

## Phonemic Awareness Activity: Sock Puppet

By: Richard Moreno

### a. Introduction

- According to Gunning (2016), Phonemic Awareness is the “realization that a spoken word is composed of a sequence of speech sounds and being able to note the individual sounds”. Phonemic Awareness can be developed through several methods, but one effective method is developing student’s ability to blend sounds. Blending prepares students for segmenting and helps them to recognize beginning sounds in words.

### b. Body

- A way to use blending in order to develop phonemic awareness for students would begin by breaking apart words into syllables or parts first. Using a hand puppet, say the word “basket”, however, emphasize its syllables by saying “bas-ket”. Continue doing this by breaking apart the following words: monkey, turtle, camel, robin, turkey, penguin, eagle. Every time the puppet breaks apart a word, ask the students to count by holding up a finger for each part.



Source: [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sock\\_puppet](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sock_puppet)

- Once the students have understood more about breaking apart words into syllables, move onto helping them understand onset and rime. Tell the students that the hand puppet will say words in parts. Say “moon” but say it in a way to distinguish its onset and rime such as “m-oon”. Ask the students to help the puppet put the word together. Then ask them to help put back the following words: “m-an”, “s-and”, “h-at”, and “r-an”.
- Move onto blending phonemes, by saying the word “cat” but separated into its phonemes (k/a/t). Use the hand puppet to do this and ask the students to help the puppet put the words together. Ask them to count by holding up a finger for each separate sound. Students are then given words in groups of four. Along with each group of words, they are given a group of pictures to represent the word. When you say each word (separated into its phonemes), ask students to count the number of sounds with their fingers. Once they put together the word they hold up the picture that represents the word. As the

activity progresses, encourage the students to work faster. If a student struggles, affirm their efforts and provide assistance. Use the following words:

- pie, tie, bee, key
  - cat, hat, bat, rat
  - cap, map, nap, fish
  - lock, rock, sock, goat
  - hop, mop, pop, bed
  - bus, duck, pig, cup
- (Gunning, 2016, 148-49)

c. Conclusion

- This activity is useful and important because it helps students who may have difficulty understanding that a word can be broken down into separate parts. Instead of immediately launching students into blending phonemes, it gradually leads them to do so by having them blend syllables and onset and rime, so that way they can build up to phonemes. It does so in an entertaining way that keeps them interested.
- The steps in this activity for blending fit well together because they gradually increase in difficulty. When a student can distinguish a syllable in a word, they understand that a word can be broken down into separate sounds. Through onset and rime they understand that even syllables can be broken down further. This helps students to understand separate sounds in a word and recognize phonemes.
- This activity can be helpful in early education for students who have more difficulty understanding phonemic awareness. It can help students sound out words and be able to separate those sounds as well.

d. References

Gunning, T. G. (2016). *Creating literacy instruction for all students* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.) Pearson.