

# Phonological Awareness Skills Test

The Phonological Awareness Skills Test (PAST) in this book is an informal, diagnostic, individually administered assessment tool to help you determine the point of instruction for your students and monitor progress made from doing the activities you select. Because it is not a normed test, there can be flexibility in its administration. For example, you can reteach the directions as necessary or add your own word for the child to blend, segment, or delete if you want to gather additional information on a particular student.

The materials the administrator of the assessment needs include the assessment itself, a pencil, and counters or chips for the student to use for the segmentation part. If counters are not available, the student can clap the number of segments instead. The assessment is administered orally since PA has to do with the sounds of language.

## When Skills Are Typically Mastered

Although children develop their PA skills at different rates, it is helpful to have a general window of when specific skills are typically mastered. The following is a suggested timeline.

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Typically mastered</u>
Concept of spoken word (sentence segmentation)	Preschool
Rhyme recognition	Preschool
Rhyme completion	Preschool/kindergarten
Rhyme production	Kindergarten
Syllable blending	Preschool/kindergarten
Syllable segmentation	Kindergarten
Syllable deletion	Kindergarten
Phoneme isolation of initial sound	Kindergarten
Phoneme isolation of final sound	Kindergarten/first grade
Phoneme blending (onset and rime)	First grade
Phoneme blending (all phonemes)	First grade
Phoneme segmentation	First grade
Phoneme deletion of initial sound	First grade
Phoneme deletion of final sound	First grade
Phoneme deletion of first sound in consonant blend	Second grade
Phoneme substitution	Second grade (some first)

*Note:* In order to make the test user-friendly and time-efficient, the skills of rhyme completion and phoneme blending of onset and rime are not measured. However, since the skills are sequential, if a student masters rhyme production, he/she should also be able to do rhyme completion. By the same token, if a student masters phoneme blending, he/she should also be able to master blending of onset and rime.

# Questions and Answers

## How to Get the Most out of the Assessment

### QUESTION

At what age do students typically master the specific PA skills on the assessment?

### ANSWER

Generally, preschoolers are able to master isolation of spoken word, rhyme recognition (some can do rhyme completion), and syllable blending. Kindergarten can master those skills plus rhyme completion, rhyme production, syllable segmentation, syllable deletion, and isolation of the initial sound of a word. Many can master isolation of final sounds as well. First-graders can master the above skills plus phoneme blending, phoneme segmentation, and deletion of initial and final sounds of words. Some can do phoneme substitution. Second-graders can master the above skills, along with phoneme deletion of the first sound in a consonant blend and phoneme substitution.

### QUESTION

How fast do you say the sentences in the sentence segmentation section?

### ANSWER

Talk in a normal conversational speed. If you tend to speak rapidly, slow it down, but speak in a natural, conversational voice.

### QUESTION

Do you administer the entire test to every child?

### ANSWER

"Best practices" suggests that you should assess every student. However, for those students who do not appear to be struggling, you may not want to administer any of it. Be aware, though, that sometimes a student only *appears* to be doing OK. Such a child may have a good sight-word vocabulary because early words in books are almost always in a student's oral vocabulary. But once students reach the latter part of third grade, they begin to encounter many words not in their oral vocabulary, and some students then have difficulty decoding these words due to a lack of PA skills.

Also, consider the grade level of the child when administering portions of the test. You may not want to give sentence segmentation to a second-grader because it is too easy. On the other hand, some of the latter part of

the assessment would go past the frustration level of most kindergarten children. Administer the test until the child reaches a frustration level; typically, if he/she misses three out of six, stop. However, use your judgment. Some children get stuck on rhyme but can do syllable blending without any problem.

Start at the section where they will have a success rate of at least five out of six correct, and go from there. You can use your judgment, based on kid-watching and other school assessments, to make your decision about where to begin administering the test. However, if you are unsure, start at the beginning (concept of spoken word). Erring on the side of "too easy" when choosing where to begin the assessment is a good rule of thumb.

## **QUESTION**

How many questions should a child master on each section of the assessment to be successful?

## **ANSWER**

To be successful, they need to master at least five out of six, but compare the grade level of the child with the grade level at which a skill is typically mastered.

## **QUESTION**

What do you do with the information you get from giving the test?

## **ANSWER**

Look at the first section where the child missed two or more answers and use the activities in this book that relate to that section. You can do those activities with the whole class, with a small group, or individually.

## **QUESTION**

How long does it take to administer the test?

