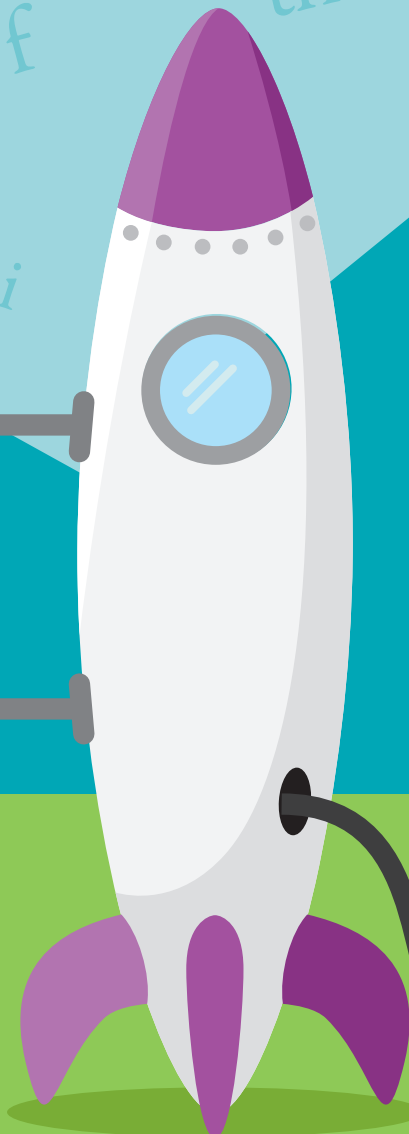




# COUNTDOWN

sh Making Countdown Active



Ideas for Increasing  
Students' Active Participation  
in Countdown Activities



This document contains ideas that will help you actively engage your students in Countdown's activities using movement and/or manipulatives. The ideas are broken into sections by skill area (beginning sound isolation, phoneme segmentation, letter identification, etc.). Within each skill area, there are suggestions and ideas for specific activities in Countdown Units 1–16.

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## Beginning Sound Isolation (BSI) Activities

“Tap and Slap” (for use with any BSI activity) - Students “tap” their desk or leg with a pointer finger for the beginning sound of a word and then gently “slap” their desk or leg for the whole word. They can also “tap” and “slap” the object they are referring to (e.g. “/p/, pencil” while tapping and slapping a physical pencil).

### PEEL THAT SOUND

Use **Countdown Sort and Play Cards** - Before Round 2 of Peel That Sound, hand each student one card and tell them to say the word to themselves, figuring out the beginning sound (cards given should not begin with a consonant blend). When an object appears on the screen for Round 2 of *Peel That Sound*, have students peel the beginning sound and then look at their cards. If a student has a matching beginning sound, have them stand up, jump up, or wave their hand and then say the beginning sound and the whole word.

### PEEL AND SORT

Students can use their working boards and a color tiles to physically sort according to beginning sounds in Peel and Sort. Have students use their markers to draw a line down the middle of the board when oriented horizontally. Before clicking to move the new icon into the correct category, have students move their color tile to the corresponding side of their boards. Students display boards for the teacher to give a sense of which students are getting it and which still need practice.

### PEEL AND SAY

If a student's name begins with the same sound as all three images on the screen, have that student jump up, stand and turn around, or simply wave his or her hands in the air.

### THIS OR THAT?

Have students raise their left hand for the image on the left or their right hand for the image on the right while answering. They can also touch their left or right ear to give a more subtle answer that other students may not see.

## Rhyming Activities

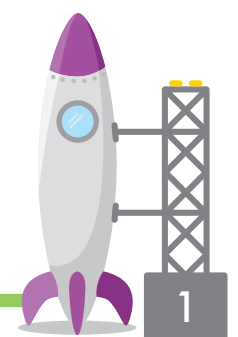
### WHICH WORDS RHYME?

For each round, assign three students to represent one of the three words/images on the screen, and have them all stand up. Each student repeats his or her word, and then the student with the non-rhyming word sits down. The two standing students say their words again to confirm that the words rhyme.

