



Transitioning to
KINDERGARTEN

The Get Ready to Read!
**Screening
Tool**

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The *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool

Transitioning to
KINDERGARTEN



The *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool is a 20-item early literacy screening tool for young children in the year before kindergarten. It was developed in conjunction with the National Center for Learning Disabilities by some of the country's top reading researchers.

The *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool takes about 10 minutes to administer and was designed to provide early childhood professionals and parents with a "snapshot" of where a child is on the path to developing important early literacy skills. The Screening Tool is NOT a formal assessment or a way to identify disabilities. However, it can give you important information about a child's skills that can help inform what you do in the classroom.

The *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool is typically administered in the fall of the year before a child starts kindergarten, again in the spring before kindergarten starts, and occasionally one additional time in between. However, you can get useful information about a child's skills anytime during the year before kindergarten and use that information to help inform classroom and home activities. The skill-building activities included in this section are a good starting point. There are also special activity cards for parents to use with their children in the parent section of this toolkit. **For an online version of the Screening Tool as well as additional resources please visit the *Get Ready to Read!* website at www.getreadytoread.org.**

This section includes a guide to using the *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool with the children in your care and also a guide to scoring and interpreting the Screening Tool.

The items on the *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool are based on skills that many years of research have shown to be especially important for a young child to be ready to learn to read.

These skills include:

Print knowledge

Print knowledge: a child's understanding of books, printed letters, and words. Skills include:

- Differentiating print from pictures
- Functions of print
- Book rules
- Print components
- Rules of print
- Naming letters

Linguistic awareness

Linguistic awareness: a child's understanding of how words and language works. Skills include:

- Active listening
- Vocabulary
- Rhyming words
- Segmenting sentences
- Segmenting words
- Phonemic awareness

Emergent writing

Emergent writing: a child's first efforts to create and use print in a meaningful way. Skills include:

- Scribbling
- Drawing
- Copying
- Printing letters
- Printing name
- Invented spelling



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

HOW TO USE THE SCREENING TOOL

1. Look through the screening tool.

It helps to read through the screening tool right before you begin screening the children to familiarize yourself with the tool.

2. Find a quiet place to work with one child at a time.

Find a place where you will be able to sit next to, not across from, the child at a table, on a couch or on the floor. It helps to have a flat surface like a small table in front of you on which you can show the screening items. The child does not have to be removed from the classroom or home setting. You can use a quiet corner where there won't be a lot of distractions. You will need about 10 minutes to complete the screening with a child.

3. Plan ahead to make the screening process run smoothly.

If you are in a classroom, family child care home or other group setting, you may want to tell the children who will be screened that they are all going to have a chance to do this special activity. Select an easy going, interested child to screen first or ask for volunteers. Be encouraging. Approach the child individually and take him or her to the screening area.

4. Prepare the screening area and gather the materials that you will need:

The screening tool, a separate answer sheet labeled with the child's name, and a pencil or pen.

5. Complete the information about the child at the top of the answer sheet.

Be sure that you also fill in the date and which screening this will be for the child (e.g., first, second).

6. Place the screening booklet directly in front of the child.

The child should have a straight and direct view of the screening tool items. Be sure to only show the child one page at a time, by folding the booklet back, as you administer the 20 items of the screening tool.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

HOW TO USE THE SCREENING TOOL

7. Start with the sample item.

The purpose of the sample item is to make sure that the child understands what to do. When you are ready to begin the screening with a child, you will open the booklet and fold the page back to show just the sample item. Place the booklet directly in front of the child and put the copy of the answer sheet in front of you. First, introduce the activity to the child:

Let's look at some pictures. [Point to the pictures in the sample item.] I will ask you a question about them and you put your finger on the picture that is the best answer to the question. Let's try one.

Then, read aloud the sample item using the exact words that are in the screening tool.

8. On the sample item you may give hints and feedback to make sure that the child understands the instructions.

You may not do this on the 20 items in the tool. Give the child general praise after he or she completes the sample item. Say something like this:

You've got the idea! Now I am going to ask you some more questions. Each time I ask a question, you choose the picture that is the best answer. Just look carefully at the pictures and pick the one you think is right.

Once the child has selected an answer on each item, mark the child's choice directly on the answer sheet by circling the answer that the child has chosen.

9. Then, proceed with the 20 items of the screening tool, one by one, in the order in which they appear in the manual.

Ask each question exactly how it is worded in the screening tool. Be sure to show the child just one item at a time by folding the page back. Circle the answer that the child has chosen for each item as soon as the child selects it. Do not worry at this time about checking to see if it is the correct answer.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

HOW TO SCORE THE SCREENING TOOL

- 1. As you are administering the tool, circle the child's answer for each item.**

You should NOT decide whether the answer is correct or incorrect at this point because you will want to move on to the next question.

- 2. When you are ready to score a child's answer sheet, you will need BOTH the answer sheet that you used with the child and the answer sheet with the correct answers shaded to use as an "answer key."**

This "answer key" can be found at tinyurl.com/grtr-key.

- 3. Place the answer sheet and the "answer key" from the manual side by side on the table in front of you.**

- 4. Begin with Item 1—remember not to score the Item Sample!**

For each question, compare the child's answer with the answer that is shaded on the "answer key." If the child's answer is correct, place a "1" in the lower right corner of that box. If the child's answer is not correct, place a "0" (zero) in the lower right corner of that box..

- 5. Count the number of correct answers by counting only the "1's" that you wrote.**

Remember...do not count the sample!

- 6. Count the answers again to double-check your counting.**

- 7. When you are sure of the score, write the total number of correct answers in the box at the bottom of the page.**

Get Ready to Read! Screening Tool

Child Booklet

Answer Sheet

Duplicate the answer sheet for each screening.

Child's Name: _____

male female

Child's Age: years _____ months _____





Date: month _____ day _____ year _____

Person Administering Screening: _____





parent teacher

First Screening Second Screening Third Screening



Item Sample These pictures are: boy, fish, apple, car. Which one is car? Find car. If child answers incorrectly: That was a good try, but this is car. Let's try again. Which one is car?

