

Curriculum Corner: Playing with the Sounds Heard in Words

(Phonemic Awareness and Phonological Awareness)



In English class, we are working hard on being able to say the sounds in a word when we **hear** it. If you say "cat" the students should be able to say k aaaa t with spaces between the sounds so you know they hear 3 different sounds. If you say k a t, they should be able to hear that you said the sounds for cat.

We are working on four-sound and five-sound words now, which is a little tricky, especially with r, l, n, m and s sounds. For example, if you say "cats", they should be able to say 4 separate sounds k aaa t sss. They may miss the sounds for r, l, m, and n, such as in the words black, frog, camp, and hand. For example, hand should be h aaaa nnnnn d as four separate sounds. You can help them by saying 4-5 sound words that are going to show up in a story. Sometimes, try saying the sounds separated to see if they can hear and blend (sing) them together. Other times, you can say the word, then ask them to say all the sounds in the word for you, making sure they separate each sound.

There are also some fun ways to help build this skill. Playing silly games like Simon says touch the d eeee ssss k or Simon says touch your left h aaaa nnnn d help them hear the sounds. Poems, songs, and rhyming games also make them aware of the sounds in words.

These skills can be tricky for early readers, but they are also extremely important for later reading skills, such as sounding out new words and spelling. Also, working on this skill in English and/or in your home language will also help them hear the different sounds in French words too!