



Newcastle **A**ssessment of **P**honological **A**wareness (**NAPA**)

Manual and Record Book

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If you have any queries about the use of the assessment please contact Helen Stringer Helen.stringer@newcastle.ac.uk or visit www.research.ncl.ac.uk/phonologicalawareness



Newcastle Assessment of Phonological Awareness (NAPA)

Manual

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Newcastle Assessment of Phonological Awareness (NAPA)

Manual

What is this assessment for?

The aim of this assessment is to identify the starting point for the Newcastle Intervention for Phonological Awareness (NIPA) (Stringer, 2019) for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) & Key Stage 1 (KS1). It can be used with students of any age. It is possible that secondary age children with literacy difficulties have poor phonological awareness. This is not a standardised test but follows a developmental sequence (Rosner, 1993; Gillon, 2004; Anthony & Lonigan, 2004; Anthony & Francis, 2005; Carroll, Snowling, Hulme, & Stevenson, 2003).

It can be used for all children, but will be particularly helpful for assessing children with speech sound disorders, vocabulary and other language difficulties. Research indicates that children always develop phonological awareness skills in a large unit to small unit sequence (Anthony & Francis, 2005). Therefore, if children do not have good syllable level skills they will find it very difficult (if not impossible) to acquire phoneme level skills and at best those skills will be superficial.

It can also be used to assess readiness for reading intervention that is targeted at phoneme level (i.e. individual sound identification and blending such as in synthetic phonics), as these programmes assume that the child already has good syllable level skills, but rarely check. The NIPA can be used with children of all ages, as no matter how old they are, they will need good syllable level skills as well as good phoneme level skills to support reading and spelling.

Rhyme awareness prior to school entry is not thought to be a predictor of reading, but once the child can read, there is a closer association (Blaiklock, 2004). Reading interventions often assume that *rhyme awareness* is a syllable level skill (onset-rime) and is therefore acquired early. Rhyme identification, as an aspect of rhyme awareness, may well be possible when children can segment syllables; however, rhyme production (or rhyme generation) is obviously a very different skill and is only possible once children can confidently identify, delete and substitute initial sounds. Therefore only assessment of rhyme identification is included. Letter sound knowledge is included for all children because it is a strong predictor of reading (Adams, 1990). It is expected that typically developing children will know the sounds of all letters by entry into Year 1 (in the UK this is the year in which they have their sixth birthday).

A review of 52 controlled experimental studies (National Reading Panel 2000 report to US Congress) indicated that *intensive* phonological awareness instruction will have a significant effect on reading and spelling, with benefits for all children regardless of reading ability. There is research evidence indicating that children with age appropriate phonological awareness skills who also have poor language skills find it difficult to apply their phonological awareness skills to literacy. So for children with language difficulties it is not sufficient that they have age appropriate phonological awareness skills; they have to be more robust than those of typically developing children for the child to apply them in a new context (Zourou et



al., 2010). Furthermore, Anthony and Francis (2005) report a meta-analysis of cross sectional and longitudinal research on large populations (n=1189) of 2-8 year olds (Anthony & Lonigan, 2004) which concludes that phonological awareness is a single cognitive ability that manifests in a variety of skills. Individual differences in phonological awareness skills are stable across time and across different phonological awareness skills i.e. if a child finds phonological awareness difficult to acquire, they will always find it difficult. This evidence suggests that children who find phonological awareness difficult to learn would benefit from over-teaching (i.e. beyond age equivalent) of phonological awareness skills because they will continue to be slow learners once you have stopped your intervention and they will find it difficult to build on existing knowledge without support.

I suggest that you support children to attain phonological awareness skills up to syllable deletion and, if possible, the level of initial and final sound substitution before they progress into Reception Class (EYFS2) when they will be introduced to phonics. They may need continued support to acquire phoneme level skills at the same pace as their peers who are acquiring phonological awareness skills without additional support (Anthony & Francis, 2005).

