

## What is the Phonological Awareness Hierarchy?

There are 4 main components that make up Phonological Awareness.

### Rhyming (Ages 2-5)

The ability to match/produce word endings.

### Alliteration (Ages 3-7)

The ability to match/produce word beginnings.

### Blending (Ages 4-5)

The ability to combine syllables or sounds to make words.

### Segmenting (Ages 4-5)

The ability to separate words into syllables and sounds.

Word parts include:

Whole words (elephant)

Syllables (di/no/saur)

\*Onset and \*Rime (d-og, ch-eck)

\*Phonemes (cat = /k/ /a/ /t/)

\*Onset is defined as the first consonant, or group of consonants in a one-syllable word.

\*Rime is the remaining vowel and consonants that follow the onset.

\*Phonemes are the individual speech sounds in a word.

## What does Phonological Awareness development look like?

### Rhyme

2-3 year old children generally participate in speaking nursery rhymes, finger plays, jingles, songs and books. 3-5 year old children generally can match (and subsequently produce) rhymes.

### Alliteration

3-5 year old children may recognize words with the same initial sound, 5-7 year olds may produce initial sounds in words.

### Blending

Most 4-5 year old children are able to combine syllables or sounds to produce words.

### Segmenting

Most 4-5 year old children are able to identify syllables and/or beginning sounds. Some PreK students may be able to identify sounds in one-syllable words.

## Why is Phonological Awareness important?

*"Phonological awareness skills in Kindergarten have been identified as one of the best predictors of reading achievement between Kindergarten and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (NRP, 2000; Snow et al, 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan 2002)."*

Phonological awareness is most strongly related to literacy development (Anthony & Francis, 2005; Lonigan, 2006) and is a very important link between oral and written language. It is one of the three foundations of early literacy. Providing instruction along the phonological awareness hierarchy should be initiated well before children enter kindergarten.

