

Aspect 3:

3.1 Onset and rime

The 'onset' of a syllable is its initial consonant(s) and the 'rime' is the vowel and any following consonants in the syllable e.g. in 'cat' the onset is the consonant 'c' and the rime is 'at'

This stage usually develops after syllable awareness and before phoneme awareness and is considered a crucial aspect of reading development. Children who have difficulty in segmenting words into single sounds may find the strategy of breaking words into onset and rime a useful intermediate step in the development of segmentation skills.

Onset and rime develops through the following stages:

1. Full adult support – the child requires the adult to model the onset and rime and say the full word in order to find pictures
2. Adult intervention – the child can find a picture card in response to the adult saying an onset and rime e.g. adult says d-og, child finds a picture of a dog
3. Child led – the child can break words into onset and rime without adult support
4. Internalisation – the child can isolate the onset or the rime without saying the full word

Children will learn:

- ✓ Recognise that words can be broken down into onset and rime
- ✓ To identify a word by tuning into the onset and rime

3.2 Rhyme Detection

This is the ability to identify words that have identical final SOUND segments (not spelling patterns). This is a crucial step in developing understanding of language in that it requires attention to the sound structure rather than the meaning.

Bryan and Bradley (1985) suggest that learning about rhyming helps reading and spelling in the following ways:

1. Rhyming helps children develop phonemic awareness, which facilitates decoding.
2. Rhyming teaches children to group words together by sounds, thereby reducing the number of words they have to learn to read by making generalisations of larger sound units.
3. Rhyming teaches children to make connections between categories and the letter-string patterns that are used to spell words.

As with other skills, understanding of rhyme is effectively established once a child can internalise the rhyme. Before this can happen, a variety of skills need to be achieved. These are:

1. Ability to identify the words that rhyme when given orally by an adult.
2. Ability to find a picture that rhymes with a word given orally by an adult, from two options.
3. Ability to match pictures that rhyme with the child saying the words.
4. Ability to silently match or sort pictures that rhyme.

Children will learn:

- ✓ An awareness of rhythm and rhyme in speech
- ✓ Increase awareness of words that rhyme and develop knowledge about rhyme
- ✓ Talk about words that rhyme and produce rhyming words

Phonological Awareness