Test construction

The aim of this assessment is to discover the child's zone of actual development (ZAD) and provide information about where intervention should be targeted so that it aligns with the child's zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1986). This is not a standardised test and therefore does not provide a standard score for comparison with typically developing children. It follows a developmental progression which, apart from the word to syllable to phoneme sequence, is unlikely to be linear. The language a child hears when growing up (ambient language) will influence the way their phonological awareness develops (Anthony & Francis, 2005). It is assumed that children who can perform a task will either do so on item one or two of the test, or will improve over a few items if the skill is emerging. The number of items in each section are therefore sufficient to give the child opportunity to demonstrate their ability to perform the task. The words are chosen based on their syllable and phoneme construction. Scaffolding and repetition of stimulus items is encouraged as this also an indicator of the child's zone of proximal development. You should start the intervention in the area where the child is starting to show development (ZPD); guidance is given for each section below.

How to use the assessment

General and item related instructions are *in italic*, examiner's script is **in bold**. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is used for some examples e.g. cat /kat/. Praise the child and give them verbal encouragement as appropriate.

Stick as closely to the **script** as you can (so as not to change the nature of the task) but please ensure the child understands the task. You can provide scaffolding as required. Scaffolding includes

- repetition or re-wording of instructions;
- performing the task in unison with the child;
- verbal emphasis;
- modelling;



- visual prompts;
- providing a forced alternative choice for the child.

On several occasions you are directed to *model and repeat* to the child, this is repeating back both the stimuli and the correct answer to provide the child with a model of the correct answer. Use the coloured vertical lines as visual prompts if required. If the child wants to point to the coloured lines and not clap this is fine, make sure they use left to right orientation. The child can mark the number of syllables in any way that seems appropriate e.g. clapping, building a tower of bricks. You may need to check they have one to one correspondence if this seems to be an unusually difficult task. Do not use written words as support in any of the assessment items (they are confusing not supporting).

Record if the child required scaffolding of any sort in the *Support* column (Yes/No). This will contribute to your decision making about where to start intervention e.g. if the child requires no scaffolding to succeed they are proficient at that level, but if they require scaffolding this indicates that they are still developing skills in that area (ZPD) and this should be the starting place for intervention.

References

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Queries

If you have any queries about the use of the assessment please contact Helen Stringer Helen.stringer@newcastle.ac.uk or visit www.research.ncl.ac.uk/phonologicalawareness

Materials required

Sheet with letters on (page 18)

Sheet with coloured, numbered columns (page 19)

Sheet with two horizontal lines (page 20)

These pages can be laminated for repeated use. As an alternative you could use different coloured bricks or cards.

Class results table

You can copy this freely for your own use. It is also available as a separate PDF and MS Word document for use online.

A Copy of the NAPA Record Book for each child

You can photocopy the record book freely for your own use. It is also available as a separate PDF and MS Word document for use online.



Sentence and word level skills

Counting words

You say:

We're going to play some games with words.

I'm going to say some sentences and we are going to count the words. Use the page with five vertical coloured lines. Like this:

Sam is a boy. Point to a line as you say each word.

Now you point. Point to the first line and if the child does not put their finger there model and repeat or provide appropriate scaffolding.

Sam is a boy. Repeat with demonstrations until the child can point independently while you say the words.

When the child can point to the lines as you say the sentence move on to the sentences below and record the child's response (number of words). If the child finds this too difficult try *Counting Syllables* before abandoning the assessment.

You say	Response	Support? Y/N
Jane is small		
Clouds are white		
Rain is wet		
The bird is red		
My car is grey		
The dog is big		
The horse is fast		
Jill is my best friend		
Max ran on the road		
Joe sat on the chair		
Total sentences correct without support		

Children who can segment syllables are likely to apply that skill at word level and therefore make more errors than children who are not yet able to segment syllables this is why these are all single syllable words. No matter how the child performs here it is important that you assess all children at syllable counting level. Go to Counting Syllables



Syllable level skills

Segmenting Syllables

For all children, clapping syllables or saying the word emphasising the syllables is adequate demonstration of syllable segmentation. Children who have one to one correspondence established can also be asked to numerically count the syllables. For the child to numerically count syllables is a more complex task and demonstrates a higher level of competence.*

You Say:

We are going to clap while we say some words and count the parts in the words.