Item 1 These are pictures of a book. Find the one that shows the back of the book.

Item 2 Find the picture that has letters in it.

7 8 3	
	A B C





Item 3 Find the picture that has letters in it.

3 0 2	o o y b
BD	57

Item 4 Find the picture that has a word in it.

Item 5 These are pictures of a cereal box. Find the one that tells you the name of the cereal.

Item 6 Find the letter R.

R	B
M	P

Item 7 Find the letter G.

F	G
R	T

Item 8 Find the letter that makes a sss sound.

G	A
S	R

Item 9 Find the letter that makes a tuh sound.

H	E
C	T

Item 10 Find the letter that makes a buh sound.

O	L
B	P

Item 11 Some children wrote the letter F. Find the one that is written the best.

F	F
F	F





Item 12 Some children wrote their names. Find the one that is written the best.

Jony	Jony
Jony	Jony





Item 13 Some children wrote stories. Find the longest story.

One day a girl found a box with a picture of a girl and a boy. She was very happy and she had some fun.	One day a girl found a box with a picture of a girl and a boy. She was very happy and she had some fun.
One day a girl found a box with a picture of a girl and a boy. She was very happy and she had some fun.	One day a girl found a box with a picture of a girl and a boy. She was very happy and she had some fun.





Item 14 These pictures are: ball, skate, apple, star. Find the one that starts with the buh sound.





Item 15 These pictures are: dog, kite, fan, snake. Find the one that starts with the duh sound.





Item 16 This is ball, and these pictures are: zebra, shoe, wall, leaf. Does ball sound like zebra, shoe, wall, or leaf? Find the one that rhymes with ball.





Item 17 These pictures are: seashell, racket, shoe, chimney. Find what you get when you put SEA and SHELL together. Find sea (pause) shell.





Item 18 These pictures are: penguin, moon, carrot, dragon. Find what you get when you put PEN and GUIN together. Find pen (pause) guin.

Item 19 These pictures are: mouse, cloud, cow, moon. Find what you get when you put MMM and OON together. Find mmm (pause) oon.

Item 20 These pictures are: sun, key, frog, mop. Find turkey without tur.

Instructions: This answer sheet shows a reduced version of each question on the screening tool. Read each question to the child. Mark on this answer sheet the child's answer. For example, if the child points to the car in response to the sample question, then make a pencil mark on the car on this sheet. When the child has finished taking the screening tool, there should be a mark indicating the child's answer on each of the 20 questions.

The correct answers to the *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool can be found on page 30 of the Early Literacy Manual.

Add up the number of correct responses made by the child. (Don't count the sample question.) The total number correct is the child's score. Enter that number in the box below:

Number correct:

Get Ready to Read! is an early literacy program designed to help early education and child care professionals and parents ensure that young children are equipped with the fundamental skills necessary for learning to read. *Get Ready to Read!* is an early intervention program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities.

For more information about *Get Ready to Read!*, write to:

Pearson Early Learning
1185 Avenue of the Americas
26th Floor
New York, New York 10036

or call 1-800-552-2259

www.PearsonEarlyLearning.com

The development of the screening tool was made possible by grants to the National Center for Learning Disabilities by the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation, the Ford Motor Company Fund, the Cisco Foundation, and ExxonMobil Foundation.

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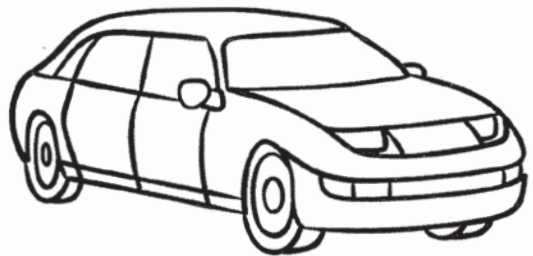
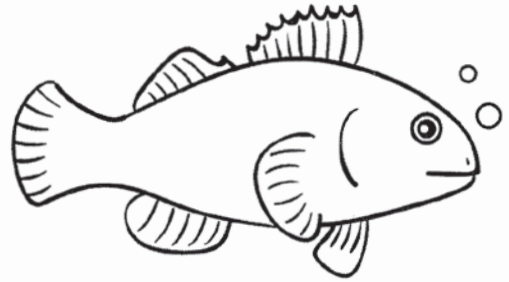
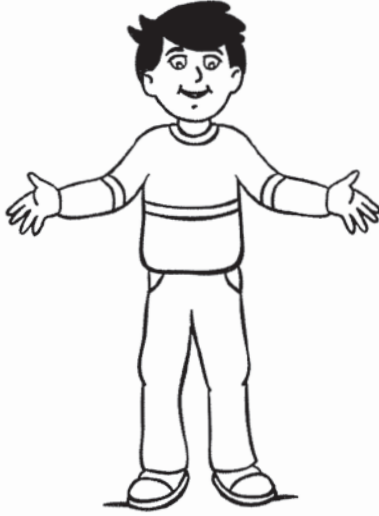
The content in this booklet is meant to provide children with the opportunity to demonstrate and practice skills that contribute to early literacy. The information is *not* intended to diagnose learning disabilities or to offer or replace any educational, psychological, or medical information, treatment, or professional advice. A qualified professional should be sought if a care provider or parent believes a child has some difficulties that warrant professional or medical attention.



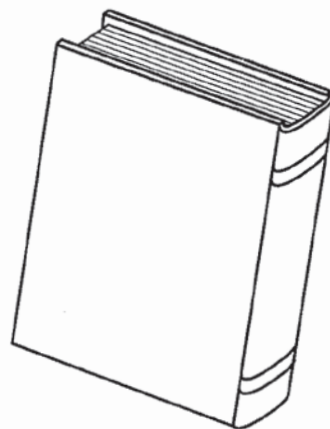
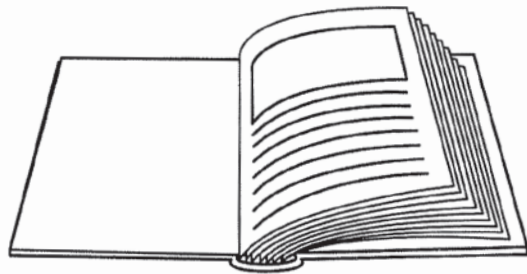
Printed in the United States of America
ISBN 0-201-37777-2

Sample: These pictures are: boy, fish, apple, car. Which one is car? Find car.

