

An awareness of the sounds heard in words is essential for learning to read—and our Beginning Sounds Phonemic Awareness Box is perfect for helping children learn to identify initial consonant sounds. Through hands-on experience, students develop phonemic awareness as they match appealing miniatures to illustrated mats.

## Introducing the Kit

Introduce the kit to your class by allowing students to handle and examine the miniatures. When students have had enough time to explore the objects on their own, ask them to name as many as they can. This will help students gain confidence with the miniatures and allow them to learn the names of any objects they don't already know.

With some of the miniatures, you might need to prompt students with the intended word. For example, students may identify the *rose* as a flower. In this case, tell them they're right—it is a flower, but it's a special kind of flower that starts with /r/. Ask if anyone knows its name, then give them the answer if needed.

## Getting Started

Once students are familiar with the miniatures, introduce one of the mats (such as the *cake* mat). Have the children identify the picture on the mat. Select five to six miniatures (including the *candy*, *cookie*, and *cork*). Ask volunteers to identify each miniature. Then, ask them to determine if any of the words have the same beginning sound as the picture on the mat. Now, have volunteers place the three miniatures with the same beginning sound (*candy*, *cookie*, and *cork*) in the squares on the mat.

## Activities

- Select a picture mat from the box and present it to a small group of children. Prompt the children to find the three miniatures that have the same beginning sound as the picture on the mat. Encourage the children to say the name of each object out loud.
- For this small-group activity, give each child one mat. Place all of the objects in the center of the group and instruct the children to take turns finding miniatures that have the same beginning sounds as the illustrations on their mats. To add excitement to this activity, place the miniatures in a paper bag. Then, ask the children to take turns selecting a miniature. If the chosen miniature has the same beginning sound as the image on the mat, the child can place it on the mat. If it doesn't match, have the child look at the other mats to see if she can find where the miniature belongs.
- Have the children take turns choosing a miniature from the box. Ask each child to say the word out loud and to think of another word that starts with the same beginning sound. If the child says a word with the same beginning sound, he gets to keep the miniature. If the child cannot think of a word with the same beginning sound, ask the rest of the class to help. You might want to record all of the words with the same beginning sound on the chalkboard or a piece of chart paper to create a "Beginning Sounds Word Bank."

## List of Miniatures

- basketball, bow, butter
- candy, cookie, cork
- dolphin, domino, donut
- feather, fish, football
- lettuce, lipstick, lizard
- milk, mop, mushroom
- nest, newspaper, nose
- pants, penguin, pizza
- radio, ring, rose
- teeth, tire, tomato

**Ages 3+**

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