We clap once for each part of the word. *Put the page with two horizontal lines on the table and point to each line in left to right sequence.*

Football. *Verbally segment the word 'foot-ball' and clap once for each syllable at the same time as you say it.*

Now we'll do it together, you clap too.

Football. *Verbally segment the word 'foot-ball' and clap once for each syllable at the same time as you say it.*

Yes, two claps. Football has two parts.

If the child does not clap twice, model and repeat the above sequence, telling the child to clap with you, or use the lines for pointing if the child will be more comfortable. You say:

Football. *Clap once as you say each part of the word. One two.*

You say:

That's right, football has two parts. We did two claps. Foot-ball.

Now continue with the words below. If the child prefers pointing, put the page with 5 vertical lines on the table. Credit the child with any form of segmentation: emphasis or pause in between syllables e.g. foot-ball; correct clapping; saying the number of syllables. Mark correct 1 or incorrect 0 in table below. Ask the child how many parts after each item, record answer.

You say:

Clap the parts of these words. *Repeat or supply scaffolding as required for each item and record if support provided. When the child has clapped the word ask*:*

How many parts in that word? *If the child cannot tell you, you tell them, say the word and clap each syllable.*

	Correct 1 or 0	How many parts?	Support? Y/N		Correct 1 or 0	How many parts?	Support? Y/N
greenhouse (2)				telephone (3)			
sunshine (2)				tomato (3)			
picnic (2)				helicopter(4)			
kitchen (2)				caterpillar (4)			
lollipop (3)				hippopotamus (5)			
Total correct without support				Total correct without support			

The aim is to find out if the child can segment syllables, whatever their preferred way of doing so. If the child can segment up to 3 syllable words with no adult help proceed to Syllable Deletion. If the child is not confident clapping or counting syllables start intervention with Syllable Segmentation. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.



Syllable Deletion

Put the page with two horizontal lines on the table. NB. You can say ‘miss off’ instead of ‘don’t say’. You say:

This time we are going to say some words and not say one of the parts. I’m going to say sunshine, and not say sun. Put your hand over the first line. Just say shine. Point to the last line. Model and repeat. Now you say sunshine. Now say it again and don’t say sun. Put your hand over the first line. Well done

Say --, now say it again and don’t say – (first syllable)			Say --, now say it again and don’t say – (last syllable)		
	Child response	Support? Y/N		Child response	Support? Y/N
Blackbird [black]	bird		Football [ball]	foot	
Tshirt [tee]	shirt		Popcorn [corn]	pop	
Toothbrush [tooth]	brush		Postbox [box]	post	
Biscuit [bis]	kit		Paper [per]	pay	
Rabbit [ra]	bit		Donkey [key]	don	
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 in total proceed to Initial Sound Identification. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention with Syllable Deletion. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.



Phoneme level skills

Initial sound identification

If the child makes any speech sound errors, check if they can say the sounds needed for this task, note their production and accept it as a correct answer e.g. if the child says /t/ for /k/, accept /t/ as correct for the first sound in car. You say: **We are going to play games with sounds now. You say these sounds after me. Record child's production:**

You say:	Record child's exact production
m	
k	
s	
b	

We are going to listen for the first sound in some words now. Listen.

Mat. *Emphasise the first sound by elongating it /m:/.*

The first sound in mat is /m/.

Now you tell me the first sound in sun.

If the child cannot say the first sound, model and repeat with additional scaffolding until they are successful. If they cannot do this with a high level of scaffolding, give them a model to copy and do no further items. If the child says /s/ you say:

Yes the first sound in sun is /s/, well done. Now let's do some more. What is the first sound in.....

You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
Car			Mouse		
Bat			Ball		
Moon			Sock		
Cap			Cow		
Sea			Box		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Final Sound Identification. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Initial Sound Identification. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.



