



# Phonological Awareness Skills by Age

Deficits in phonological awareness are an early marker for dyslexia.\*

Ages at which 80 – 90% of typical students should have achieved a particular skill:

Age	Skill	Example
4	Rote imitation and enjoyment of rhyme and alliteration	<b>rat, cat, bat</b> “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.”
5	Recognizes a Rhyme Clapping / Counting Syllables	Which two rhyme? <b>sat, rug, hat</b> <b>dog</b> (1 syllable), <b>rabbit</b> (2 syllables)
5 ½	Blends Onset and Rime Produces a Rhyme Isolates Beginning Sound Distinguishing & Remembering Separate Sounds in a Series	<b>/sh/ /ip/, (ship), /k/ /up/, (cup)</b> Tell me a word that rhymes with <b>rug. (bug)</b> Say the first sound in <b>net (/n/)</b> . Repeat sequence of single phonemes using colored squares: <b>/s/, /t/, /f/, /sh/, /s/</b>
6	Compound Word Deletion Syllable Deletion Blending of 2- and 3- phoneme words Segments 2- and 3- phoneme words (no blends)	Say <b>sunfish</b> . Say it again, but don't say <b>sun. (fish)</b> Say <b>tulip</b> . Say it again, but don't say <b>/tu/. (lip)</b> <b>/s/ /u/ /n/ (sun), /g/ /o/ (go)</b> Say the sounds in the word <b>shot</b> as you move a chip/square for each sound <b>(/sh/ /o/ /t/)</b>
6 ½	Segments words that have up to 3- or 4- phonemes (including blends) Phoneme substitution to build new words (no blends)	Say the sounds in the word <b>black</b> as you move a chip/square for each sound <b>(/b/ /l/ /a/ /k/)</b> Change the <b>/j/</b> in <b>cage</b> to <b>/n/</b> . <b>(cane)</b>
7	Phoneme Deletion (initial and final word positions)	Say <b>seed</b> . Say it again without the <b>/d/</b> . <b>(see)</b>
8	Phoneme Deletion (initial position including blends)	Say <b>sled</b> . Now say it again without the <b>/s/</b> . <b>(led)</b>
9	Phoneme Deletion (medial and final blend positions)	Say <b>past</b> . Now say it again without the <b>/s/</b> . <b>(pat)</b>

Adapted from: Moats & Tolman, 2009; Adams, et al., 1998; Gillon, 2004; Goswami, 2000; Paulson, 2004; Rath, 2001.  
\*Catts, et al., 2005; Shaywitz, 2003.