Breaking Words into Sounds

Number of Days to Complete the Lesson
2

Time
10 minutes each day

Activities

Day One-

1. Explain that good readers learn how to break words into sounds so that, later, they can begin sounding out words on their own. Today you are going to practice breaking words apart by listening to their sounds.

2. Hold up three fingers. Say the word “pig”. Explain that “pig” has three sounds. You are going to break the three sounds apart.

3. Starting with YOUR right-most finger (it will be on the left for your child as they look at you), sound out the word “pig”. Shake your right-most finger when you say the “p” sound, then shake the finger next to it as you say the “i” sound and finally, wave your left-most finger when you say “g”.

   Note: You are having your child “read” your fingers from their left to right to reinforce that you read left to right across a page.

4. Now push your three fingers together and say “pig”.

   Note: This step demonstrates that the three separate sounds are glued together to make an actual word.

5. Repeat steps 2-4 using the words “cup” and “red”.

Materials

- 6 uppercase flashcards included in your Getting Started Kit: C, A, T, F, I, P.
6. Now, ask your child to hold up three fingers. Repeat
the word “red” and ask him to break it apart into
sounds the same way that you did.
7. Ask your child to break the word “top” into pieces.
8. Next, have him separate the sounds in “men” and then
“dip”.
9. Tell your child that you listened to words and then
broke the sounds apart.

**Day Two**

1. Remind your child that you broke apart the sounds in
words yesterday. Today, you are going to break words
into sounds again but this time you will add a new step.
2. Say the word “pat”. Use three of your fingers to break
the word into three separate sounds.
3. Using the flashcards, lay down the letters P-A-T in front
of your child, leaving about a half inch of space
between each card.
4. Explain that these three letters make up the word “pat”.
Each letter makes a special sound. You are going to
break apart the word “pat” into its three special sounds.
5. Say /p/ and touch the P, say /a/ as you touch the A,
and then say /t/ and touch the T.
6. Now, push the P and T in so that they touch the A. Say
“pat”.
7. Say “I am going to break the word “pat” apart again.
Listen for the special sound that each of the letters
makes.”
8. Pull the three cards apart. Then touch each card as you
say its sound.
9. Remove the A card and replace it with the I to make a
new word “pit”.
10. Repeat steps 4-6 for the word “pit”, “cap”, “fat”, “fit”.
11. Remind your child that he practiced breaking apart the
letters and the special letter sounds of words today.

Note: You are introducing the connection between
letter sounds and their written letter but you will not
ask your child to use the cards to break words apart on
his own. At this point, that skill is too complex and
would likely lead to unnecessary frustration.
Follow Up Activities

• Practice breaking other three letter words into sounds while you clap. If you were sounding out the word “hop,” you would say /h/ and clap once, /o/ and clap, /p/ and clap. Then you would give one big clap and say “hop”.

• During car rides, help your child break apart their own name and the names of friends and family.

Prep for the Next Lesson

• None.