



Chapter Nine: Classroom Music Activities

Goals

- To foster musical development in all children
- To create activities that activate all parts of the brain.
- To teach the elements of music
- To meet the state and national standards for music education

Planning Musical Learning Activities that Activate the Whole Brain

- **Auditory learners:** Use activities and promote experiences that develop auditory discrimination. Auditory learners tune in to the sounds of music. They hear and imitate rhythms and melodies. They can discriminate between different types of sound (environmental, noise, and musical), pitches (high and low), and timbre (wood, metallic).
- **Visual learners:** Visual learners recognize visual cues, musical notation, watching a performance, and looking at instruments as they are played.
- **Kinesthetic learners:** Most students excel through kinesthetic means: touching, feeling, experiencing something with hands-on activities. Kinesthetic learners will enjoy playing instruments, singing songs, and moving to music.

Music and the Brain: Brain Activation with Different Stimulation and Levels of Activity

Performing music makes neural connections between various parts of the brain. Auditory and motor activities take place through playing an instrument. Rhythm and melody instruments require motor coordination. Reading music involves visual activity. Singing songs and recalling or reading lyrics activate language processing areas of the brain. Dancing or moving to the rhythm of music stimulates the brain's motor areas. Music is processed differently for different people depending on kind of music and musical background.

- Familiar music activates Broca's area (left hemisphere)
- Rhythm notes are activated in Broca's area and the cerebellum
- Harmony activates the left side of the brain more than the right in the inferior temporal cortex.
- Timbre activated the right hemisphere (the only musical element that did)
- Pitch activated an area on the left back of the brain - the precuneus.
- Melody activated both sides of the brain
- Composite listening - Left and Right Hemisphere - Auditory Cortex
- Understanding lyrics - Wernicke's Area

Teaching the Elements of Music



Rhythm and Tempo Activities

- Steady Beat - Find the beat, march the beat, tap the beat, etc.
- Conduct the beat using traditional conducting patterns.
- Clap the rhythm of syllables in names, words, phrases, etc.
- Long vs. short and fast vs. slow
- Locate the accents in words.
- Rhythm echoes with Words, Jump Rope Rhymes, phrases, etc.
- Raps and Rhymes
 - Keep a steady beat with lap, clap, tap or drums, tambourine, etc.
 - Find a recording or MIDI file of a drum beat and rap over a drumbeat.
- Rhythm Echoes - See the rhythm chapter and powerpoint presentations.
 - Aural (listening) echoes - Play a regular rhythmic pattern and have the child echo. See the rhythm echoes powerpoint presentations. Generally you will want to be consistent with your patterns. Use a 4/4 Common time signature. Make each pattern 4 beats long and stick with a walking tempo. Use rhythms with quarter notes and eighth notes in the beginning. You can begin to introduce syncopation as the children become more tuned in. Put the rhythm in your hands, your feet, or play a rhythm instrument.
 - Introduce rhythm notation See the rhythm chapter and powerpoint presentations.
 - Whole Note - Eagle - Glide 2 3 4
 - Half Note - Penguin - Slide 2 Slide 2
 - Quarter Note - Bear - Walk walk walk walk
 - Eighth Note - Squirrel - Run run run run Run run run run
- Clap rhythms of well-known songs or nursery rhymes and try to recognize the rhythm.
- Use the Indian Gathering Drum to play rhythm echoes. Make it a relay game and line the students up. As you play a 4-beat rhythm, each child echoes and hands off the beater to the next child.
- Draw a musical timeline and create symbols for long, short tones.
- Count how many beats as you play or sing tones - or watch the second hand on the clock.
- Introduce rests - timed silence.
- Introduce time signatures and count beats in measures.
- Explore duple and triple meters. 4/4 vs. 3/4
- Use a metronome to explore the beats per minute with various tempos.
- Use musical terminology for tempos - accelerando, rallentando, etc.
- For older students
 - Fractions and rhythmic proportions
 - Rhythm Math

