



Did You Know?

Did you know that hearing and counting the number of syllables in a word is an important step for learning to read? Being able to hear that a word can be broken down into smaller “chunks,” or syllables, can help young children to sound out words when practicing their reading skills.

Books with Counting and Comparing Numbers

Read books aloud often with your child. Quiet time together with a book creates a special time for you and your little one. It also promotes school readiness skills. The following are a few children’s books to get you started:

- *Peter’s Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats
- *My Five* by Alik
- *My Abuelita* by Tony Johnston

At Home

This simple trick can help young children count syllables. Place your little one’s hand under their chin, then ask them to say the names of each family member. Count how many times their chin moves while saying the name--this is the number of syllables. Then ask, “Who has the most syllables in their name? Who has the least?”

While You Are Out

In the grocery store: Call out items you see, such as fruits and vegetables. Then ask your child to take one step for every syllable. Count how many steps they took to determine the number of syllables in each word.

In waiting rooms: Use magazines and books in the waiting room to look for pictures of animals. Ask your child to name the animal and then figure out how many syllables are in each animal’s name.

In the car or bus: Play “I Spy,” syllable style. For example, say: “I’m thinking of a word with one syllable for an animal that says meow,” or, “I’m thinking of a word with two syllables for the name you call me.”

**These activities have been adapted from the Family Child Care Mentoring Project, Somerset County Judy Center.*

School Readiness Matters

When your child can hear the syllables in a word, it can lead to hearing individual sounds. These are important skills for learning to read. For more information on how you can develop your child’s reading skills, please take a moment to check out the following material:

[Developmental Milestones of Early Literacy](#)