

E11: Clapping Names

Lesson Objective: Children will hear a word and repeat it while clapping out and then correctly identifying the number of syllables.

Materials

All you need for this activity is the same Word List you used for the previous activity, Drumming Names (E10).

Activity

Before starting the game, review with your child what a syllable is:

Adult: You did a good job drumming the parts
in all those words and names.
Those parts are called syllables, remember?
Say syllable.

Child: Syllable.

Video: How to play Clapping Names

Now show your child how to clap the syllables in a variety of familiar words and names. Print out our word list (the same list from Drumming Names (E10)) for examples of words of different lengths. Use names of people and characters that are very familiar to him: family, pets, friends, and favorite fictional characters. Make sure you use names of varying syllable lengths: e.g., Jeff, Fido, Granny, Elizabeth, Uncle Julio, etc.

Start with a series of one-syllable words and names. Then move to two-syllable compound words, followed by two-syllable non-compound words.

Adult: I am going to say a name, and I am going to clap
one time for each part, each syllable, of the name.
You tell me how many parts you hear.
Listen. Mom-my. Mom-my.
[Say name clearly. Say it again, clearly, while clapping syllables.]

Adult: Say it with me...

Child and Adult: Mom-my.

Adult: Say it again, and clap for each part of the word.

E11: Clapping Names (continued)

Child: Mom [clap] – my [clap]

Adult: Good job. Mommy is a word that has two parts, two syllables.

Once your child grasps the concept, have her say each word with you and clap with you. Eventually she should be able to hear and clap the syllables on her own.

When the child has the hang of hearing the difference between one-syllable and two-syllable words, move on to three-syllable words and names, and then a few four-syllable words and names.

After introducing all the different word lengths, give the child a mix of some one- and two-syllable names. Once she has a solid grasp of one- and two-syllable names, throw some three- and eventually four-syllable words into the mix.

Stick with this activity until the child has mastered the skill of hearing the difference between one- and two-syllable words and names. This is a critical step toward a child's ability to hear the individual sounds in words later on.

NOTE: For any error the child makes, have her repeat the use of her fingers under her chin and feel the number of syllables while she repeats the word. Then have her clap the word again.

Small Groups (2-5 children)

Adaptation: Read the main activity, watch the video, and follow the instructions above, with the following changes:

Review by drumming each child's name. Explain to the group, "Today we are going to clap names and words. Do you remember what the word parts are called? Syllables. Let's tap syl-la-ble. Now let's clap the word syllable. How many claps?"

Practice with first and last names as well as words from the printed word list. Let children take turns calling out different group members' names and then have the whole group clap out the syllables in the name that is called.