

Break Words into Syllables

Your child has already practiced building words with syllables, now it's time to try breaking words down. This skill presents a greater challenge. Because breaking words down into syllables requires more mental work, it builds greater mental muscles and will help your child become a stronger reader.

Phonological awareness activities help children pay closer attention to the SOUNDS of words. Learning how units of sound fit together into words is difficult for beginning readers. Please don't feel these activities need to be enriched with printed letters or words. Right now, children should be concentrating on what they HEAR, not what they see, especially if dyslexia runs in the family.



SmartStart DVDs

Play any of the songs on the *Nursery Rhymes and Songs* DVD and pound out the syllables together.

MyBackpack App

Open the app and select Nursery Rhymes. Select a book and explore it together. Show your child how to click on individual words to hear them read aloud. Have your child pick a word and click on it. Listen to it together, then pound out the syllables. Repeat this with several words.

Syllable Bag

Gather several foods or household items that have two, three, or four syllables and place them in a box or bag.

Pick an item from the box and say its name. Ask your child how many "pounds" it has. Have your child say the name of the item with you as you gently pound your fists together for each syllable. Determine how many syllables the word has.

Take turns picking an item and counting the "pounds."

- Household items with two syllables: pencil, carrot, bottle, quarter, scissors, apple, lemon, necklace, crayon, marker
- Household items with three syllables: banana, marshmallow, potato, cinnamon, chocolate, envelope
- Household items with four syllables: dandelion, macaroni, thermometer, binoculars, invitation, dictionary, calculator

Counting Syllables

1. Draw four boxes in a row on a piece of paper. Get four dry beans, pennies, pebbles, or any other small objects.
2. Say a two syllable word. "Pound" the syllables.
3. Count the syllables with your child, then demonstrate how to put a bean in a box on the paper as you say each syllable.

Follow the same process for several words. As your child gets more comfortable with the process, provide less guidance. Move on to three syllable words when you feel your child is ready. For an extra challenge, try four syllable words.

Library

Take a trip to the library. Here are some books you might want to check out:

Cha-Cha Chimps, Julia Durango & Eleanor Taylor

Eating the Alphabet, Lois Ehlert

Gossie, Olivier Durea

Marsupial Sue, John Lithgow

Old Mikamba Had a Farm, Rachel Isadora

Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes, Eric Litwin