Final sound identification

You say:

We are going to listen for the last sound in some words now. Listen.

House. *Emphasise the last sound by elongating it /s:/.*

The last sound in house is /s/.

You tell me the last sound in book.

If the child cannot say the last sound, model and repeat with additional scaffolding until they are successful. If they do not get to that point, give them a model to copy and do no further items. If the child says /k/ you say:

Yes the last sound in book is /k/, well done. Now let's do some more.

You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
Rack			Lamb		
Tub			Rub		
Room			Bus		
Back			Rock		
Mouse			Rib		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Initial Sound Deletion. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Final Sound Identification. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.

Sound deletion

You say:

We are going to miss off some sounds and make some silly words now. Listen. If I say mouse and don't say /m/ it is ouse /aʊs/.

You say mouse. *Wait for child to say mouse.*

Now say it again but don't say /m/. *Model and repeat with additional scaffolding until they are successful. If they do not get to that point, give them a model to copy and do no further items. If the child says ouse /aʊs/ you say:*

Yes mouse without the m is ouse. Well done, now let's do some more.

For the following give each item in the form: Say (word) now say it again but don't say /sound/. The first column omit the first sound; the second column omit the last sound.

Initial sound deletion	Final sound deletion



You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
Coat /k/			Make /k/		
Mat /m/			Horse /s/		
Bean /b/			Arm /m/		
Boat /b/			House /s/		
Mark /m/			Rice /s/		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Sound Substitution. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Initial Sound Deletion. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.

Sound substitution

Use any terminology here that will help the child perform the task e.g. change, swap, instead.

You say:

We are going to change some sounds and make some new words now. Listen

The first sound in cat is /k/, if I change the first sound to /b/ it will say bat.

Now you say cat. *Wait for child to say cat.*

What is the first sound in cat? *Wait for the child to say /k/.*

Now you change the first sound to /b/ what does it say now? *Wait for child to say bat, if necessary model and repeat the substitution with additional scaffolding until they are successful.*

Let's try another one.

You say fit. *Wait for child to say fit.* **Change the first sound to /p/ what does it say now?** *Wait for child to say pit, if necessary model and repeat the substitution with additional scaffolding. If they do not get to that point, give them a model to copy and do no further items.*

If the child says pit you say:

Yes if we change the first sound of fit to /p/ it says pit. Well done, now let's do some more.

For the following give each item in the form: Say (word) now change the first sound to /sound/.



You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
coat /b/			make /k/		
mat /k/			house /m/		
bean /m/			cap /m/		
hat /f/			dog /f/		
mark /p/			leg /p/		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Complex Sound Deletion. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Initial Sound Substitution. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.

Complex Sound Deletion

You say:

We are going to miss off some sounds and make some silly words now. Listen.

If I say play and don't say /p/ it is lay /lɛɪ/.

You say play. Wait for child to say play. Now say it again but don't say /p/ wait for child to say lay. Model and repeat with additional scaffolding until they are successful.

Let's try another one.

You say trap. Wait for child to say trap.

Now say it again but don't say /t/. Model and repeat with additional scaffolding until they are successful. If they do not get to that point, give them a model to copy and do no further items.

If the child says rap /ɹap/ you say:

Yes trap without the t is rap. Well done, now let's do some more.

For the following give each item in the form: Say (word) now say it again but don't say /sound/.



You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
star /s/			glass /g/		
smoke /s/			trap /t/		
swing /s/			plate /p/		
slide /s/			smack /s/		
cream /k/			snow /s/		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

Assess both Rhyme Identification and Letter-Sound Knowledge.



Rhyming

Rhyme identification

You say:

I am going to say some rhyming words now. Rhyming words sound the same at the end but not the start. So big and jig rhyme because they both have ig at the end. You listen to these words and say yes if they rhyme and no if they don't rhyme.

