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# **Understanding and**

# **supporting phonics progression:**

# **Reflective tool**

# **(A focus on pre-school children)**

Each page refers to a single Pre-phonic Progression Step:

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Tip, as you refer to each pre-phonic progress step (page), highlight your practice:

**Green:** Practice is good, children are on track, professional knowledge is sound.

**Amber:** Practice needs some support, support with planning teaching is needed, there are professional development (CPD) needs.

**Red:** Practice requires improvement, staff need lots of support with planning, the team need to understand this in more detail.

## Getting ears and eyes ready (general sound discrimination)

### **Phonics skills: auditory discrimination, and memory**

* Children need to put sounds together and remember them in the right order.
* This requires good auditory discrimination and auditory memory.

### **Phonic skills, visual discrimination, and memory**

* Children recognise and remember similarities and differences of letter shapes.
* This requires good visual discrimination and good visual memory.

### **Milestones: Children can…**

* Describe a range of similar objects in simple terms.
* Find an object, item, or picture, based on the description.
* Match shapes and images in sorting games and puzzles.
* Isolate items which don’t visually match a set.
* Sort items or pictures by visual categories.
* Complete up to a 16-piece puzzles independently.

### **Continuous provision enhancements**

* Provide multisensory encounters to represent objects and shapes in different ways e.g., different spoons in the home corner.
* Look and find books.
* Curiosity cubes.
* Treasure baskets.

### **Adult focused games**

* ‘Model and Extend’ as you explore different objects.
* ‘Start Well Stories’ used to introduce character objects.
* Observation drawing.

### **Reflective practice: RAG rate**

* Do reading books encourage looking for similarities and differences?
* Do role play props encourage looking for similarities and differences?
* Do children have opportunities to explore similarities and differences in open ended collections?
* Are the same things represented in lots of different ways?
* Do matching activities provide challenges for different stages of development?
* Do shape sorters and puzzles provide a clear progression?
* Is observational drawing and painting something you guide regularly?

### **Resources**

* [Get Bolton Reading: Golden Nuggets 0-3s and 3-4s)](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/resources/learning-development/6)
* [Help for early years providers: Reading comprehension (education.gov.uk)](https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/literacy/reading-comprehension)
* [EYFS statutory framework: group and school-based providers](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670fa42a30536cb92748328f/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_-_based_providers.pdf) Pg 8, 10, 13, 16.
* [The Learning Lady | Phonics & Early Reading Expert](https://learninglady.co.uk/)

## Listening and attention

### **Phonics skills: auditory discrimination, and memory**

* Exploring and experiencing familiar environmental sound games and play.

### **Phonic skills, visual discrimination, and memory**

* Matching familiar shapes or objects; copying and matching noises and sounds.

### **Milestones**

* Start by comparing and matching big sound differences first, adding more similar sounds as children gain confidence and learn to ‘tune in’ more.

### **Continuous provision enhancements**

* Listen to sounds, make sounds, remember sounds and name them.
* Songs of the month props.
* Noisy books.
* Instruments, musical instruments.
* Sound Lotto.
* ‘Talking Tins’ with familiar sounds to explore.
* Role play objects that make sounds e.g., crisp packets, tins etc.

### **Adult focused games**

* Games using different musical instruments.
* ‘Model language’ for sounds repeatedly, in different ways, so children begin to understand the words, and in time, start to use them independently.
* Listening walks.
* Making and playing noisy games, indoors and outside.
* ‘Stop, Start’ games.
* Action rhymes.
* Games that involve sucking, blowing, tongue movements.

### **Reflective practice: RAG rate**

* Are there enough noisy books for matching pictures with sounds?
* Do children frequently practice making sounds by joining in at story time?
* Are there enough instruments available for all children to play?
* Are children taught to name instruments and describe the sounds they make?
* Do children learn to sing rhymes and songs from memory?
* Do you model how to warm up your voice and use your mouth to blow, suck etc?
* Do you identify and track children that may be struggling to use their tongue and mouth or may have difficulty pronouncing words or making sounds.
* Do you create opportunity to use interventions such as ‘Language through Listening’ games to support children that may need more help?

### **Resources**

* [Letters and Sounds](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/course-detail?entry_id=4127) (Aspect 1 Environmental, Aspect 2 Instrumental)
* [Get Bolton Reading: Golden Nuggets](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/resources/learning-development/6) (Listening and attention)
* [Super Sounds](https://learninglady.co.uk/phase-1-phonics/) (Steps 1 and 2)

## Phonological Awareness – Rhythm, Beat, and Movement

### **Phonics skills: auditory discrimination, and memory**

* Rhythm, beat, and movement.

### **Phonic skills, visual discrimination, and memory**

* Copying, matching, and sequencing patterns of actions and sounds matched to visuals.

### **Milestones: Children can…**

* Join in and clap a steady beat independently.
* Hear, remember, and copy simple clapping patterns.
* Hear, remember, and copy more complex clapping patterns.
* Clap the syllables in their names.
* Clap the syllables in everyday words.

### **Continuous provision enhancements**

* Different types of musical instruments.
* Rhyme books.

### **Adult focused games**

* Clapping stories, songs, and rhymes games.
* Stories with predictable patterns for children to repeat and join in (e.g., We’re Going on a Bear Hunt).
* Modelling dancing and singing songs with different beats.