## **ANSWER**

That depends on how much of the test you administer to the student. Typically, it takes 10 to 15 minutes. It can be administered in two separate sittings.

## **QUESTION**

How do I find the time to give this test to my students?

## **ANSWER**

There are several options. Consider having an instructional aide or volunteer work with the rest of the class while you test. Some teachers assess during sustained silent reading, while others do it while students are in flex groups or centers.

## QUESTION

When and how often should this assessment be administered?

## ANSWER

Consider assessing two to three times a year. The first test, or pretest, can be given in August or September. Some kindergarten teachers prefer to wait until January to give a PA assessment due to the diversity of children's home-language environments. After students experience PA instruction and activities for the first part of the year in kindergarten, it may be easier to tell who is not progressing and therefore requires intervention. Other kindergarten teachers like to get baseline data on their students and prefer to give the pretest in August.

Regardless, after the children experience whole-group and/or small-group activities relating to the assessment, it should be given in January to monitor progress. A final test, or post-test, should be given in April or May. Some teachers copy the tests on different-colored paper to help identify when the assessment was given—for instance, yellow in August, red in December, and green in April.

It is not necessary to repeat the section(s) of the test where the child scored at least five out of six correct. Each time the assessment is given again, start at the point where the child made more than one error out of six questions.

# Phonological Awareness Skills Test (PAST)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

## Concept of Spoken Word

Tell the student you are going to play a game with words and colored chips. Use the sentence "Joey likes cake" as an example. As you say each word of the sentence, push a colored chip forward—one chip per word. Then ask the child to do it. Once he/she understands the skill, read each sentence to the student and ask him/her to repeat the sentence while pushing up one chip for each word. Put a check in the box to the right of the sentence if the child does it correctly.

1. Tom ran home. (3)
2. I have two pets. (4)
3. Did you eat lunch? (4)
4. What are you doing? (4)
5. Terry loves to play soccer. (5)
6. Yesterday it rained. (3)

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Rhyme Recognition

Tell the child that two words that sound alike at the end, such as *hat* and *sat*, are rhyming words. Ask if *sit* and *bit* rhyme. (Yes.) Then ask if *chair* and *boy* rhyme. (No.) If the child appears to grasp the skill, do the same for each of the following pairs of words. Put a check in the box to the right of the pair if the child answers correctly.

1. bed – fed (yes)
2. top – hop (yes)
3. run – soap (no)
4. hand – sand (yes)
5. funny – bunny (yes)
6. girl – giant (no)

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Rhyme Production

Tell the child that you are going to say a word, and he/she is to tell you a word that rhymes with it. The answer can be a real word or a nonsense word. Ask the child to tell you a word that rhymes with *sit*. Possible answers include *bit, fit, mit, pit, dit, and jit*. Put a check in the box to the right if the child answers correctly. Write down the child's answers on the lines provided.

- |         |                          |       |          |                          |       |
|---------|--------------------------|-------|----------|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. pain | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | 4. see   | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| 2. cake | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | 5. dark  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| 3. hop  | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | 6. candy | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Syllable Blending

Tell the child you are going to say a word in a funny way. The job of the student is to put the parts together and say the whole word. Give these examples, pausing between syllables: out-side (outside), ro-bot (robot). Have the child say the sample words normally. Then do the following words and put a check in the box to the right if he/she says them correctly.

- |                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. pen - cil     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. rain - bow    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. pop - corn    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. black - board | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. side - walk   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. pa - per      | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Syllable Segmentation

Tell the student that you are going to say a word and then break it into parts, or syllables. First say *rainbow* normally. Clap out the two parts in *rainbow* while saying each part. Then push up a chip as you say each syllable. Read each of the following words and ask the child to push up a chip while saying each syllable. It is not necessary to clap the syllables again unless the skill needs to be retaught. Put a check in the box to the right if the child does it correctly.

- |                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. sometime (2)   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. basket (2)     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. bedroom (2)    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. fantastic (3)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. maybe (2)      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. helicopter (4) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Syllable Deletion

Tell the student you are going to play a game with words where one part of the word is left out. For example, *sunshine* without *shine* is *sun*. Ask the student to say *airline* without *air*. He/she should say *line*. Using the words below, tell the child the syllable to leave off. Use this sentence structure: "Say (down)town without *down*." Put a check in the box to the right if the student deletes the correct syllable.