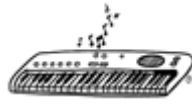


Melody Activities

- Sing! Begin with simple repetitive songs with choruses.
- Melody echoes - What is your name? etc.
- Use Solfege - do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do (See
- Sing solfege echoes.
- Help children discriminate between lows and highs, melodies that go up, down or stay the same.
- Use body signals from solfege - or create your own using hands to show the rise and fall of the melody.
- Help children hear intervals - the distance between the pitches of the melody may be steps from one note to an adjacent note, or skips where pitches leap from one to another skipping a tone or tones.
- Use the colored bells to introduce the scale of 8 tones from low to high.
- Sing Do Re Mi from the Sound of Music and ring the bells as you sing the scale.
- Teach children how to ring the bells appropriately.
- Discuss the similarities between high do and low do.
- Sing words or phrases and point out the natural melody in comparison to the spoken word or phrase.
- Sing a story! Make up opera recitatives and arias!
- Read songs from the colored bell powerpoint collection.
- Bells - Have children learn to echo your playing or singing using the step bells on tone bars from the glockenspiel or xylophone.
- Demonstrate low and high pitches in relationship to the size of the bars on the bells.
- Teach breathing and phrasing as you sing with children. Take deep breaths and let the air out slowly - singing through the phrase. Use vowel sounds to help children use their "vocal cavity."
- Teach enunciation of words and the difference between vowels and consonants.
- Play the piano and demonstrate the treble clef and bass clef sections of the keyboard.
- Create pentatonic (5-tone) melodies using just the black keys on the piano.
- Try the question and answer phrasing with just the black tone bars of your glockenspiel, tone bars, etc. Count 2 measures for and improvise a "musical question" with the black keys or bars. Have the child improvise an "answer" on the other tone bars. Typically one person can use the 5 lowest black bars and the other can use the higher 5 black tone bars.
- Use an electronic keyboard. Preferably use a MIDI keyboard that you can connect to the computer.
- Teach children to listen and imitate melodies on the keyboard.



Harmony and Form



Harmony is formed either by sounds that are played or song at the same time (homophonic) or by sounds that are created with simultaneous melodies (like a round or canon). Form is the design of music, incorporating repetition, contrast, unity, and variety. The organization of music, its shape or structure.

- Play chords on a guitar, piano, or autoharp as you sing songs.
- Electronic keyboards frequently have chord progressions and musical styles.
- Demonstrate chords using the colored bells. Discuss which tones sound good together (consonant) and which tones seem to clash (dissonant).
- Demonstrate the I chord, V chord, and IV chord. Example - La Bamba
- Sing Rounds or Canons.
- Create an "Ostinato" - or repeated patterns that continue beneath a melody. (Example: Ding Ding Dong repeated through out "Are You Sleeping?")
- Listen to polyphonic music, rounds, canons, fugues as the melodies combine at different times. Good examples might be Handel's Messiah.
- Look for repeated patterns. Try the colored bell songs in the powerpoint presentation. The colors clearly show that some phrases are identical and others are different. Look for repetitions in notation - rhythm, melody, chord patterns, etc.
- Explore song forms - verse/chorus, ABA, AABA, ABC, etc. Repeated patterns unify the song form.
- Make up repeated choruses and patterns in raps and songs.



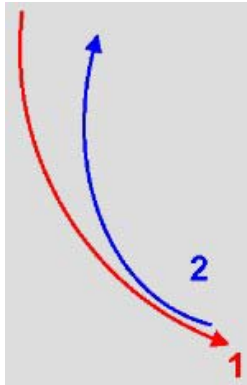
The Expressive Elements of Music - Add Variety and Contrast to Music

Timbre - The distinctive quality of tone of a sound.

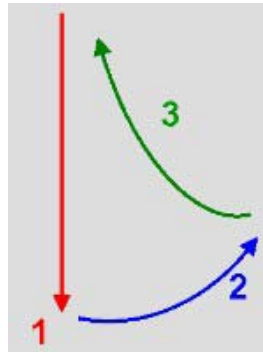
- Listen to sounds around you.
- Using rhythm instruments - divide into 3 groups and instruct different groups to echo.
 - Wood - woodblock, guiro, sticks, etc.

- Metal - triangle, cowbell, tambourine, cymbals, etc.
 - Skins - drums (some tambourines have both skin and metal)
- Create sound effects for stories.
- Listen for high, middle, low, loud, soft, long, short.
- Use additional adjectives for descriptions - shrill, thump, rumble, crash, clunk, etc.
- Create your own instruments.
- Listen to musical instruments and identify instrument families.
 - Strings
 - Brass
 - Woodwinds
 - Percussion
- Listen to different timbres in voices. (Hide students and have them try to recognize voices of classmates, teachers, etc.)
- Learn the voice ranges by sung example or by families of instruments (recorders, saxophones, etc)
 - Soprano
 - Alto
 - Tenor
 - Bass
- Look inside a piano
 - See how the hammers hit the strings
 - Examine the long/low and shorter/high strings
 - Watch the vibration of the strings
- Demonstrate the concept of vibration
 - Examine guitar strings, frets, and harmonic proportions as you divide the string into half, fourths, etc.
 - Use bells to discuss vibration by letting them ring and then stopping the vibration with the mallet (or resting the mallet on the tone bar in order to not allow vibration.
 - Create a homemade string instrument with rubber bands
 - Play combs with wax paper to feel vibration

