

# Phonological Awareness Test

This test is designed to find the students' skill level in each of the major phonological awareness areas and consequently their readiness to begin the formal reading process.

## Guidelines

- The test is presented orally, requiring students to rely on purely phonetic cues—visual cues are not tested at this stage.
- Ensure that sounds (not letter names) are used by both student and teacher.
- The test should be administered to a single student on a 'one-to-one' basis.
- The skills are listed in order of difficulty and should be administered in sections following the schedule outlined below.
- A number of 'nonsense words' have been included to prevent students from guessing the answers, providing a more accurate phonemic assessment.

## Sections

**Section A** (rhyming, word awareness, syllables and phonemic isolation) should be administered before formal instruction in learning the single and multiple phonograms (Terms 1 and 2 of *Teacher Book A*).

**Section B** (phonemic identity, phonemic categorisation, phonemic blending and phonemic segmentation) should be administered before formal instruction in spelling (Terms 3 and 4 of *Teacher Book A*).

**Section C** (phonemic manipulation and phonemic substitution) should be administered before proceeding onto *Teacher Book B*.

Students who do not perform well in any of these subtests may need additional support and extra small group activities to improve in these areas in order to successfully complete the formal learning activities.

Student name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Section A Date \_\_\_\_\_ Section B Date \_\_\_\_\_ Section C Date \_\_\_\_\_

Tick or cross the boxes for correct and incorrect responses. Answers (where applicable) are given in square brackets.

**SECTION A**

**1 Rhyming** ‘Sun’ and ‘fun’ are rhyming words—they have the same sound at the end.  
Have the student say other words that rhyme with these words:  
sat fat  cot lot  bit kit  hut gut  sack tack

**2 Word awareness** Read these sentences and ask the student to tell how many words they hear:  
Please come. [2]  Four boys are here. [4]  The train whistled. [3]  Do you know the answer? [5]

**3 Syllables** Some words can be broken into parts called **syllables** (happy = hap-py).  
Read these words and ask the student to tell the number of syllables they hear.  
today [2]  wonderful [3]  believe [2]  happiness [3]  yes [1]  ponnet [2]

**4 Phonemic isolation** Read these words and ask the student to tell the initial (first), medial (middle) and final (end) sounds for these three-letter words. Ensure the student says sounds and not letter names (‘d’, not ‘dee’).  
cat [‘k’ ‘a’ ‘t’]  dog [‘d’ ‘o’ ‘g’]  sun [‘s’ ‘u’ ‘n’]  vod [‘v’ ‘o’ ‘d’]

**SECTION B**

**5 Phonemic identity** Say each series of words and ask the student to identify the common sound. The examples include initial, medial and final sounds.  
can cat cope kind [‘k’]  mum make money Michael [‘m’]  cat plate sit cot [‘t’]   
cup pop map snip [‘p’]  cot shop dog doll [‘o’]  sit rim pin limb [‘i’]

**6 Phonemic categorisation** Say each series of words and ask the student to identify the word which doesn’t belong (because it doesn’t share the common sound). The examples include initial, medial and final sounds.  
camel cat kitten mule [mule]  rope roof hat roll [hat]  until flip sail hit [sail]   
snake curl pill sill [snake]  nail toes roam mown [nail]  curl sir tale Bert [tale]

**7 Phonemic blending** For the words below, say each sound separately and ask the student to blend the sounds to make a word.  
‘b’ ‘i’ ‘g’ [big]  ‘l’ ‘i’ ‘f’ ‘t’ [lift]  ‘s’ ‘t’ ‘o’ ‘p’ [stop]  ‘b’ ‘oi’ [boy]  ‘oh’ ‘v’ ‘er’ [over]  ‘g’ ‘l’ ‘i’ ‘m’ [glim]

**8 Phonemic segmentation** Say each word clearly. Ask the student to break the word into its sounds and tell how many there are.  
me [‘m’ ‘ee’] [2]  not [‘n’ ‘o’ ‘t’] [3]  girl [‘g’ ‘er’ ‘l’] [3]  trees [‘t’ ‘r’ ‘ee’ ‘s’] [4]  chorf [‘ch’ ‘aw’ ‘f’] [3]

**SECTION C**

**9 Phonemic manipulation** Say these base words and ask the student to add or remove the indicated sound at the beginning, tell the new word, and then add or remove it at the end and tell the new word.  
park add ‘s’ at the start [spark] add ‘s’ at the end [sparks]   
ill add ‘h’ at the start [hill] add ‘i’ at the end [hilly]   
lamp remove ‘l’ at the start [amp] remove ‘p’ at the end [am]   
tins remove ‘t’ at the start [ins] remove ‘s’ at the end [in]

**10 Phonemic substitution** Say these base words and ask the student to say the new word when the sound is substituted.  
bat remove ‘t’, add ‘k’ [back]  tap remove ‘t’, add ‘s’ [sap]  dog remove ‘o’, add ‘i’ [dig]   
kitten remove ‘k’, add ‘m’ [mitten]  set remove ‘t’, add ‘p’ [sep]

## Summary of skills

Tick the boxes for the student responses above (generally 0–1 correct = poor, 2–3 correct = satisfactory, 4+ correct = good).

<p>1. Rhyming</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>2. Word awareness</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>3. Syllable</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>4. Phonemic isolation</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>5. Phonemic identity</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>6. Phonemic categorisation</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>7. Phonemic blending</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>8. Phonemic segmentation</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>9. Phonemic manipulation</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>10. Phonemic substitution</p> <p>POOR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>GOOD <input type="checkbox"/></p>