

How to Set Up an Event to Educate Patrons About the Fundamentals of Reading with Accompanying Children Activities

Phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics. You've heard the terms, but what does it all mean? By setting up a series of whiteboard stations for children to progressively walkthrough and get their "map" stamped, your patrons will experience the process of learning to read, concluding with a display of books including decodables and other literacy resources. All materials are provided in a "toolkit," or you can use your own materials.

Key Terms

Phonological Awareness is a broad skill that includes an awareness of oral language parts of speech. Children that have phonological awareness skills can rhyme, count syllables and recognize words that start with the same sound.

Phonemic Awareness is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate *individual* sounds in spoken language.

Phonics instruction should reveal how letters are symbols for sounds in words. Phonics is where you crack the code.

General Materials

- Whiteboard stations with pockets in the back for handouts. (handouts provided)
- Numbered road map (provided)
- Book display (list of recommended publishers provided)

Optional

- A roll-out "road."
- Treasure chest with prizes at the end
- Teddy bear or mascot just for fun

Station #1 Comprehension through Interactive Read-Aloud (developing language skills)

Materials: *The Little Engine that Could*, a handout on PEER strategy/dialogic learning

In **dialogic reading**, the adult helps the child become the teller of the story. The adult becomes the listener, the questioner, the audience for the child. The idea is that children learn most from books when they are actively involved. In the book, *Ordinary Children, Extraordinary Teachers* by Marva Collins, she uses the children's read-aloud book, *The Little Engine That Could* to demonstrate an interactive way of reading to expand vocabulary and help children understand the message. Librarians (parents/teachers) should ask questions DURING rather than just AFTER reading aloud to children

Here's an example from *The Little Engine that Could*:

P-Prompt-Ask a question.

"What words show that the little engine is a hard worker?"

E-Evaluate-Make sure the response is correct or makes sense.

"Yes. When she was huffing and puffing, the little engine was working hard."

E-Expand-Elaborate on the answer.

"When she puffs and puffs, she helps herself work hard by saying, 'I think I can, I think I can, I think I can...'"

R-Repeat-Return to the prompt, so the child expands on their answer.

Other examples of questions:

Ask each child, "What did you learn from this story?"

Hopefully, the message of a positive attitude and determination can be summarized.

Encourage children to speak in complete sentences.

What kind of hill did the little engine have to climb?

(It was a steep hill.)

"She pulled, and she pulled. She puffed, and she puffed." We would read this aloud.

Question: What words show that the little engine was a hard worker?

Have the children repeat the words from the book.

"Pretty soon the little engine saw a big train, and she said, 'Will you help me up the hill?' 'The big train replied, 'I have work to do. I cannot help you.'"

Question: What shows that in life, we must help ourselves?

Have children talk about what is happening.

"I think I can...I think I can...I think I can..."

"I thought I could...I thought I could...I thought I could"

"And finally, she was able to climb the *steep* hill."

Question: What shows that the little engine had determination? What does the word *determination* mean?

Have children talk about the message of believing in yourself. They can also learn about past tense. Bring in vocabulary that is NOT in the book. Ask if they remember what a steep hill means.

Station #2 Rhyme Time (developing phonological awareness)

Materials: picture cards for rhyming what does and doesn't rhyme, a handout on rhyming game directions.

Show a picture of a train

“What rhymes with the word train?”

Show pictures of a baseball mitt, a pie, and a chain. Have children name the pictures and teach them that rhymes have the same sounds at the end of the word when we take off the beginning sound.

“What else rhymes with the word train?”

Have pictures of words that do and don't rhyme with the word train. Rain, cane, drain, bread, shell, and drum are examples and can be introduced slowly.

Station #3 Hearing Syllables (phonological awareness)

Materials: Wordlist for syllable game

“We are going to pretend that our lips are glued together. “Try saying these words and count how many times you heard ‘sound.’””

“Try placing your hand under your chin to feel your jaw drop for each vowel sound.”

- 1) Little
- 2) Train
- 3) Railroad
- 4) Engine
- 5) Finally
- 6) Determination

*Variations on this game include marching or clapping to syllables and eventually compound words.

Station #4 Match the Beginning Sound (phonological awareness)

Materials: Word pictures for alliteration directions.

Have children hear the word *engine*. (Hold the beginning sound.) “Which words have the SAME beginning sound.”

Show them pictures of an egg, elephant, and an Eskimo, and milk, a snake, and a nurse. Which ones match?

Station #5 Phoneme Segmentation and Matching with Letters (phonemic awareness & phonics)

Materials: letter cards or a whiteboard

“I think I can... I think I can... I think I can... Do you think we can break up the word can into all its sounds?”

Say the word slowly. /k/ /a/ /n/

“What is the first sound? Find the letter and pull it down. What is the next sound in caaaaaaan. Find the letter and pull it down.”

“What is the next sound in cannnnn? Find the letter and pull it down.”

“Take your finger under the word and follow the arrow. What word did we build?”

Station #6 Phoneme Manipulation. (Children entering kindergarten) (phonics)

Materials: letter cards or a whiteboard

“Say the word ‘can.’ Take away the /k/ and add an /r/-What’s the new word?”

“Say the word ‘ran.’ Take away the /n/ and add a /t/-What’s the new word?”

“Say the word ‘rat.’ Take away the /r/ and add an /s/-What’s the new word?”

Station #7 Decodable books

Materials: Decodable book displays and literacy resources

Once children begin to learn how to blend sounds together, they are ready for decodable books. This will be the information center about what they are and how to use them.