If child answers incorrectly: That was a good try, but this is car. Let's try again. Which one is car?

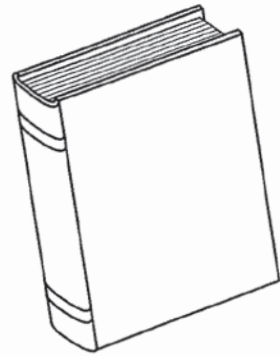


Item 1: These are pictures of a book. Find the one that shows the back of the book.



Item 2: Find the picture that has letters in it.

7 8 3



A B C

Item 3: Find the picture that has letters in it.

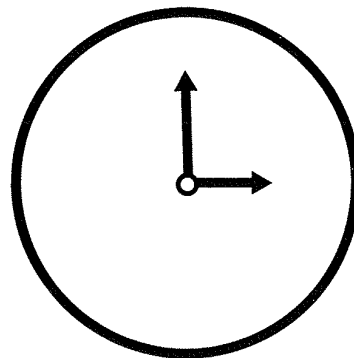
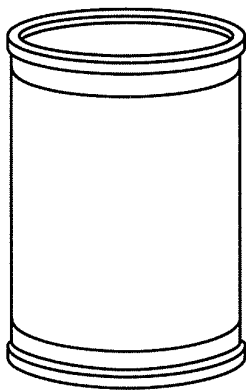
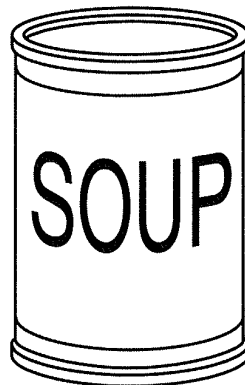
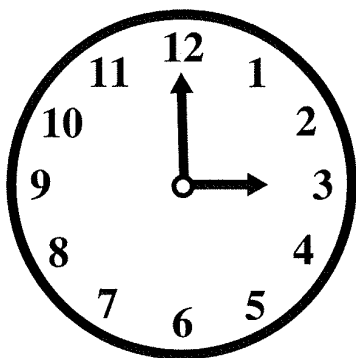
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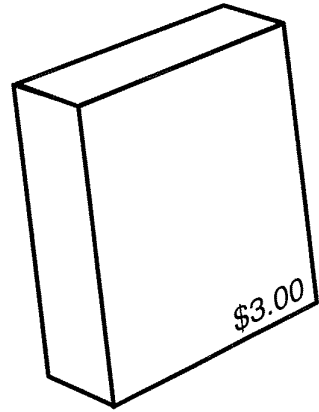
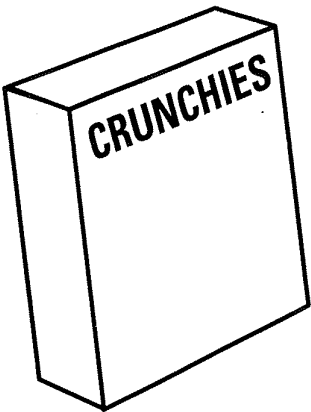
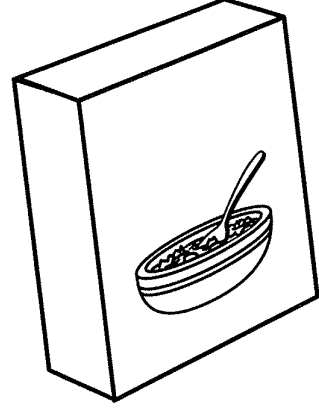
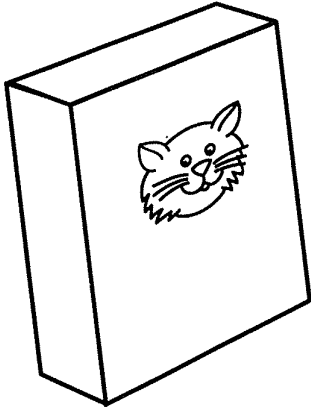
BD

57

Item 4: Find the picture that has a word in it.



Item 5: These are pictures of a cereal box. Find the one that tells you the name of the cereal.



Item 6: Find the letter R.

R

B

M

P

Item 7: Find the letter G.

F

G

R

T

Item 8: Find the letter that makes a sss sound.

G

A

S

R

Item 9: Find the letter that makes a *tuh* sound.

H

E

C

T

Item 10: Find the letter that makes a *buh* sound.

O

L

B

P

Item 11: Some children wrote the letter F. Find the one that is written the best.



Item 12: Some children wrote their names. Find the one that is written the best.

Jenny

Jenny

Jenny

Jenny

Item 13: Some children wrote stories. Find the longest story.

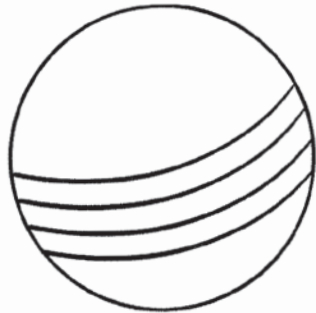
Sara went
on a picnic.

One day a girl named
Sara went on a picnic.
She brought lots of
good food to eat.
The sun was shining
and the food was good.

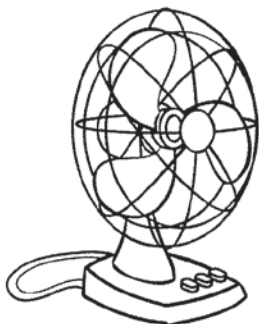
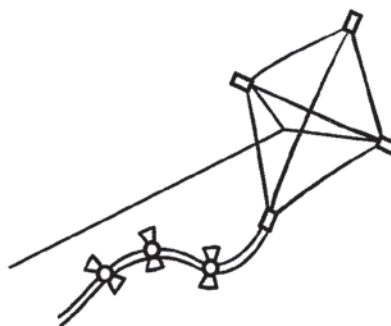
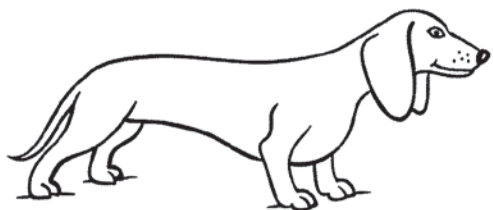
One sunny day, a
girl named Sara went
on a picnic and ate
some good food.