Listen. Do bat and hat rhyme? Wait for child to respond. If they say no, model and repeat until they are successful. If they do not get to that point, give them a model to copy and do no further items. If they say yes; model and repeat to them: Yes bat and hat rhyme because they both end in at. Here's another one:

Do bat and big rhyme? Wait for child to respond, if they say Yes, model and repeat with additional scaffolding until they are successful. If they do not get to that point, give them a model to copy and do no further items and end the assessment.

If they say No, model and repeat back to them: That's right, bat and big don't rhyme because one ends with at and one ends with ig. Let's do some more.

For the following words present in the format: do (word) and (word) rhyme?

<i>You say:</i>	<i>Child response:</i>	<i>Support? Y/N</i>	<i>You say:</i>	<i>Child response:</i>	<i>Support? Y/N</i>
rat hat			table chair		
pin tin			smile file		
car bat			smoke beach		
mouse house			fly pie		
horse wall			mat map		
Total Correct without support			Total Correct without support		

Assess Letter-sound Knowledge



Letter-sound knowledge

You say:

Now I want you to tell me the sound these letters say. Not their names, so not ay, bee, see, but /a/, /b/, /k/.

Show the child the next page (or laminated sheet) and point to letters. Record correct letter sound knowledge/child's response on this page (NB q and x are not included). If the child starts to fail ask them to look at the whole page and tell you the sounds of any letters they know. Do not scaffold for this task.

	Letter sound ✓/✗		Letter sound ✓/✗
s		j	
p		c	
d		v	
i		e	
r		z	
a		k	
y		b	
f		t	
w		g	
h		u	
o		l	
m		sh	
ch		n	
		Total correct	



