

What the H-e-ck is Phonological Awareness?



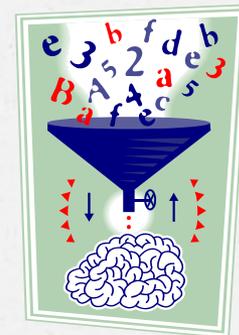
Presentation by Geoffrey Cayen, LRT

Definition of PA:

- *Phonological awareness* is an area of oral language that relates to the ability to think about '*phonemes*' or sounds in words rather than just the meaning of words. Words consists of syllables, rhymes and most significantly, words are made up of sounds.

Why is Phonological Awareness Important?

- o Research has consistently shown the very highest correlation between early developing phoneme awareness and success in learning the encoding (code for the brain) and decoding skills of early reading and writing.



Underlying Processes affecting Phonological Awareness:

- o Auditory discrimination
- o Attention
- o Auditory memory



- o Approximately 20% of students struggle with some aspects of PA, while another 8-10% exhibit significant delays.
- o Early intervention can make a real difference to students with weak or limited PA.



What grades are targeted?

- Phonological awareness should be an area of focus in the following grades:
 - Kindergarten
 - Grade 1
 - Grade 2
 - For students with phonological awareness difficulties in grade 3 and beyond if necessary.
i.e. For students with a learning disability

Developmental Sequence of Phonological Awareness

- o Cycle 1 - Word Awareness and Print Awareness
- o Cycle 2 - Compound Word Awareness
i.e. rain – bow / cow - boy
- o Cycle 3 - Syllable Awareness
 - Blending (Dividing words by syllables)
i.e. pan - da
 - Segmenting (Clap out syllables)
 - Syllable deletion
 - i.e. 'Say Natasha' but don't say 'Na' (tasha)

o Cycle 4 – Rhyme Awareness

- Judgements:
i.e. Do the following words sounds alike?
- Production:
i.e. Say words that rhyme.

Cycle 5 – First Sound Awareness

- Judgements:
i.e. Do these words start with the same sound?
- Identifying:
i.e. What sounds do these words start with?
m-m-m monkey
- Production:
i.e. Make words that start with the same sound.

o Cycle 6 – Last Sounds Awareness

- Judgement:
i.e. Do these words end with the same last sound?
- Identifying:
i.e. What sounds these words end in?

Cycle 7 – First and Last Sounds

i.e. Identify both the first and last sounds in the following word.

Cycle 8 – Phoneme Blending

Have students blend words back together as you say them slowly, breaking them into sounds (2 sounds to 4 sounds)

i.e. day (d-ay) (2 sounds)

soap (s-oa-p) (3 sounds)

o Cycle 9 – Phoneme Segmenting

- Have student tell you each sound in words. The student could use blocks and push a block for each sound.
i.e. day (d-ay) (2 sounds)
soap (s-oa-p) (3 sounds)
- Phoneme Deletion:
i.e. Say 'fan' but don't say 'f'. - (an)

Cycle 10 – Reading and Writing

- Writing: Spell the following silly words.
i.e. sap / pem / lug ...
- Reading: Read the following silly words.
i.e. beb / fap / mas / wid

Phonetic Analysis: Is the understanding of predictable relationship between phonemes (sounds of spoken language) and graphemes (the letters and spelling of written language). Knowledge of these relationships help children recognize familiar words accurately and automatically as well as decode new words.

Underlying Processes affecting Phonetic Analysis:

- o · Phonological Awareness
- o · Memory
- o · Attention
- o · Visual Discrimination
- o · Visual Processing



Will versus Skill

Will:

According to Webster' s Dictionary – “Choosing to act, a desire, volunteering to participate, and it is associated with pleasure, controlling your own actions, energy and enthusiasm.”

Skill:

According to Webster' s Dictionary –
“expertise that comes from instruction, training, acquired ability, or proficiency.”
Refers to the development of knowledge, understanding, and sound judgment.

- o Will and skill are two sides of the same coin. One depends on the other. If the child does not have the will to learn, there is no interest, no motivation, no focused attention and few opportunities for the child to develop higher-order reasoning. The child must develop some fundamental cognitive skills in order to make continuous progress.

Carol Lyons

Self-Regulation... What is the child's plan? What does he do when he stops and does not know what to do next?

Does he

- look to you for help?
- ask to leave the room?
- get a tissue to blow his nose?
- look up in the air?
- yawn?
- put his head on the desk, saying his head hurts?
- quit?
- say he cannot think because he is having a bad day?
- display other avoidance behaviours?

Does he

- re-read?
- look at the first letter?
- search the picture?
- look at the end of the word or look for chunks?
- look for a small word in the word he is stuck on?
- try to think of a word that would make sense?

o First scenario:

The child's plan suggest avoidance, helplessness, frustration.

o Second scenario:

The child's plan displays more cognitive behaviours.

If the teacher assists the child in developing various strategic ways to problem-solve, he will acquire different ways to attempt to resolve his challenge. If the child uses only one plan, (i.e. re-read the 1st letter) he will encounter difficulties when the texts become more challenging.

What can be done to support the struggling reader?

- o Educate the student using accurate language regarding difference between words, syllables, and sounds.
i.e. Not say “ What sound does the letter make?” but rather “What sound does the letter represent?”.
- o Increase use of high-frequency vocabulary, word wall or sound wall
- o Read easy, repetitive books to increase confidence and fluency.
- o Educate the parents on what can be done at home.

What can be done to support the struggling reader?

- o Pinpoint what the child needs to learn *next* and teach it.
- o Analyze and reflect on your teaching practice **before**, **during** and **after** your lesson.
- o Realize that each student has a different way of learning.
- o What motivates the student?

What can be done to support the struggling reader?

- o Belief that all children can achieve. Build affective attachment between you and your students. This has an impact on their emotional responses, feelings and risk-taking.
- o Necessity to go to the level where the child will succeed. Scaffold the instruction accordingly. Always make the children's experience positive and rewarding.
- o According to Carol Lyon, "Students' success is dependent on teachers' expertise to effectively analyze and assess children's behaviours and scaffold their learning.

Suggested References

- o *A Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading, Kindergarten to Grade 3*, Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2003.
- o *Class Act Phonological Awareness Kit and Overview of Cycles*, Communication Services, Special Education / Student Services, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.
- o *La Littératie: une approche équilibrée*, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, 2002
- o Lyon, Carol A., *Teaching Struggling Readers, How to Use Brain-based Research to Maximize Learning*, Heinemann, 2003.