One day a
girl named
Sara went
on a picnic.

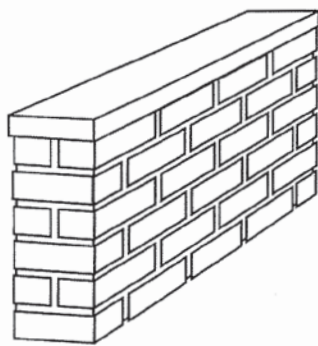
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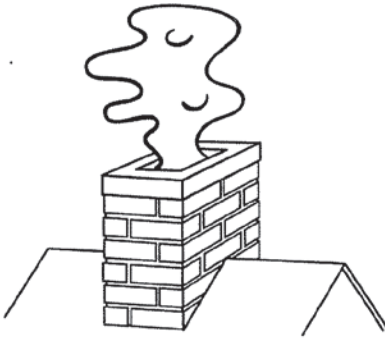
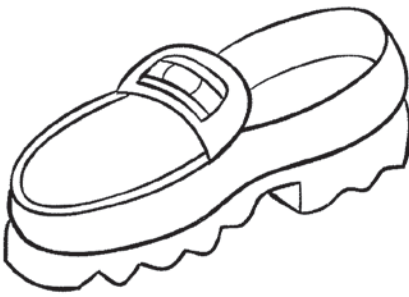
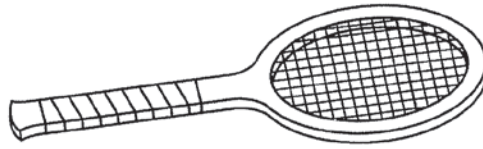
Item 15: These pictures are: dog, kite, fan, snake. Find the one that starts with the *duh* sound.



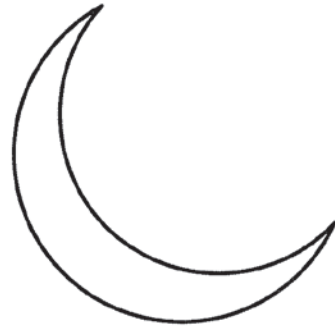
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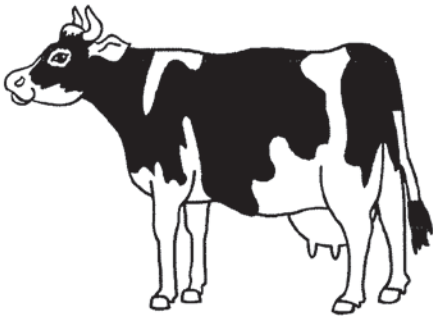
Item 17: These pictures are: seashell, racket, shoe, chimney. Find what you get when you put SEA and SHELL together. Find sea (pause) shell.



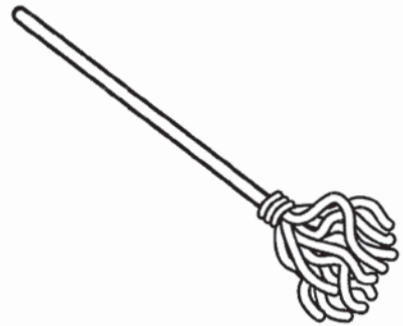
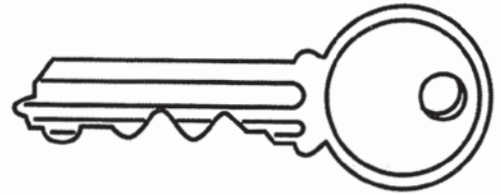
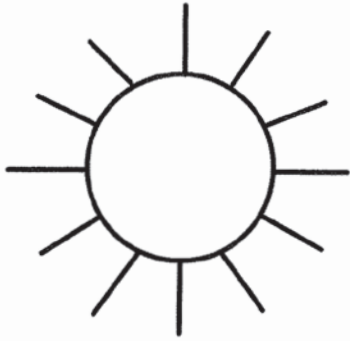
Item 18: These pictures are: penguin, moon, carrot, dragon. Find what you get when you put PEN and GUIN together. Find pen (pause) guin.



Item 19: These pictures are: mouse, cloud, cow, moon. Find what you get when you put MMM and OON together. Find mmm (pause) oon.



Item 20: These pictures are: sun, key, frog, mop. Find turkey without *tur*.



Find the *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool and additional activities and resources online at Family Education Network's website, www.FamilyEducation.com. For more information about the *Get Ready to Read!* Initiative or Screening Tool, visit www.getreadytoread.org.

About the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

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National Center for Learning Disabilities

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Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT THIS CHILD

Child's Name _____ **Date of Birth** __/__/__

Get Ready to Read! Screening #1

Date: _____

Total number correct: _____ out of 20

General Observations:

Follow-Up Activities

Print Knowledge Skills (books, printed letters and words):

Emergent Writing Skills (first efforts to create and use print in a meaningful way):

Linguistic Awareness (first efforts to create and use print in a meaningful way):

Some activities that really worked with this child:

Something different I could try with this child:



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT THIS CHILD

Child's Name _____ **Date of Birth** __/__/__

Get Ready to Read! Screening #2

Date: _____

Total number correct: _____ out of 20

General Observations:

Follow-Up Activities

Print Knowledge Skills (books, printed letters and words):

Emergent Writing Skills (first efforts to create and use print in a meaningful way):

Linguistic Awareness (first efforts to create and use print in a meaningful way):

Some activities that really worked with this child:

Something different I could try with this child:



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT THIS CHILD

Child's Name _____ **Date of Birth** __/__/__

Get Ready to Read! Screening #3

Date: _____

Total number correct: _____ out of 20

General Observations:

Follow-Up Activities

Print Knowledge Skills (books, printed letters and words):

Emergent Writing Skills (first efforts to create and use print in a meaningful way):

Linguistic Awareness (first efforts to create and use print in a meaningful way):

Some activities that really worked with this child:

Something different I could try with this child:




Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

The following pages contain the *Get Ready to Read!* skill-building activities. These activities are engaging, child-friendly early literacy activities for preschoolers. You can use the child’s score on the screening tool to help you decide whether to start with “**beginning**” activities, “**making progress**” activities, or “**ready to read**” activities, or you can just use your knowledge of the child’s skills.

