (add “simon says”):

- hap your clands (clap your hands)
- figgle your wingers. (wiggle your fingers)
- ap your flarms (flap your arms)
- tub your rummy (rub your tummy)
- fop on one hoot (hop on one foot)
- rance like a dobot (dance like a robot)