

## **Poor phonological processing ability**

Phonological awareness can be developed by a variety of methods.

For example:

- Rhyming and alliteration – suitable techniques range from simple rhyming songs and games to more structured activities involving making books with rhyming or alliterative themes, playing rhyming snap or ‘odd-one-out’ games with pictures and objects; using plastic letters to discover and create rhyming word families
- Deletion of the first sound (e.g. ‘near–ear’) or of the last sound (e.g. ‘party–part’), or of whole syllables (e.g. saying ‘alligator’ without the ‘all’)
- Elision of the middle sound (e.g. snail–sail) or syllable (‘alligator’ without the ‘ga’)
- Correspondence – e.g. tapping out the number of syllables in a word

Many of these activities are very suitable for playing at home, so parental involvement is strongly encouraged.

Recommended computer-based activities for practising phonological skills include Tizzy’s Toybox and Talking Animated Alphabet (Sherston); Letterland; and Sounds and Rhymes (Xavier). In general, younger students respond well to phonological training activities and skills swiftly improve. However, some dyslexic students may have more persistent difficulties that will require particularly careful literacy teaching. In such cases, a well-structured multisensory approach incorporating plenty of practice in phonic skills (over-learning) is recommended.

Without phonological awareness training, many students with such weaknesses are liable to develop an over-reliance on visual (whole word) and contextual strategies in reading (especially if they are bright). They can easily slip through the net, only to re-appear as a student who is failing in reading and spelling later in their schooling.