The activities are organized by skill domain and level. Each activity also states which specific skill the activity addresses. For more information about the skill domains, please see the information about the *Get Ready to Read!* Screening Tool at the beginning of this section. Here is what you will find:

	“BEGINNING” ACTIVITIES	“MAKING PROGRESS” ACTIVITIES	“READY TO READ” ACTIVITIES
 <p>Learning About Print (PRINT KNOWLEDGE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a Menu • My Favorite Book • My Name Has Letters • The Reading Puppet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a Word • Fishing for Letters • Name Memory • Word Puzzles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter Memory • My Word Box • Pick a Letter • Word Jump
 <p>Beginning Writing (EMERGENT WRITING)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw to the Music • Draw Your Day • I Can Write Letters! • Tell Me About Your Picture • Walk on a Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Your Name • Clay Letters • Copy a Card • Sequence Story • Trace Your Name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guess What’s Inside • Send a Message
 <p>Oral Skills: Talking And Listening (LINGUISTIC AWARENESS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an Expert Listener • Find the Rhymes • How Many Words? • Match That Sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a Word • Find the Compound Words • Jump for a Rhyme • Mystery Sound • Rhyme-Out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Sound Sort • Stretched-out Story • What Word is Left?



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Beginning



Making a Menu *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- paper
- glue stick
- pictures of food cut out from magazines
- crayons or markers
- names of different foods clearly written on index cards

What You Do:

1. Discuss with the children the purpose and use of a menu.
2. Choose a meal for the children to make menus.
3. Lay out the pictures of food.
4. Have the child or children pick out a few pictures. Discuss good choices and favorites.
5. Write "MENU" at the top of each page. Help children who are ready write the word on their own.
6. Have the children glue the pictures of the selected foods down the left side of the paper.
7. Help children find the names of the selected foods. They can either glue the name next to the food or copy it directly onto the paper.
8. Ask each child to read the menu back to you or share it with a friend.

Why?

Children become familiar with one of the many functions of print.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Beginning



My Favorite Book *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- construction paper
- pictures cut from magazines and newspapers
- markers
- glue
- stapler

What You Do:

1. Fold two sheets of construction paper and staple them along the crease to make a book.
2. Have the child pick a title for the book, such as "My Favorite Toys," "My Favorite Animals" or "My Favorite Foods." Write the title and the child's name on the front of the book.
3. Have the child pick pictures that have to do with the chosen title and glue them into the book.
4. Encourage the children to share their books with each other.

Why?

Children learn that pictures and print carry messages and have many uses. Children also learn how books work.



Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Beginning



My Name Has Letters *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- plastic 3-D letter
- paper
- markers
- shallow basket

What You Do:

1. Using the plastic letters, spell the child's name on the paper.
2. Trace the letters with the marker so that the child's name is written on the paper. Color in the letters all the same color.
3. Place the plastic letters that are in the child's name in the shallow basket.
4. Have the child pick letters from the basket and match them, one by one, to the corresponding letters on the paper. Continue until the child's name is spelled.

Why?

The child learns that his or her name is made up of letters and what those letters look like.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Beginning



The Reading Puppet *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- puppet or stuffed animal
- big book on stand

What You Do:

1. Place the book upside-down on the stand.
2. Bring out the puppet and introduce it to the children. Explain that the puppet is going to read the book, but will need some help. Encourage the children to interact with the puppet.
3. Begin the activity by having the puppet look for the title, author and illustrator of the book. Since the book is upside-down, the puppet should ask for help from the children. For example, "I want to read this book, but first I need to tell you the title. I can't find it! The book is upside down. There's the title. What does 'title' mean?"
4. Continue the activity with the puppet asking for the children's help reading the book. For example. "What should I do first if I want to read the book?" "Where should I start reading?" "Help me turn the page." "Can you help me find the picture of ____?"

Why?

Children become aware of book rules.

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Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Making Progress



Find a Word *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- pictures of familiar items cut from magazines and advertisements
(Some pictures should include print, and some should be simply a picture without any print.)
- scissors • glue • index cards

What You Do:

1. In advance, glue each picture onto an index card.
2. Give each child two cards, one that has a word or words on it and one that is just a picture.
3. Say, "Letters can go together to make words. Look for letters and words on your cards. Hold up your card that has a word on it."
4. Choose a child to bring his or her card to you and place it where it can be seen by all the children. Challenge the children to tell you what word they see in the picture.
5. Repeat with a few cards. Reinforce the purpose of the print in each picture. For example, say, "This cereal box has a word on it that tells us the cereal's name."

Why?

Children learn to differentiate print from pictures and learn one of the purposes of print.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Making Progress



Fishing for Letters *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- construction paper
- strings
- magnet
- stick or wooden dowel
- scissors
- marker
- large paper clips

What You Do:

1. Cut out 26 fish shapes from the construction paper.
2. Have children decorate one side of each fish.
3. On the other side of each fish, write a letter of the alphabet.
4. Slide a paper clip onto each fish's tail.
5. To make the "fishing rod," tie the string to the end of the dowel or stick. Tie the magnet to the other end of the string.
6. Scatter the fish on the floor with the letter side down.
7. Have the children try to "catch" a fish with the fishing rod and say the name of the letter on that fish.
8. For a more advanced version of the game, children can also say the letter's sound or a word that starts with that sound.

Why?

Children become aware of letter shapes, names and sounds.



Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Making Progress



Name Memory *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- same-colored index cards
- markers

What You Do:

1. Make the game cards: Using only the letters in the child's name, write each letter on two cards so that you have several pairs of cards.
2. Shuffle the cards and spread them out face down.
3. Ask the child to turn over any two cards. If the cards match, help the child name the letter. The child then keeps the cards. If the cards do not match, the child turns the cards back over and tries again.
4. Play continues until all matches have been made.
5. Help the child put the letters in order to spell his or her name.

Why?

The child will become familiar with the names and shapes of the letters in his or her name.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Making Progress



Word Puzzles *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- several empty cartons of foods familiar to your child (e.g., cereals, milk, pasta)
- plastic sandwich bags

What You Do:

1. Cut the carton front into 4-5 puzzle-shaped pieces.
2. Place each puzzle into a bag. If possible, have an intact, identical carton front for the children to see as a model.
3. Have the children put the puzzle together. Ask them to point out the food words on the puzzle and say them out loud.

Why?

Children become aware of print in our everyday world and learn to differentiate print from pictures.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Ready to Read



Letter Memory *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- same-colored index cards
- markers

What You Do:

1. Make the game cards: Choose 6 letters that the children have been learning or need to practice. Write each letter on two cards so that you have 6 pairs of cards.
2. Shuffle the cards and place them face down.
3. Ask a child to turn over two cards. If the cards match, the child names the letter and keeps the cards. If the cards do not match, the child turns the cards back over and tries again.
4. Play continues until all matches have been made.

Why?

Children becomes familiar with the names and shapes of the letters of the alphabet.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Ready to Read



My Word Box *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- small box
- index cards
- magnet
- marker

What You Do:

1. Label each box with a child's name
2. Have each child decorate his or her box.
3. Ask children to tell you 3 or 4 of their favorite words or words that are important to them.
4. Write these words on index cards and have the children keep the special words in his or her own box. Repeat steps 3 and 4 every few days.
5. Children can include pictures on the cards that illustrate some of the words.
6. Every few days, ask children to "read" their cards to you and tell you about the words.

Why?

Children begin to recognize words that are important to them.



Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Ready to Read



Pick a Letter *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- brown paper bags
- plastic letters

What You Do:

1. Place 10 letters in the bags.
2. Model the activity by closing your eyes and picking a letter. As you feel the letter, describe what letter you think you've picked. Open your eyes and confirm your answer with the children.
3. Have a child close his or her eyes and pick out a letter.
4. Ask the child, "What letter do you think it is?" If the child is having trouble identifying the letter, give clues.

Variation

Hide the letters in a bin of sand or rice. Have the child match the letter that he or she finds to words you have printed on a piece of paper.

Why?

Children learn about letter shapes and letter names.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Learning About Print: Ready to Read



Word Jump *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- large index cards (*or paper*)
- marker
- list of simple words (*see list below*)

What You Do:

1. Choose eight words that the children are learning.
2. Write each word in large print in lowercase letters on an index card.
3. Spread the words out on the floor.
4. Say a word, and ask a child to jump to that word and read it.
5. Have other children take turns jumping to words that you say.

Why?

Children will begin to recognize simple words.

Sample Simple Words:

And, the, in, is, on, you, cat, it, my, we, me, with

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Beginning



Draw to the Music *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- music with different styles and tempos
- paper
- crayons

What You Do:

1. Give each child paper and crayons. You can use construction paper for individual children, or mural paper on the wall or floor for a whole group.
2. Tell the children to draw when the music is on and stop drawing when the music is off.
3. Turn on the music.
4. Let the children draw for a few minutes. Turn the music off and remind the children to stop drawing.
5. Repeat several times, changing the music after a few minutes to a different style or tempo.

Why?

Children learn to connect their motor actions with the marks they make on the paper. They also gain practice controlling a crayon.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Beginning



Draw Your Day *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- a variety of drawing materials (*crayons, markers, pencils*)
- paper

What You Do:

1. As the children watch you, write at the top of the paper, "Today in school, I will ... " or "Today at home, we will "
2. Ask the children to finish the sentence with a drawing of something that will happen that day in school or at home.

Why?

Children learn that they can draw a picture can tell a story or describe an event.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Beginning



I Can Write Letters! *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- sandpaper
- baking sheet with sand spread out on it
- large squares of carpet

What You Do:

1. Have the children stand up.
2. With your back to them, "write" the letter that you are teaching them in the air in front of you with your index finger. This should be done in a large and exaggerated way. Make sure that the children can see what you are doing. Say the name of the letter as you "write" it in the air. Do this several times along with the children.
3. Children should then be encouraged to experiment with "writing" the letter with their index fingers on sandpaper, in sand on a baking sheet and on carpet. Make sure to observe the children's attempts and help them as necessary.

Why?

Children develop sensitivity to the muscle movements involved in writing letter shapes, which will help them to learn how letters are formed.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Beginning



Tell Me About Your Picture *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- drawing paper
- crayons
- black marker

What You Do:

1. Give the children drawing paper and crayons. Tell them to draw a picture of an activity that they have done recently. For example, they can draw about something they did in school or at home.
2. Ask each child, one at a time, to describe to you what they have drawn. Write, in clear print with the black marker, what each child says on his or her picture, and then read it back to the child.

Why?

Children learn that pictures and words can be used to describe experiences in their lives.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Beginning



Walk on a Letter *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- masking tape

What You Do:

1. Make a large letter on the floor with the masking tape.
2. Tell the children the name of the letter and a word that begins with that letter.
3. Have the children walk or jump on the masking tape in the shape of the letter. They can say the name of the letter as they do it.
4. Tell the children a few other words that start with the letter. Ask them if they can think of more.

Why?

Children become familiar with the names and shapes of the letters of the alphabet.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Making Progress



Build Your Name *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- uppercase and lowercase plastic letters
- bag or cloth sack
- paper
- pencil or crayons

What You Do:

1. Write a child's name at the top of the paper in large letters, using an uppercase letter for the first letter in the child's name, followed by lowercase letters.
2. Place the plastic letters that are in the child's name into the bag. Also include one or two letters that are not part of the child's name.
3. Tell the child to pick a letter out of the bag.
4. Ask the child, "What is the name of the letter that you picked? Look at your name. Is this letter in your name?"
5. Ask the child to place the plastic letter under the written letter, and continue until the child has picked all of the letters in his or her name.
6. When the child's name is complete, ask the child to print it out on the paper.