s

p

d

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r

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y

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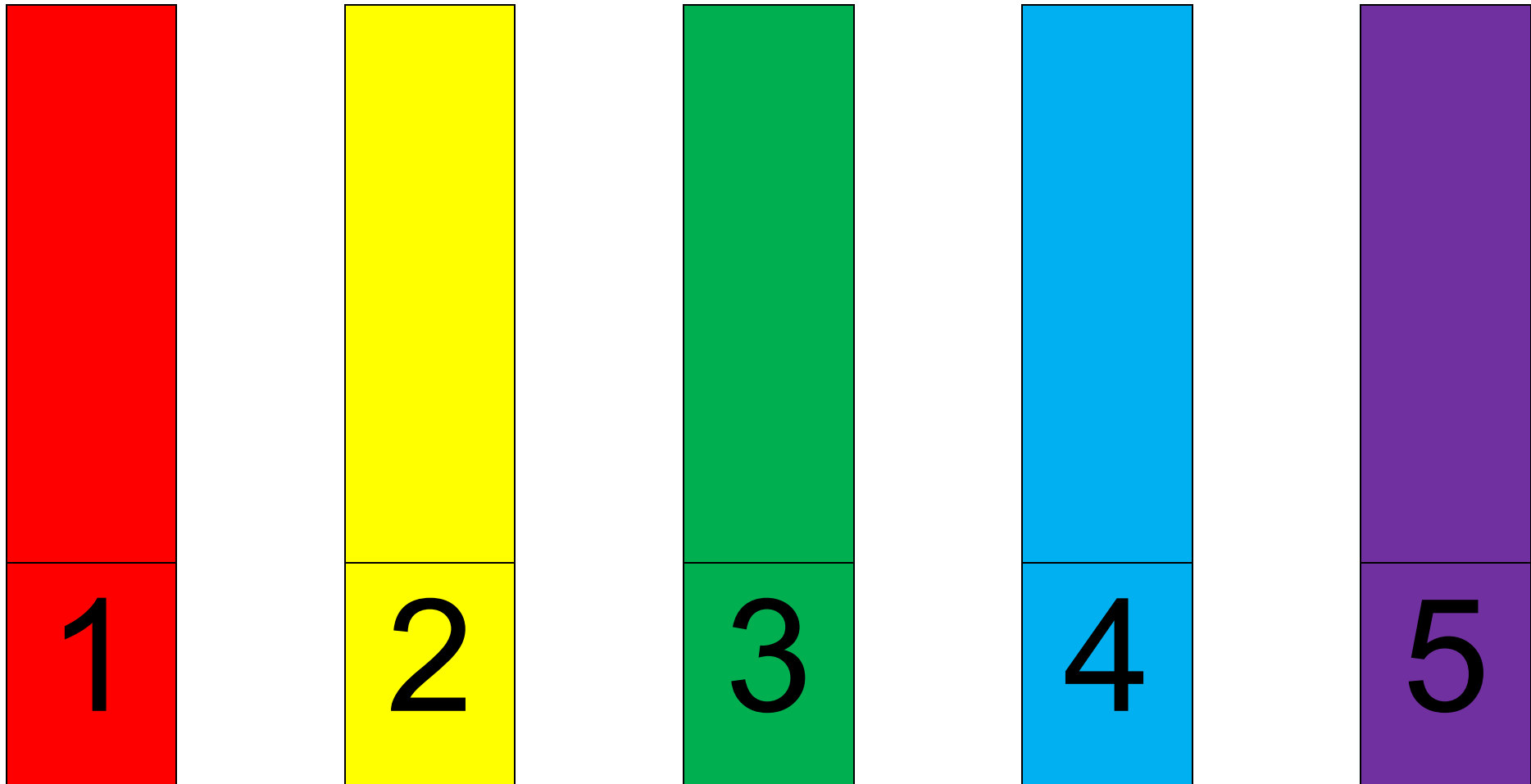
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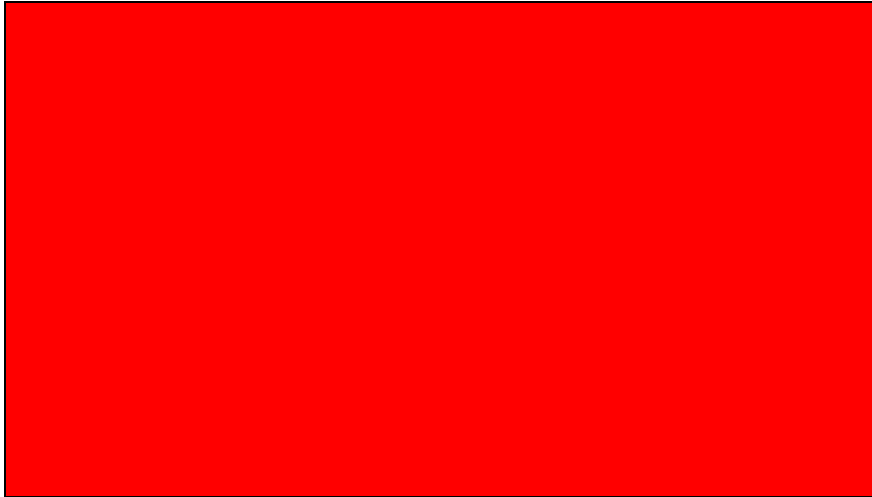
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Newcastle Assessment of Phonological Awareness (NAPA)



Class Record

Against each child's name record the number correct (C) and the number requiring support (S). The ratio of items correct to items requiring support will give you information about ZAD and ZPD. Start the intervention at the ZPD.

Class name:

Assessor initials:

Date:

Child's Name	Age y;mm	Counting words		Counting syllables		Syllable deletion		Initial sound ID		Final sound ID		Sound deletion		Sound substitution		Complex sound deletion		Rhyme ID		Letter-sound naming	
		C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	S	C	



**Newcastle Assessment of
Phonological Awareness (NAPA)
Record Book**

Name	
Date of birth	
Date of assessment	
Age (years; completed months)	
School/Nursery + year	
Administered by	
Notes	

Based on performance, indicate below where the child is competent or needs support and start intervention at the session* indicated in line with the ZAD and ZPD.

