

- Ages 4 to 7 is a critical time for learning to read.
- Read with your child for 20 minutes a day. Take turns reading, listening, and discussing.
- With your child, listen to sentences and clap, drum, or tap the number of words.
- Say a sound and see if your child can match the sound to a letter or letters.
- Choose a word. Count how many sounds are in the word. The number of letters in a word does not necessarily match the number of sounds in a word.
- Practice blending individual sounds together. You can do this out loud with real words (e.g., /c/ /a/ /t/ -> cat) or made-up silly words (e.g., /m/ /i/ /b/ -> mib).
- Play rhyming games by saying words that rhyme (e.g., cat, pat, sat, mat).
- Say words that begin with the same sound (e.g., pet, park, play).
- Counting Syllables: Ask your child to place their hand under their chin and say a word. Each time your child's chin bumps into their hand they are saying a part of a word with a vowel, this is called a syllable. Repeat and count how many syllables are in the word.

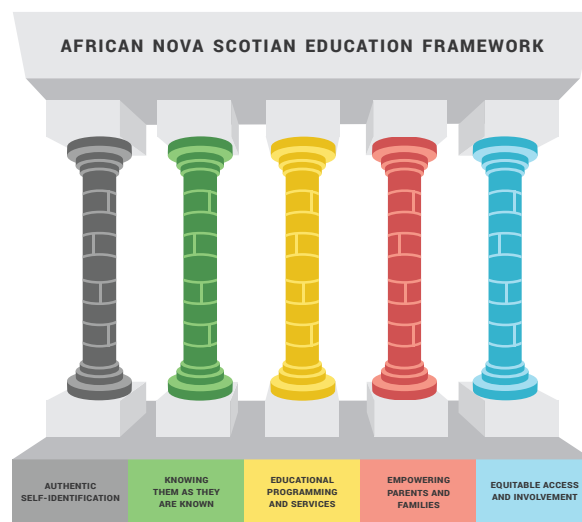
Questions to ask your child's teacher:

- What are my child's strengths?
- What skills do my child need to work on at home?
- How are you supporting my child in the classroom?
- When may we meet next to discuss my child's progress?

About the ACSB

ACSB is dedicated to collaborating across the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and with students, families, and the community to build a Nova Scotian education system that is equitable, culturally responsive, and a safe learning environment for all learners.

The pillars of the **African Nova Scotian Education Framework** outline the essential themes necessary to address the systemic barriers in education, allowing ANS/Black students to be heard, seen, inspired, and supported so they can reach their promise and potential.



For more information, contact:

African Canadian Services Branch
Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
 4th Floor Brunswick Place
 2021 Brunswick Street / PO Box 578
 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2S9
 (902) 424-3151
acsb@novascotia.ca

Empowering Parents and Families

Phonological Awareness



Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome to Inclusive Education! As your child's first teacher and advocate, we recognize the critical role you play in your child's education. For that reason, Empowering Parents and Families is one of the five pillars of the African Nova Scotian Education Framework.

Our actions are intentional. We strive to create opportunities to empower you, and your child's system of support, as essential decision makers regarding programming and supports for your child. This is achievable through an authentic and collaborative partnership between home, school, and the community that supports and strengthens your child's well-being and achievement. To achieve this goal, we provide information, tools, and training.

You can use this brochure to increase your awareness of grade-level reading benchmarks, and what reading behaviours to look for when reading with your child at home. A perforated edge has been added allowing you to easily separate the panels. You can place the helpful tips in a highly visible area, like the refrigerator door, as a reminder to read and have fun!

Yours in education,

African Canadian Services Branch (ACSB)

“Sankofa” is derived from the Akin Twi and Fante languages of Ghana, loosely meaning “to retrieve.” The concept is represented by the Sankofa bird, with feet facing forward and head turned to retrieve an egg on its back. The symbol is presented on ACSB materials as a reminder that “in order to understand our present and ensure our future, we must know our past.”



SANKOFA

What is phonological awareness?

Playing with the sounds in our language is fun for children! It also helps them grow important skills that support learning to read!

Phonological awareness refers to thinking about the sounds in a word and includes **phonemic awareness**, the ability to hear, and manipulate individual sounds that form words. Phonemic awareness is a critical skill necessary for students to learn so they can “sound out” simple words, helping them to read and spell.



Phonological awareness includes:

- recognizing that words are made of letters and sounds
- hearing and saying rhyming words
- recognizing the same sound in different words (e.g., **cat**, **can**, **cut**)
- recognizing individual sounds in words (e.g., /**c**/ is the initial sound in the word “**cat**” and /**t**/ is the ending sound of the word “**cat**”)
- making a new word by substituting one sound (e.g., **cat-cot**) or ending sounds (e.g., **cat-can**)
- using all the letter sounds together to say a word (e.g., /c/ /a/ /t/ - “**cat**”)
- deleting sounds in words (e.g., say the word “**cat**” and ask your child to repeat the word without the “/c/” sound—the new word is “**at**”)

Year-End Phonological Awareness in Grades Primary to 1

Primary

Phonological Awareness:

- recognizing words are made of letters and sounds
- hearing and saying rhyming words
- hearing and saying the sound of letters at the **beginning**, **end**, and **middle** of 2- and 3-letter words (e.g., **big**, **big**, **big**)
- beginning to “sound out” words, identifying each letter sound and putting the sounds together

Grade 1

Phonological Awareness:

- hearing and saying words with the same
 - beginning sound (e.g., **balloon**/**beach**)
 - ending sound (e.g., **help**, **soap**)
 - middle sound (e.g., **cat**/**tap**)
- changing the sound at the beginning of a word to make a new word (e.g., **hoop**/**loop**)
- adding a sound to the end of a word to make a new word (e.g., **win**/**wind**)
- putting letters and sounds together to make and read words

For more information about reading behaviours at different reading levels, visit the curriculum section of the EECDD website:

<https://curriculum.novascotia.ca>



Other brochures in this series can be found in the Publications section of the ACSB website at www.ednet.ns.ca/acs/home.