Why?

Children become familiar with the letters in their name.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Making Progress



Clay Letters *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- modeling clay or play-dough
- paper and pencil

What You Do:

1. Print a few letters of the alphabet on the paper, making them at least 6 inches tall.
2. Roll lumps of clay or dough into long, thin strips.
3. Help the children form the strips of clay into letters. At first, children can make the letter directly on the written model. They can progress to forming the clay below the written letter, using it as a guide.

Why?

Children become familiar with the shape of the letters and practice forming them independently.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Making Progress



Copy a Card *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- paper
- crayons
- 12 index cards, each with a different figure on one side (*simple shape, squiggly line, letter*)

What You Do:

1. With several children seated in a small group, give each child a piece of paper and a crayon. Children who can should write their names on their paper.
2. Place the index cards face down in a pile.
3. Have the children take turns picking a card from the pile. The child who picks the card shows it to the others and everyone draws that figure on their paper.
4. After all of the cards have been picked, children can color and decorate their pictures.

Why?

Children practice the fine motor skills that will help them to form letters on their own.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Making Progress



Sequence Story *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- crayons
- black marker
- stapler
- 3 pieces of drawing paper for each child

What You Do:

1. Tell the children about something you've done recently, like shopping or making dinner. On large paper, draw three simple pictures showing the beginning, middle and end of the experience. Use those pictures to tell the story again.
2. Help the children think of a recent experience. Talk with them about the beginning, the middle and the end.
3. Have each child draw three pictures, describing the beginning, middle and end of the experience. Number them in the correct order.
4. Ask the children, either individually or in small groups, to tell you about their pictures in sequence. Write the description for each picture on that picture.
5. Help the children put the pictures in order. Staple the pages together to make a "book" that the children can use to retell the experience.

Why?

Children learn to use words and pictures to communicate an experience. They also learn about the importance of sequence in a story.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Making Progress



Trace Your Name *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- marker
- chalk
- construction paper or sandpaper, at least 8 1/2" x 11" in size

What You Do:

1. With the marker, write the child's name in large letters on the paper. Use an uppercase letter for the first letter of the name, and lowercase for the rest of the letters.
2. First, have the child use a finger to trace each letter of his or her name on the paper. Help the child say the name of each letter out loud as it is traced.
3. Give chalk to the child, and have the child trace the letters with the chalk, saying the name of each letter out loud as it is traced. If necessary, begin by holding and guiding the child's hand as he or she holds the chalk.
4. Encourage the child to trace the letters in order, but be accepting of all attempts..

Why?

The child practices writing and saying the names of the letters in his or her name.



Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Ready to Read



Guess What's Inside *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- large box
- markers
- lightly colored plain wrapping paper
- item familiar to the children that will fit inside the box and can be named with one word

What You Do:

1. Place the item in the box.
2. Wrap the box with the wrapping paper.
3. Tell the children that there is something in the box, and that they should write on the box what they think is inside. Place the wrapped box on a table with some markers next to it.
4. Ask each child to write his or her name on the wrapping paper and try to write a guess as to what is inside. All attempts at writing a word should be encouraged.
5. To help, ask the children to say the word out loud that they want to write. Help them listen for the sounds in that word and write the letters that make those sounds.
6. Later, open the box and show what is inside. The box can be reused another day with new paper on it.

Why?

Children learn that writing has a purpose, and engage in beginning attempts at writing on their own.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Beginning Writing: Ready to Read



Send a Message *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- shoebox decorated as a mailbox with slot cut in the top
- paper and pencil or crayons

What You Do:

1. Model writing a short message to the children in order to introduce the activity. The message can include both text and pictures that represent text.
2. Tell the children that they can each write messages to you and put them in the mailbox. The children can use scribbles, letters, and pictures for their message.
3. Write messages back to each child and leave them in their cubby holes or their own "mailboxes."

Why?

Children practice using written language and drawings to communicate a message.



Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Beginning



Be an Expert Listener *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- CD with common sounds recorded on it
- CD player

What You Do:

1. Introduce the activity by talking to the children about the different sounds that they hear in the world around them. Have them think of a few sounds that they recall hearing.
2. Encourage the children to close their eyes and listen carefully to the sounds that they hear around them. Invite them to name the sounds that they hear.
3. Try this activity with sounds recorded on a CD or smart phone or on a "listening walk" outside.

Why?

Children learn to listen carefully for sounds. This helps them to be more active listeners to the sounds in language.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Beginning



Find the Rhymes *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- pictures of rhyming word pairs

What You Do:

1. Begin with any two pairs of pictures displaying rhyming words.
2. Spread the pictures out on the table or floor.
3. Explain to the children that words that rhyme sound the same at the end. Give a few examples, such as fat/rat or sing/ring.
4. Let the children choose one of the pictures. Find the picture that rhymes with the chosen picture and ask the children to determine if the words rhyme. Say the words together to emphasize the rhyming parts of the words. Do the same with the other rhyming pair.
5. Spread out more pictures and have the children find the rhyming pairs.

Why?

Children begin to recognize that some words rhyme because they share common sounds.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Beginning



How Many Words? *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- several plastic counters or other small game pieces

What You Do:

1. Give each child a pile of counters. Tell the children that sentences are made up of words, and that you are going to help them count the words in some sentences.
2. Say a simple sentence.
3. Help the children put down a counter for each word in the sentence.
4. Say the sentence again, having the children touch a counter for each word that they hear.
5. Continue with a few more sentences, using longer sentences when the children are ready.

Why?

