

CREATIVE PHONETIC AND VOCABULARY ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG ENGLISH LEARNERS

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Abstract: *This article presents creative and practical methods for teaching English phonetics, reading and vocabulary to primary school pupils through interactive games, rhymes and sensory activities. Also mini tales, integrated (skills reading spelling) Speaking) to develop accurate pronunciation and early literacy. The approach motivates learners, develops fine motor skills and strengthens pronunciation and memory.*

Key words: *Phonics, vocabulary, reading, spelling, diagraphs, blends, silent letter.*

Introduction

Early English lessons must be lively and multisensory. Traditional drilling is rarely enough for 7-to 10-year-olds. My work with 18 fourth-grade pupils at school №7 shows that creative, movement-based tasks accelerate sound recognition, spelling, and active vocabulary.

1. Phonetic Foundations

- Rabbit Rule-doubling a consonant after a short vowel (e, g, rabbit, kitten, supper)
- Silent letters-playful examples such as wrist (w saw the red dress and said O! but run away.)
- C-sound practice -focusing on |k| and |s| in simple words appropriate for beginner.
- Diagraphs & blends-sh, ch, th, bl introduced through games.

2. Vocabulary & Reading short sentences give context beyond single words :

«The cat is sleeping». «Dogs are freindly». Reading practice moves from CVC words (bat, cat, sun) to mini-stories and tongue twisters.

3. Creative games and activities

Games \ Activity	Focus	Key benefit
Magic play-dough	Molding letters and words	Tactile memory and sounds
Grain writing	Tracing letters in colored rice or buckwheat	Strengthens fine motor skills, supports speech.
Water wash	Washing toy objects while saying verbs (wash, scrub)	Motor development+ action vocabulary
Bottle shake	Word slips inside a bottle; pupils shake and read the word found	Builds excitement and word recognition.
Wave-shake-Tap.	Teacher commands wave your hand, tap your hand	Listening skills and total physical response
Number hunt	Cups over number; pupils hit the	Rapid number

	number the teacher calls	recognition and pronunciation
Memory challenge	Objects shown for one minute the hidden. Questions: «How many flowers?»	Improves short-term memory and descriptive language.
Scale game	Elephant vs mouse toys on a balance	Comparative adjectives: «The elephant is heavier than the mouse »
Sound detective	Sorting spoken words into Diagraph,Blend,Monophtong,Diphtong	Advanced listening and phonetic analysis
Boxing letter	Punching sponges labeled with diagraph or blends using soft gloves and	Advanced listening and phonetic analysis
Magic fingers	Vowel stickers or each finger, children touch and say sounds.	Kinesthetic vowel practice.

4. Poetry, Tongue Twisters, and stories.

Short poems (red cat on a mat) and tongue twisters (“she sells sea shells”) sharpen articulation. Mini – stories illustrate tricky sounds w saw a bright long red dress and said “O”! but clever R ran away - so we say wrist. These narratives make abstract-phonetic rules memorable.

5. Results and Discussion

After one semester:

- Pronunciation improved noticeably pupils confidently distinguished diagraphs and blends.

- Vocabulary and reading fluency expanded, including numbers and colors.

- Memory and attention scores increased through sensory and movement tasks.

The method aligns with internation early – literacy standards while respecting local classroom realities.

Spiral Reading of Homophones

To help beginner learners memorize homophones such as *sun–son* or *pear–pair*, words can be arranged in a **circular spiral pattern**. Students read the words sequentially along the spiral, either with their eyes or by following with a finger. This encourages faster recognition and reinforces memory through repeated exposure and movement. By combining **visual, kinesthetic, and reading practice**, this method is especially effective for young learners who benefit from multi-sensory learning approaches.

Additionally, teachers can use **different colors** for each homophone pair or **time the reading activity** to make it more engaging. This interactive approach not only strengthens phonetic awareness but also adds an element of fun to vocabulary learning.

1. Sensory and Motor Activities.

- Play -Dough Creation:

Children squeeze, roll and stretch homemade play-dough while naming shapes, colors, or new vocabulary. This strengthens finger muscles and improves articulation, directly supporting clear speech.

2. Memory and Critical thinking.

•One – minute memory challenge A slide of random objects appears for 60 seconds. After it disappears, students answer questions such as “What color was the book?” or “How many flowers did you see?” The builds observation skills and strengthens English question and answer patterns.

Conclusion

Integrating phonetic drills, active games, tactile materials, and imaginative storytelling creates a powerful environment for young learners.

This approach strengthens speech organs, enriches vocabulary, and nurtures a love of English.

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