- |                 |       |                          |
|-----------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 1. (down)town   | town  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. (in)side     | side  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. for(get)     | for   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. bas(ket)     | bas   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. af(ter)      | af    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. (skate)board | board | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Phoneme Isolation of Initial Sounds

Tell the child you are going to say a word, and he/she is to tell you the first sound of that word. Ask the child what the first sound is in the word *top*. The child should say /t/. Do the same with the words below and put a check in the box to the right if the child says the first sound correctly.

- |          |      |                          |
|----------|------|--------------------------|
| 1. big   | /b/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. land  | /l/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. farm  | /f/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. apple | /a/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. desk  | /d/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. ship  | /sh/ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Phoneme Isolation of Final Sounds

Tell the child you are going to say a word, and he/she is to tell you the last sound in the word. Ask the child what the last sound is in the word *pot*. The child should say /t/. Do the same with the words below and put a check in the box to the right if the child says the sound correctly.

- |          |      |                          |
|----------|------|--------------------------|
| 1. pick  | /k/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. ran   | /n/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. fill  | /l/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. bug   | /g/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. same  | /m/  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. tooth | /th/ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Phoneme Blending

Tell the student that you are going to separate all the sounds in a word, and he/she is to say the whole word. Do these examples by segmenting each sound and having the student say the whole word; for example, /s/ /i/ /t/ is *sit*, and /s/ /t/ /o/ /p/ is *stop*. Read each word in segmented fashion. Put a check in the box to the right if the student says the whole word correctly.

1. /m/ /e/            me
2. /b/ /e/ /d/        bed
3. /h/ /a/ /t/        hat
4. /m/ /u/ /s/ /t/    must
5. /sh/ /o/ /p/       shop
6. /p/ /l/ /a/ /n/ /t/ plant

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Phoneme Segmentation

Tell the student that you're going to play a game with all the sounds in the words below. As an example, show the student the three sounds in *dime*. Push up a chip for each sound you say—/d/ /i/ /m/. Ask the student to try it with the word *hat*. Read each of the following words and ask him/her to push up a chip for each sound. Put a check in the box to the right if he/she does it correctly.

1. in (2)
2. at (2)
3. name (3)
4. ship (3)
5. sock (3)
6. chin (3)

Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Phoneme Deletion of Initial Sounds

Tell the child you will be playing a word game where the beginning sound of a word is left off. For example, *bed* without /b/ is *ed*. Ask the child to say *can* without /c/. The answer is *an*. Read each word below and tell the child the beginning sound to leave off. Put a check in the box to the right if the child does it correctly.

1. (s)un    un
2. (p)ig    ig
3. (m)op    op
4. (n)eck    eck
5. (b)at    at
6. (t)ape    ape

Total \_\_\_\_\_



### Phoneme Deletion of Final Sounds

Tell the child that in this word game, the final sound of a word is left off. For example, *goat* without /t/ is *go*. Ask the child to say *meat* without /t/. The answer is *me*. Read each word and tell the child the ending sound to leave off. Put a check in the box to the right if the child does it correctly.

1. ro/s/e    row
2. trai/n/    tray
3. grou/p/    grew
4. sea/t/    sea
5. ba/k/e    bay
6. in/ch/    in

Total \_\_\_\_\_

### Phoneme Deletion of First Sound in Consonant Blend

Tell the student to make new words by taking the first sound off a consonant blend. Example: The word *crow* without /k/ is *row*. Ask the student to say *still* without /s/. The answer is *till*. Do the following words with the student and put a check in the box to the right if he/she does it correctly.

1. Say *clap* without /k/.                  lap
2. Say *stop* without /s/.                  top
3. Say *rust* without /t/.                  rust
4. Say *black* without /b/.                  lack
5. Say *drip* without /d/.                  rip
6. Say *smile* without /s/.                  mile

Total \_\_\_\_\_

### Phoneme Substitution

Tell the child you will be playing a very different game with sounds of words. You are going to ask him/her to take off the first sound of a word and replace it with another sound. Example: Replace the first sound in *pail* with /m/. The new word is *mail*. Ask the child to replace the first sound in *top* with /h/. The answer is *hop*. Ask the child to do the same with the rest of these words; if he/she answers correctly, put a check in the box on the right.

1. Replace the first sound in *man* with /k/.                  can
2. Replace the first sound in *pig* with /d/.                  dig
3. Replace the first sound in *sack* with /t/.                  tack
4. Replace the first sound in *well* with /f/.                  fell
5. Replace the first sound in *bed* with /r/.                  red
6. Replace the first sound in *shop* with /ch/.                  chop

Total \_\_\_\_\_