## Phonemic Awareness: Phoneme Blending Activities

### MYSTERY BAG: BLENDED SOUNDS & WHAT'S THAT WORD?: INDIVIDUAL SOUNDS

Teacher points to a student for each sound to be blended into a word; after all sounds are assigned, those students repeat their sounds in quick succession, and then all students say the blended word.





## Phonemic Awareness: Phoneme Segmentation Activities

### STRETCH THOSE SOUNDS

Students, in rows or in a circle, do a "round robin" with segmenting the sounds. All students stretch the sounds with their fingers. Teacher displays the icon and names it (e.g., **ice**). All students repeat. Student 1 says the first segmented sound (e.g., /ī/), Student 2 (next in line/ circle) says the next segmented sound (e.g., /s/) until all sounds in that word have been said. All students then repeat the word (e.g., **ice**), pulling fingers back into a closed fist. Next word (e.g., **zoo**) continues in the same manner with Students 3 and 4 segmenting the sounds.

### COUNT THE SOUNDS

- Teachers can make a set of two cards (using index cards or card stock) for each student; one with the numeral 2 and one with the numeral 3 (as shown below). Rather than finger-stretching, students can tap the dots on the numeral cards as the word is stretched and then hold up the card with the corresponding number of sounds. Alternately, the students can display either two or three color tiles on a working board.



- Have students stand in a line or a circle. When the new image pops up on the screen, name the image, and then stretch the sounds with the students. As each sound is said, each student takes a step, a hop, or a stomp forward/backward/left/right. Students then tell the teacher how many steps/hops they took. Teacher clicks to move the icon to the correct side to verify the answer.
- Place three shapes on the floor in a line (or make a few sets) and write the numerals 1, 2, 3 on the shapes. Have students step on a shape for each sound, always beginning on shape 1, and then count the sounds. Alternatively, use floor tiles or carpet squares.

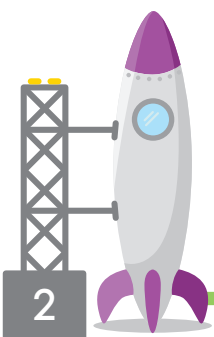


## Phonemic Awareness: Phoneme Manipulation Activities

### SOUND SWAP

#### Extension/Challenge:

Ask students to think of other words with the same ending (rime) as in the activity in the Teacher Guide, and then have them tell you the individual sound they swapped. (Example: **chin**, /ch/ /īn/; change first sound to /w/ to get **win**. Student then offers "**pin**" and tells you that he or she swapped /p/ for /w/.





## Alphabetic Principle: Letter ID Activities

### THIS LETTER OR THAT?

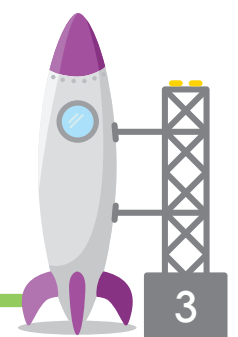
- Have students raise their left hand for the image on the left or their right hand for the image on the right while answering. They can also touch their left or right ear to give a more subtle answer that other students may not see.
- Alternative Sort Activity (\*requires teacher prep):
  1. Pull the **Countdown Sort and Play Cards** for the letters that will be sorted in the activity you are replacing. (Take care not to include cards whose initial sounds do not match with their initial letters; e.g. phone begins with /f/, not /p/.)
  2. Either display the initial sort screen from *Countdown Online*, or write the letters to be sorted in two columns on the board.
  3. Evenly distribute all cards for one sort (example: **m** vs. **p**) to students. Name the icon as you hand the card to each student. Tell students not to turn the cards over; they should only be looking at the icon side.
  4. Call on one student at a time to say the isolated beginning sound and then the whole word associated with their icon card. The student then walks to the side of the board that matches the beginning letter.
  5. The rest of the class gives a thumbs up or down to agree or disagree with the choice. If needed, the student moves to the correct side.
  6. The teacher chooses another student to continue in the same manner.

