

Clapping syllables

Lesson 3 of 81 (ages 3-6) · Getting Ready · Ages 3-6 · about 10 min

GOAL

Your child can clap the beats (syllables) in words of 1, 2 and 3 beats.

WHY IT MATTERS

Clapping the beats (syllables) shows your child that words are made of smaller parts. Splitting a word into beats is the first step toward splitting it into individual sounds, which is what reading and spelling need later.

YOU'LL NEED

- Nothing is required.
- Optional: a pot and wooden spoon, or a toy drum, to tap the beats.
- The lesson page, for the listening game.

LESSON FLOW about 10 minutes

1 min

Warm up

Clap everyone's name in the family: one clap per beat.

SAY | "Sam: one clap. Ma-ry: two claps. Your turn!"

2 min

Listen

Play elephant, rabbit and sun on the lesson page. Say each one slowly, like a robot.

SAY | "El... e... phant. Three beats!"

2 min

Show how

Put your hand under your chin. Each time your chin drops, that's one beat. Clap it while you say it.

SAY | "Ba-na-na. My chin dropped three times, so I clap three times."

2 min

Do it together

Clap the words in the answer key below, then clap foods, toys and animals in the room.

2 min

Play

Play the listening game on the lesson page. Your child hears a word and taps one, two or three claps.

1 min

Wrap up

Clap your child's full name, then march it: one step per beat.

USE WITH THIS LESSON

- **This lesson online (listening + games)**
phonicaademy.com/plan/session/awareness-clapping-syllables
- **Printable: 5-Minute Daily Routine Card (PDF)**
phonicaademy.com/printables/abc-phonics-5min-routine
- **Read: Phonological Awareness: 8-Level Progression with Ready Activities**
phonicaademy.com/blog/phonological-awareness-activities
- **Read: Is My Child Ready to Read? 10 Signs of Reading Readiness**
phonicaademy.com/blog/reading-readiness-checklist

ANSWER KEY

The same rounds as the online game, to play out loud with no screen. Tick each one your child gets on the first try.

#	SAY / SHOW	CHOICES	ANSWER	
1	"sun"	1, 2 or 3 claps	1 clap	☐
2	"rabbit"	1, 2 or 3 claps	2 claps	☐
3	"elephant"	1, 2 or 3 claps	3 claps	☐
4	"dog"	1, 2 or 3 claps	1 clap	☐
5	"banana"	1, 2 or 3 claps	3 claps	☐
6	"pizza"	1, 2 or 3 claps	2 claps	☐

WATCH FOR common mix-ups and what to do

Claps every letter or sound (d-o-g = 3 claps).

-> Beats are the chunks you can sing. Sing the word to a tune ("dooog"): it's one note, so one clap.

Claps too fast to count.

-> Slow right down. Use a robot voice and clap once, then wait, then clap again.

Always claps two.

-> Mix in more one-beat words (sun, dog, cat) and three-beat words (banana, elephant).

TOO HARD? MAKE IT EASIER

Only use one-beat and two-beat words, and clap them together first.

TOO EASY? MAKE IT HARDER

Try four-beat words: wa-ter-mel-on, cat-er-pil-lar, al-li-ga-tor.

HOW DID IT GO?

MY CHILD CAN...

- ☐ Claps the right number of beats for 1-, 2- and 3-beat words.
- ☐ Can clap their own name.

Date: _____

Colour in the stars:



Notes: _____