	Competent ✓ Not administered x	Needs support ✓	Start with session*:
Counting words			2
Segmenting syllables			3
Syllable deletion			4
Initial sound identification			5
Final sound identification			6
Sound deletion			7 then 8
Sound substitution			9 then 10
Complex sound deletion			12
Rhyme identification			11
Letter-sound knowledge			n/a

* Stringer, H. (2019). *The Newcastle Intervention for Phonological Awareness (NIPA)*. 4th edition Newcastle University, School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK.



Sentence and word level skills

Counting words

If the child finds this too difficult try Counting Syllables before abandoning the assessment

You say	Response	Support? Y/N
Jane is small		
Clouds are white		
Rain is wet		
The bird is red		
My car is grey		
The dog is big		
The horse is fast		
Jill is my best friend		
Max ran on the road		
Joe sat on the chair		
Total sentences correct without support		

Children who can segment syllables are likely to apply that skill at word level and therefore make more errors than children who are not yet able to segment syllables this is why these are all single syllable words. No matter how the child performs here it is important that you assess all children at syllable counting level. Go to Counting Syllables



Syllable level skills

Segmenting Syllables

	Correct 1 or 0	How many parts?	Support? Y/N		Correct 1 or 0	How many parts?	Support? Y/N
greenhouse (2)				telephone (3)			
sunshine (2)				tomato (3)			
picnic (2)				helicopter(4)			
kitchen (2)				caterpillar (4)			
lollipop (3)				hippopotamus (5)			
Total correct without support				Total correct without support			

The aim is to find out if the child can count syllables, whatever their preferred way of doing so. If the child can count up to 3 syllable words with no adult help proceed to Syllable Deletion. If the child is not confident clapping or counting syllables start intervention with Syllable Counting. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.

Syllable Deletion

Put the page with two horizontal lines on the table

Say --, now say it again and don't say – (first syllable)			Say --, now say it again and don't say – (last syllable)		
	Child response	Support? Y/N		Child response	Support? Y/N
Blackbird [black]	bird		Football [ball]	foot	
Tshirt [tee]	shirt		Popcorn [corn]	pop	
Toothbrush [tooth]	brush		Postbox [box]	post	
Biscuit [bis]	kit		Paper [per]	pay	
Rabbit [ra]	bit		Donkey [key]	don	
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		



If the child scores more than 8 in total proceed to Initial Sound Identification. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention with Syllable Deletion. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.

Phoneme level skills

Sound production check

<i>You say:</i>	<i>Record child's exact production</i>
m	
k	
s	
b	

Initial sound identification

You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
Car			Mouse		
Bat			Ball		
Moon			Sock		
Cap			Cow		
Sea			Box		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Final Sound Identification. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Initial Sound Identification. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.



Final sound identification

You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
Rack			Lamb		
Tub			Rub		
Room			Bus		
Back			Rock		
Mouse			Rib		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Initial Sound Deletion. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Final Sound Identification. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.

Sound deletion

Initial sound deletion			Final sound deletion		
You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
Coat /k/			Make /k/		
Mat /m/			Horse /s/		
Bean /b/			Arm /m/		
Boat /b/			House /s/		
Mark /m/			Rice /s/		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Sound Substitution. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Initial Sound Deletion. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.



Sound substitution

You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
coat /b/			make /k/		
mat /k/			house /m/		
bean /m/			cap /m/		
hat /f/			dog /f/		
mark /p/			leg /p/		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

If the child scores more than 8 correct proceed to Complex Sound Deletion. If the child scores less than 8, or required scaffolding to achieve correct responses, start intervention at Initial Sound Substitution. Also assess letter-sound knowledge.

Complex Sound Deletion

You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N	You say:	Child response:	Support? Y/N
star /s/			glass /g/		
smoke /s/			trap /t/		
swing /s/			plate /p/		
slide /s/			smack /s/		
cream /k/			snow /s/		
Total correct without support			Total correct without support		

Go straight to letter-sound knowledge.



Letter-Sound Knowledge

Letter-sound knowledge

s		j	
p		c	
d		v	
i		e	
r		z	
a		k	
y		b	
f		t	
w		g	
h		u	
o		l	
m		sh	
ch		n	
		Total correct	

