



Playing with words helps children develop skills used in reading.
Play with words by:

- stretching out their sounds
- blending sounds together to make words
- identifying the beginning, middle and ending sounds of words

Game 1: What's the word?

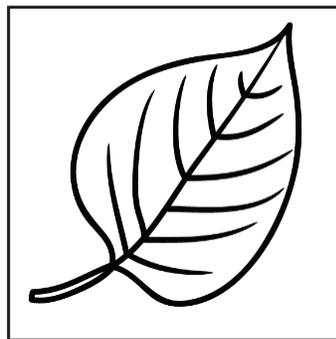
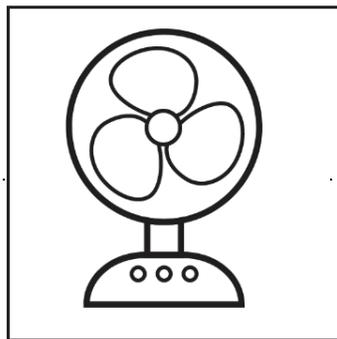
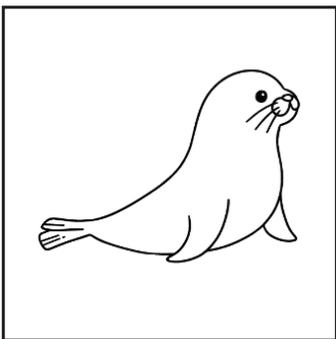
Here are some examples of how to interact and talk with your child using pictures.

We have four pictures here – let's name the pictures – seal, fan, leaf, and nut. I'm going to stretch out one of the words. The word is fffffaaaannnnn – say it with me fffffaaaannnnn. Which word was that? Can you point to it? (fan).

Try the other words. Then, try making the activity even more challenging by working with beginning, middle, and ending sounds.

We've got pictures of four things here. Which picture starts with the sound ssssss? That's right – seal! Seal starts with the sound ssssss! What about this sound – nnnnnnn - what word ends with the sound – nnnnnnn? That's right, fan!

Use this same concept to play with other words and sounds.



Sound Box Fun

Sound boxes are a simple way to practice identifying sounds in words. All you need is a sound box (one is included in the kit) and some playdough. Here are a few games you can play with a sound box.



Game 2: Mash the Sound

1. Have your child make three playdough balls and put one ball in each box.
2. Think of a word with three sounds – such as sun, seed, van, moon, etc.
3. Say the word slowly, stretching out the sounds. Have your child mash the playdough ball as each sound is said – ssss (mash the ball in the first box), uuuuu (mash the ball in the second box), nnnnn (mash the ball in the third box).
4. After all the sounds have been mashed, have your child drag their finger on the arrow from left to right and blend the sounds together ssssuunnn – sun!

Game 3: Break It Down

Once your child is comfortable with blending sounds into words like games 1 and 2, try this one. This game is to practice taking a word and breaking it down into sounds. Start with words that have two or three sounds.

1. Ask your child if they can stretch the word “mad” out (mmm aaaa ddd).
2. Ask them to count how many sounds they hear in the word (in this case -three).
3. Have them put a lump of playdough in each box for each sound (m – a – d).
4. Next, try a two sound word like “in” - iiiiii nnnn. This word gets two playdough lumps.

Game 4: Where Is the Sound?

In this game, your child will mash down the lump of playdough that corresponds to the beginning, middle, or ending sound of a word. Start with beginning sounds, then try ending sounds, and finally tackle the middle sounds – those can be trickiest. Here is one example of how the game works:

1. Put a lump of playdough in each box.
2. Choose a word with three sounds, for example, “fin”. Ask your child, “Where is the ffff sound in the word fin? Is it at the beginning, middle, or end of the word? Let’s stretch the word out – ffffiinnn.” Run your finger along the arrow underneath the boxes as you stretch out the word.
3. Then, ask “Which box is the fff sound in? That’s right – the first box. Mash it down!” When the correct box has been chosen, they get to mash the playdough!