

Small Group: Listen for Initial Phonemes - I SPY

The I Spy Game is the foundation of more formalized targeted experience and is played in a small group or individually. It can be presented to the whole group initially. Eventually children can play with a partner independently.

I- Spy



1. Carry the mat and I-spy box to a table or mat on the floor.
2. Take each object or picture out of the box, basket, or bag and name each one WITH the children. "What is this?" and place on a mat or tray. Can also have the children each take one and put it on the mat or tray.
3. Line up the pictures or objects on the mat or tray and name them again. "So we have a _____, a _____, etc."
4. Begin the game. Call on each child to take a turn. "Benita, I spy with my little eye something on the mat that is green, and hops, and starts with ffff. Can you find it and put it in the basket? What is it?"
5. Repeat for the remaining objects giving each child a turn.
6. Can extend with "Fetching Games" placing objects across the room and whispering the clue to a child and ask them to get it. More difficult: Sound clue only.

Tips for Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

- It can happen whole group, small group, individual.
- Throughout the day, transitions, and is ongoing all year.
- Help children hear and feel the sounds. Talk about what the teeth, tongue, lips are doing.
- Be aware of your own pronunciation.
- Clip sounds. Say, "g", NOT "guh". Don't add a vowel sound to the end.

- Use mirrors in small groups to help children gain awareness of sounds.

Listen for and Play with Rhyming Words: Games, Songs, Chants, Poems

(See Building Phonological Awareness handout from SPS for more detail and examples to use.)

- **Rhyming Pictures (or Objects):** Show children 3 cards, two of which rhyme. Say the name of each picture and ask children which two rhyme and which card gets turned over because it doesn't rhyme. (Can make sets and have as shelf work.)
- **Loud and Soft:** Use a poem or song chart with rhyming pattern. Choral read or sing but say the rhyming words in a louder voice. Then do the opposite and say the rhyming words in a soft voice.
- **Fill In the Rhyme:** (a la Down by The Bay). Say a rhyming phrase and have children fill in the missing rhyming word. (Similar to completion strategy.) A cat wearing a _____. Did you ever see a moose, kissing a _____.
- **I Spy:** Play I Spy by saying what you spy rhymes with. "I spy with my little eye, something that we can open and close and rhymes with floor." Eventually leave out the clue. "I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with boat."