### **Reflective practice: RAG rate**

* Are there enough rhythmic books available with repeated phrases?
* Do the children clap a steady beat every day as they sing?
* Do the children join in with clapping patterns that start off simple but become more complicated?
* Do we clap the syllables in children's names as part of everyday routines?
* Can I easily identify the syllables in everyday words, or do I need more practice?
* Do we share simple ideas for rhythmic books, songs, and activities with families?
* Could we do this even better?

### **Resources**

* [Letters and Sounds](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/course-detail?entry_id=4127) (Aspect 3 Body Percussion Games, Aspect 4 Rhythm and Rhyme Games)
* [Get Bolton Reading: Golden Nuggets](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/resources/learning-development/6) (Golden Nugget 5 Step 3)

## Phonological Awareness - Rhyme

### **Phonics skills: auditory discrimination, and memory**

* Rhyme.

### **Phonic skills, visual discrimination, and memory**

* Copying, matching, and sequencing patterns of actions and sounds matched to visuals.

### **Milestones: Children can…**

* Listen and join in with rhyming stories and songs.
* Fills in the rhyming gaps of known stories.
* Match rhyming pairs.
* Identifies objects that don’t rhyme.
* Say a rhyming list.
* Make up their own rhymes.

### **Continuous provision enhancements**

* Real rhyming role play items.
* Rhyming bags.
* Rhyming props.

### **Adult focused games**

* Modelling rhyming games.
* Pass and select the rhyming games.
* Matching and ‘odd one out’ rhyming games.

### **Reflective practice: RAG rate**

* Are there enough simple rhyming stories and books with rhymes in?
* Do the children know nursery rhymes and counting rhymes from memory?
* Do children regularly fill in the rhyming gaps in the books they know well?
* Do we have collections of real rhyming objects for playing games or adding to our play provision?
* Do we have rhyming picture pairs or rhyming sets of pictures to play games with?
* Do we explain why rhyming is so important to families?
* Do we provide them with ideas for rhymes and rhyming books to share at home?
* Could we do this even better?

### **Resources**

* [Letters and Sounds](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/course-detail?entry_id=4127) (Aspect 3 Body Percussion Games, Aspect 4 Rhythm and Rhyme Games)
* [Get Bolton Reading: Golden Nuggets](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/resources/learning-development/6) (Golden Nugget 6 Step 4)

## Phonemic Awareness

### **Phonics skills: auditory discrimination, and memory**

* Alliteration.

### **Phonic skills, visual discrimination, and memory**

* Children can read and recognise letters in their own name and in other situations.
* Creating own patterns and symbols matched to words and actions.

### **Milestones: Children can…**

* Join in with simple 2- and 3-word tongue twisters.
* Copy and repeat 2-word alliterative phrases.
* Say when words don't have the same spoken sounds at the beginning, and when they do.
* Make up their own alliterative phrases.

### **Continuous provision enhancements**

* Magnetic letters.
* Alliterative song and rhyme props.

### **Adult focused games**

* Games creating alliterative collections e.g. collecting objects with the same initial sounds.
* Making lists of objects e.g., pink pajamas.
* Making alliterative characters, e.g., “Marvellous Mighty Marley”.
* Tongue twisters.

### **Reflective practice: RAG rate**

* Do all adults understand that alliteration is not just a set of objects beginning with the same sound?
* Do we explain to families why alliteration is an important pre-phonic skill?
* Do we provide them with ideas for developing alliteration at home?
* Could we do this even better?

### **Resources**

* [Letters and Sounds](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/course-detail?entry_id=4127) (Aspect 5 Alliteration)
* [Get Bolton Reading: Golden Nuggets](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/resources/learning-development/6) (Golden Nugget 7 Step 5)

## Phonemic Awareness and Early Reading

### **Phonics skills: auditory discrimination, and memory**

* Oral Blending and Oral Segmenting.
* Early reading, blending, and segmenting.

### **Phonic skills, visual discrimination, and memory**

* Children can read and recognise letters in their own name and in other situations.
* Creating own patterns and symbols matched to words and actions.

### **Milestones: Children can…**

* Join in with oral blending and segmenting activities.
* Say all the speech sounds matched to the spoken sounds in words.
* Hear, remember and blend a word that an adult has broken into segments.
* Hear, remember and segment a whole word spoken by an adult.

### **Continuous provision enhancements**

* Play with everyday Consonants Vowels Consonants (CVC) objects e.g., c/u/p, b/a/g.
* Independent experiences of games introduced by adults such as ‘washing line’ games pegging CVC words to the washing line e.g., h/a/t.
* Robot arm games, moving arms to segment words c/a/t.

### **Adult focused games**

* Adults say the whole word and children break the word into their separate spoken sounds.
* Build oral blending into everyday routines and as often as possible.
* Using everyday objects helps children to make links and apply understanding better.

### **Reflective practice: RAG rate**

* Do the children get lots of opportunities to orally blend and segment through focused activities?
* Do adults’ model, demonstrate, and encourage oral blending and segmenting as they play alongside children?
* Are there enough everyday objects, books, and pictures to use for oral blending and segmenting activities?
* Do the adults build oral blending and segmenting into everyday routines?
* Do all adults say the 'pure sounds' correctly or is more practise needed?
* Do families know about oral blending and segmenting and how to support with this at home?

### **Resources**

* [Letters and Sounds](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/course-detail?entry_id=4127) (Aspect 7 Oral Blending and Segmenting)
* [Get Bolton Reading: Golden Nuggets](https://www.boltonstartwell.org.uk/resources/learning-development/6) (Golden Nugget 8 Step 6)