

Phonological Awareness: Key Terms

Term	Definition	Example
Phonological Awareness	An awareness of the sounds of language; a broad skill that includes identifying and manipulating units of oral language.	
Phonemic Awareness	The ability to identify and manipulate phonemes (individual speech sounds).	
Phoneme	The smallest contrastive unit of meaningful sound in a language.	
Grapheme	The smallest contrastive unit in a writing system. A letter or letter combination that corresponds to one speech sound.	
Phonemic Segmentation	A task that requires one to segment or break apart words into their individual phonemes (sounds).	
Phonemic Blending	The ability to blend or put together individual phonemes (sounds) into words.	
Syllable	A unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants, forming the whole or part of a word.	
Onset	The initial consonant or consonant cluster of a one syllable word.	
Rime	The vowel and the consonants that follow it in a one syllable word.	
Rhyme	Words that end with similar sounds.	
Phoneme Deletion	A task that requires one to manipulate individual phonemes so that an individual phoneme (sound) is removed.	
Phoneme Identification	A task that requires one to identify individual sounds in a word.	

Alliteration	A literary device that is identified by the repeated sound of the first letter in a sentence.	
Phoneme Substitution	A task that requires one to manipulate individual phonemes so that one phoneme (sound) is substituted for another.	
Alphabetic Principle	The understanding that words are composed of letters that represent specific individual sounds.	
Word Families	Groups of words that have a common pattern, usually containing the same rime.	
Digraph	A combination of two letters that make one sound/phoneme.	
Consonant Blend	Groups of two or three consonants in a word where each consonant makes a distinct sound.	
Phonics	A method of teaching grapheme-phoneme correspondences and their use in reading and spelling.	