

Tip Sheet: Draw Attention to Syllables with Clapping Games

FOR PRESCHOOL PARENTS

For additional support on this topic, visit <https://bit.ly/QTSyllable> to view a short video.

WHY?

Children with solid phonological awareness skills tend to be better readers. Phonological awareness develops while children are in preschool and elementary school. Clapping out **syllables** helps your child notice and hear that words have parts.

WHAT?

Phonological awareness is the understanding that language is made up of sounds and includes the ability to detect the individual sounds of spoken language. Words are made up of syllables, a unit of speech that has a vowel sound. For example, the word **basketball** has three syllables: bas/ket/ball. Clapping out syllables helps your child notice the sounds in each part of a word. They will later use their understanding of word parts to spell words. This understanding will help them with spelling later on.

HOW?

Play syllable clapping games with your child.

- Ask your child to clap out the syllables in their name. Continue this game by clapping out the names of family and friends.
- Encourage your child to clap out the parts of the bedtime routine. For example, "It's time to brush your teeth. Let's clap out the syllables in the word **toothbrush**."
- Give your children percussion instruments, if you have them, to mark syllables in words, such as with a tambourine, a maraca, or tapping sticks. If you don't have instruments on hand, a wooden spoon works well for tapping out syllables.