Children learn that sentences are made up of words. They also practice listening for smaller segments of language.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Beginning



Match That Sound *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- 8-10 empty solid-color containers with tops
- noisemakers: e.g., salt, beads, water, rice, metal keys, chalk, pebbles

What You Do:

1. Fill two containers with the same item, e.g., a key.
Do this for a total of eight containers (four pairs).
2. Model the activity for the children: Shake one container and describe what it sounds like.
Shake another container and describe it.
3. Repeat until you find two containers that make the same sound.
Describe the sound to the children.
4. Invite the children to try the activity. Encourage them to describe what they hear as they shake the containers.

Why?

Children learn to listen carefully for sounds. This helps them to be more active listeners to the sounds in language.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Making Progress



Be a Word *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- the first line of a nursery rhyme, poem or song that the children know very well
- a ball or beanbag

What You Do:

1. Have the children stand in a line from left to right.
2. From left to right, have each child say one word of the line of the rhyme or poem. They pass the ball or beanbag from child to child as each speaks.

Variation:

For a challenge, write the line from the rhyme or poem on a sentence strip. Cut the strip into words and give each child the word that he or she will say to hold during the activity for the other children to see.

Why?

Children become aware that sentences can be divided into words.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Making Progress



Find the Compound Words *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- list of compound words
- pictures of items that illustrate compound words and their parts
(for example, a picture of a cup and a picture of a cake for "cupcake")

What You Do:

1. Tell the children that some words are made up of two shorter words put together and that you are going to use some of those words to play a word game.
2. Say a compound word and ask them to repeat it. For instance, say, "Say cupcake," and let them repeat the word.
3. Help the children to select the pictures that show the parts of the word, such as "cup" and "cake."
4. Continue with several other words on the list below.

Word List:

Cowboy, baseball, jellyfish, grasshopper, cupcake, doorbell, raincoat, bedroom, football, starfish, haircut, sailboat

Why?

Children learn to listen for the smaller segments of language that are contained in words.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Making Progress



Jump for a Rhyme *Get Ready to Read!*SM

What You Need:

- rhyming dictionary such as *The Scholastic Rhyming Dictionary* (Scholastic, Inc., 1994) or online at www.rhymezone.com
- list of pairs of rhyming words • list of pairs of non-rhyming words

What You Do:

1. Model the activity for the children. Say a pair of words that rhyme. For example, say, "Cat-bat. The end of those words sounds the same-the words rhyme. I'm going to jump for a rhyme!"
2. Say a pair of words that do not rhyme. Tell the children, "Those words don't rhyme, so I'll just sit down."
3. Play the game with the children, beginning with several pairs that rhyme, and then add in some pairs that don't rhyme.

Variation:

To adjust level of activity, begin with one-syllable words and progress to two- and three-syllable words.

Why?

Children become aware of rhymes and learn to identify them.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Making Progress



Mystery Sound *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- index cards
- glue or tape
- yarn
- hole punch
- pictures of items familiar to the children; a few items should begin with the same sound

What You Do:

1. Make picture necklaces: Glue a picture on each index card. Punch holes in the cards and put the yarn through the holes to make necklaces. Give one to each child.
2. Choose a beginning sound, but don't tell the children what it is. Choose the children wearing pictures that begin with only that sound to stand in front of the group.
3. Tell the children that their jobs are to figure out what the mystery beginning sound is.
4. Point to each picture that a standing child is wearing and guide the group in naming the pictures, emphasizing the first sounds. Have them figure out the "mystery" first sound.

Why?

Children become aware that words are made up of sounds and learn to isolate the first sound in a word.

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Making Progress



Rhyme-Out *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- rhyming words

What You Do:

1. Working with one child or in a small group, start with a simple word with a lot of rhyming possibilities (hat, tall, sing, bell).
2. Take turns saying a word that rhymes with the first word until you run out of rhymes.
3. For more advanced students, make a list of the rhyming words on chart paper as they are said.

Why?

Children learn to listen for and generate rhymes.



Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Ready to Read



First Sound Sort *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- 3 bins
- paper bag
- several objects that begin with each of three different letter sounds

What You Do:

1. Label the outside of each bin with one of the three chosen letter sounds.
2. Show the bins to the children. Review the names and sounds of the three letters.
3. Place all of the objects in a bag.
4. Have the children take turns picking one object out of the bag. Help the children name what they have chosen and say the first sound of each object's name.
5. Tell the children to put the object in the bin that is labeled with the first sound of the object's name.
6. Repeat until all of the objects have been sorted into the appropriate bins.
7. Take a few minutes at the end of this activity to go through each bin with the children, naming each object while emphasizing its first sound.

Why?

Children learn to listen for and isolate the first sound of a word. Children also learn that a letter sound can appear in many different words.



Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Ready to Read



Stretched out Story *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- a picture book, poem or nursery rhyme

What You Do:

1. Say to the children, "I am going to tell you a story, but some words will sound a little different. I'm going to stretch out some words so that you can hear all of the sounds in the word. Your job is to put back together each word that I stretch. Let's try a word for practice. Ssss-k-ooo-1111. What word am I stretching?"
2. Read or tell the story, rhyme or poem to the children. When you get to an important place, character or object in the story, say that word stretched out sound by sound. For example, "One day, Karen went to the sss-t-ore. She had to buy some mmm-i-lll-k for her sister."
3. As you tell the story, pause for the children to help say the word that you have stretched out.

Why?

Children become aware of the individual sounds in speech and learn that words are made up of sounds.

Screening Tool

Get Ready to Read!

ACTIVITIES

Oral Skills: Ready to Read



What Word is Left? *Get Ready to Read!*_{SM}

What You Need:

- list of compound words (*see below*)

What You Do:

1. Tell the children that some words are made up of two words put together, and you can take away part of a word and have a new word.
2. Say a word and ask them to say the word back to you. For instance, say, "Say cowboy," and let them repeat the word.
3. Tell the children, "Now say it again, but don't say 'boy'." Model the correct response: "CowOboy, without 'boy'. Cowboy without 'boy' is 'cow'."
4. Continue with several other words on the list below. Ask the children to try to think of other compound words.

Word List:

Cowboy, baseball, jellyfish, grasshopper, cupcake, doorbell, raincoat, bedroom, football, starfish, haircut, sailboat

Why?

Children learn that smaller segments of language are contained in words.