

Exercise Description: Phoneme Identification

Phoneme Identification presents a target syllable, such as ba, and then a distractor syllable, such as da. The syllables differ by a single phoneme. The participant clicks the sound button to hear the target syllable ba. The animals then present ba and da. The participant must identify the target syllable ba as different from the distractor syllable da and then click the animal that said ba.

Phoneme Identification's Goals

The goals of Phoneme Identification are to:

- Improve phoneme identification and discrimination (phonological awareness)
- Increase the speed at which the participant identifies and understands rapid, successive changes in sound (listening accuracy)
- Improve the participant's ability to hold sounds in memory (working memory)

How Phoneme Identification Accomplishes Its Goals

Phoneme Identification develops phonological awareness skills by helping the participant learn to distinguish between syllables that differ by an individual phoneme, such as the /b/ in ba and the /d/ in da. (A phoneme is the smallest unit of speech sound that distinguishes one word from another. See Phonological Awareness.)

Phoneme Identification accomplishes this goal by first presenting syllables where the duration of each consonant sound has been increased (for example, ba is initially presented as bbba) and where the intensity of each consonant sound has been enhanced relative to the vowel sound. As the participant progresses through the exercise, Phoneme Identification decreases the duration and emphasis, and eventually presents the syllables at the level of natural speech. Phoneme Identification also decreases the length of time between syllable choices as the participant progresses.

Phoneme Identification helps the participant develop listening accuracy by first presenting highly stretched and emphasized phonemes and adaptively decreasing the phoneme stretch and emphasis.

Phoneme Identification helps the participant improve working memory by challenging the participant to keep the target syllable in mind while identifying its match.

How Scores Are Calculated for Phoneme Identification

The score for Phoneme Identification is based on how far the participant advances through the 26 adaptive levels, which adjust phoneme duration and emphasis, for each of the 5 phoneme contrast pairs. The aggregate score for Phoneme Identification, Phonic Words, and Old MacDonald's Flying Farm determines the phonological awareness score.

How Phoneme Identification's Goals Relate to Your School's Goals

Because Phoneme Identification helps participants learn to recognize and discriminate words that differ by a consonant sound, Phoneme Identification prepares participants to master more advanced phonological awareness skills. These advanced skills, which are components of state curriculum goals, include:

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Language

- Decoding
- Blending sounds to form words
- Adding, deleting, or changing target sounds in order to change words