

Phonemic Awareness of final sounds

Phonemic awareness is an important skill – it is what we use to hear sounds in speech. Without phonemic awareness, we cannot break words down and decode them to read unfamiliar words. We also find it extremely hard to re-code words to spell them. Therefore, phonemic awareness is a critical skill in learning to read and write.

Phonemic awareness starts developing when students are emergent and continues once they are conventional. Onset Rime has been shown to be one of the most effective ways of improving phonemic awareness, especially the ability to hear initial sounds in words. For all literacy learners, hearing initial sounds in words is considered a foundational skill for phonics instruction. Most literacy learners then develop the ability to hear final sounds in words, followed by medial, without explicit instruction. They do this through their experiences with phonics instruction and other literacy and language activities.

Some literacy learners need additional activities to help them learn to hear final sounds in words. This handout provides an outline for working on onset rime across a week with a focus on final sounds. This is intended as an example only. You should continue with similar and different activities with different initial sounds and a range of word endings to help each literacy learner develop this skill. It is important to be aware that onset rime in this context is not being done with the aim of a student getting each word “correct” or the with aim of them learning to spell the word. The aim here is for literacy learners to increase their ability to hear final sounds in words.

Generally, we would do these activities once a student is hearing initial sounds reliably. We often return to working on final sounds once we have commenced phonics instruction and a student is struggling to develop the ability to hear them. We might also work on final sounds when a student can hear initial sounds reliably but doesn’t yet have the other skills needed to progress to phonics instruction. For example, they might still be building their letter skills or don’t yet have the receptive language needed for phonics instruction.

I do and We do (passive tasks)

In the week of planning you’ll notice that for the first three days of the week, the tasks are “I do” or “we do” tasks. We introduce the initial sound and the endings and interact with them. The tasks in the first three days are ones that don’t have any “right or wrong”. These are the days in which we teach the student the skill we are looking for, as we start to implement gradual release of responsibility.

You do (active tasks)

On the last two days of the plan, we hand the responsibility over to the student and introduce tasks that require the student to listen and discriminate. These are tasks that also check how the student’s phonemic awareness for final sounds is developing.

Making Up Resources

It is very helpful to have onset rime resources made up using both letters and pictures. These have the rime as one chunk – the initial sound stays the same, so that we emphasise for students that it is the final sound that is changing.

sip sit sing sat side sick sore

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You can download two sets of onset rime resources for working on final sounds below. For some students we only need to use Set 1, as this provides them with enough practice. But if you need more repetition with variety then Set 2 is available.

[Word Families Pictures and Rhymes set 1](#)

[Word Families Pictures and Rhymes set 2](#)



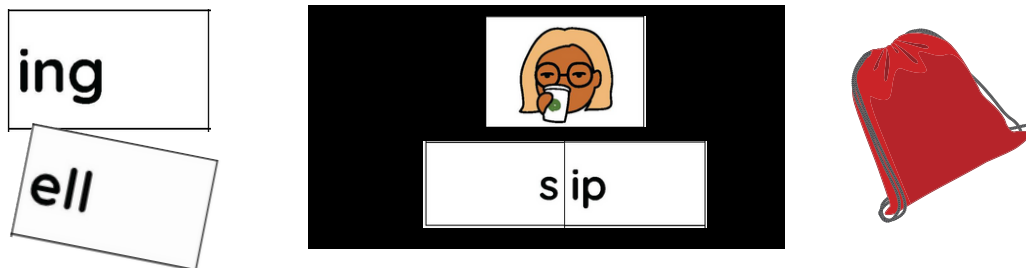
Ending Sounds Across a Week

The example below uses the initial sound -s to add ending sounds to. But you can use a similar process with any initial sounds and a range of word family endings. Just remember to do "I do" and "We do" tasks on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday to teach the student about the changing final sound - and you can start "You do" tasks on Thursday and Friday.

Monday - I do and We do

Start the week by reading a book with the initial sound -s and a range of word family endings. Introduce the s- words by reading the book "If you have an s". As you read the book, make each s- word, reinforcing what they are seeing in the book.

Put the word endings into a bag and ask students to draw out an ending. Use the ending to make the s- word and add the picture. Say the word in a sentence.

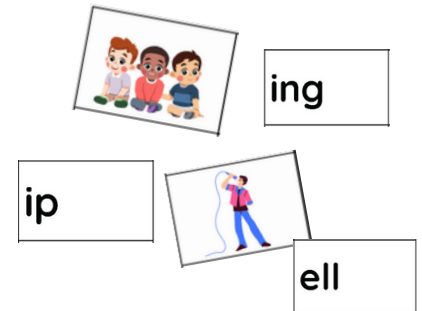
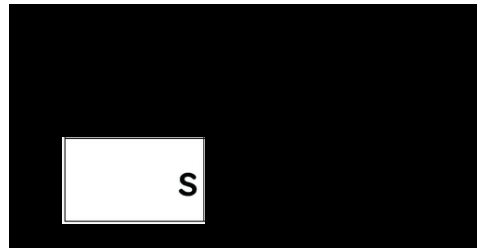


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Tuesday - I do and We do

Start by reading the book "Things I like". As you read the book, make each s- word, reinforcing what they are seeing in the book.

Offer students the s- word pictures. When they choose a picture, add the final sound to make the word for the picture. Say the word in a sentence.



Wednesday - I do and We do

Review the s- words by reading the book "Let's use S" on Monarch Reader. Again, as you read the book, make each s- word, reinforcing what they are seeing in the book.

As a second activity, ask the students to grab an ending and make a word. Then, you add the picture that goes with the word, or the student can do that if it's appropriate.

Thursday - You do

Access one of the books from earlier in the week again. You can use this to move onto the first "You do" task.

Using the book, turn to pages in a random order, talking about the s- words in the book. Ask students which ending they put after "s-" to make the word on each page. For some students you might offer them a choice of two endings and for others you might offer a choice of more.

As you offer the endings say "you're making sit. Do you want to use it or ing?" (or whichever endings you are offering the student)

Friday - You do

Use the "s-" word endings and pictures to interact with the s- words in different ways.

For example, you could put a picture at the top and ask the student to select the ending to add to "s-" to make the picture.

If appropriate, you could select an ending and put it next to s- to make a word. You could then ask the student to select the picture for that word. (You will need to read the word out to most students.)



And that ends our week on s-. Next week, pick a new initial sound with endings and go through this process again.

Onset Rime for Phonemic Awareness

Other Activity Ideas

- This is where I think we'd list the other resources that you guys make :)

And make sure your classroom has a good selection of rhyming books. There is a diverse selection of rhyming books from traditional nursery rhymes to Dr Seuss - and Aaron Blabey books are popular for their humour. There are also some early readers that your school might own which have a focus on onset rime.

nap nice nine nail nest night