\* **OR** \*

1. Students receive cards in the same manner as described above.
2. All students sort themselves on one side or the other of the board/room simultaneously.
3. Once all students are on one side or the other, the group on one side of the room takes turns reading their card names (this should be quick; teacher can point to each student to make this fast).
4. All students act as checkers, giving a thumbs up or down to show if the student and card are on the correct side. Students move as needed.
5. The second group reads the names of their cards.

### FIND THAT LETTER (\*requires students to be able to write letters)

Give students a SyllaBoard™, a dry-erase marker, and an eraser from their *Countdown Student Kit*. When the three letter tiles appear on the board, have students write their answers on their boards and hold them up when you give them a cue. If any students have written the wrong letter, say the names of the icons again with the isolated beginning sound (e.g. "/ă/, ax; /ă/, astronaut; /ă/, apple") and then ask all students to chorally name the letter that makes that beginning sound. Click to display the correct answer.





### WHICH LETTER? (\*requires students to be able to write letters)

Give students a SyllaBoard, a dry-erase marker, and an eraser from their *Countdown Student Kit*. When the three letter tiles appear on the board, have students write their answers on their boards and hold them up when you give them a cue. If any students have written the wrong letter, say the name of the icon again with the isolated beginning sound (e.g. "/h/, hat"), and then ask all students to chorally name the letter that makes that beginning sound. Click to display the correct answer.

## Alphabetic Principle: Encoding Activities

### GUESS MY WORD

#### Extension/Challenge (\*requires students to be able to write letters):

Give each student a SyllaBoard, a dry-erase marker, and an eraser from their *Countdown Student Kit*. When the scrambled letters appear on the board, say the sounds in the correct order of the whole word, but do not click to move the tiles yet. Have students write the letters in the correct order as you say the sounds again. Make it clear that the letters on the board are the only letters needed to spell the word. Once all students have spelled the word on their boards, if any students have spelled the word incorrectly, say the first sound and ask students to name the corresponding letter, and so on. Then, click to move the tiles into their correct positions. Have all students say the complete word and then click to reveal the image. If every student spells the word correctly, skip asking them to name the letter to save time.

## Alphabetic Principle: Decoding Activities

### TOUCH & SAY

Give students three color tiles, poker chips, blocks, or a strip of paper with three boxes on it. As students say the sounds in the written word displayed on the board, they touch an object/box for each sound and then sweep their pointer fingers left to right to blend the sounds together into a complete word.

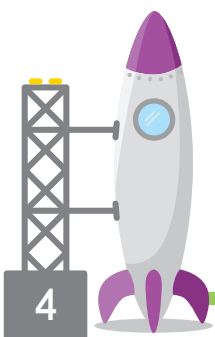


### PHRASE READING

- Use the same process as in *Touch & Say* above, giving students three tiles, objects, or boxes to touch as you *Touch & Say* with them for the decodable words. They can use these boxes for the decodable Heart Words as well.



- After reading the whole phrase the first time, have students quickly act out the phrase each time they repeat it. For example: "hug my dog" - students pretend to hug a dog while saying the phrase; "not for him" - hold pointer finger up and wag it back and forth as if to say "no."





## Sight Word Automaticity Activities

### WHERE'S THAT HEART WORD? (\*requires teacher prep)

Create large index cards with the Heart Words for the week. You may choose to just use the three words specifically taught during the current unit, or you may use all previous cards in addition to the word cards for the unit. Pass out all word cards, one to a student. Have students line up in random order and then ask the following questions, inserting one of the words from the cards:

Which word is last?

Which word is before the word \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Which word is first?

Which word is after the word \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Which word is next?

Which word is in the middle of the row?

Which word is at the end of the row?

Which word is at the beginning of the row?

The remaining students in the class answer the questions. Once each word card has been identified/read at least once, switch card holders until all students have had a chance to hold a card.