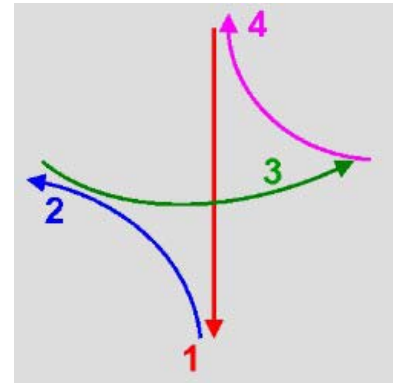
Conducting Patterns



2/4 Time



3/4 Time



4/4 Time

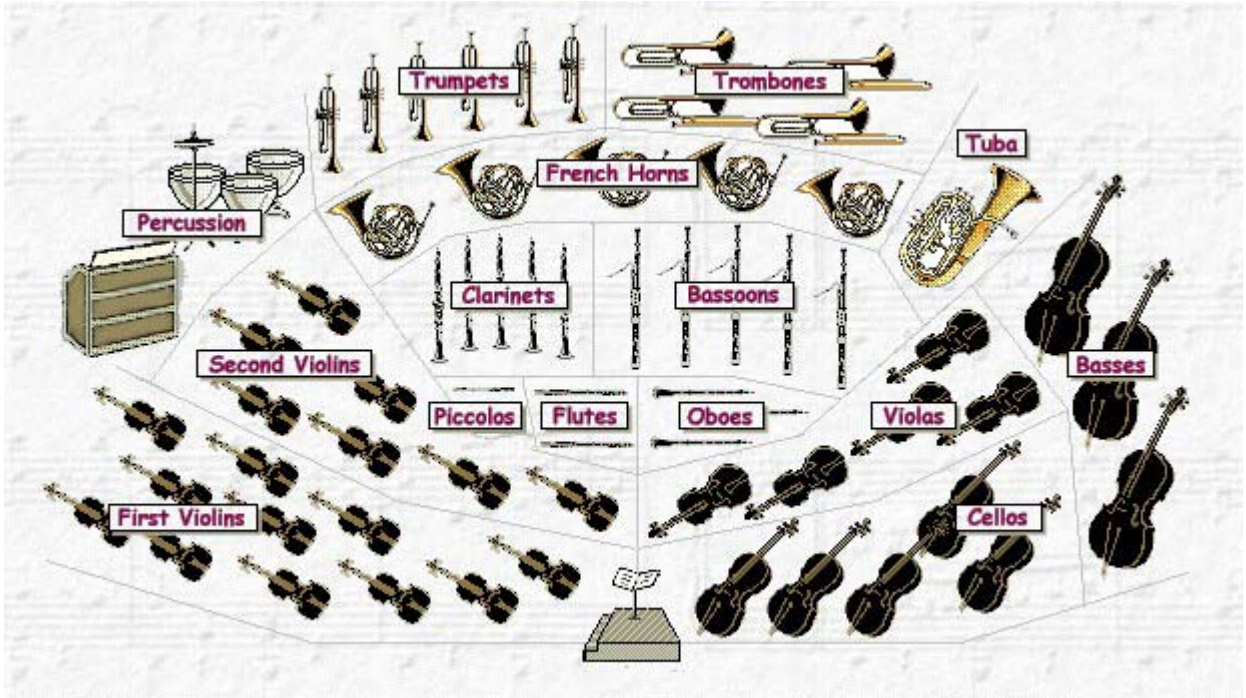
Tempo - The pace at which music moves, based on the speed of the underlying beat.

- Use a metronome to determine fast and slow tempos.
- Count the number of beats per minute
- Discuss the musical terminology for various tempos from slow to fast to very fast.
- Move, dance, walk, run, etc. according to tempo directions..
- Use musical terminology to give directions to children.
- Conduct tempo changes from faster - accelerando to slower - rallentando or ritardando.
- Conduct rhythm patterns and insert changes in tempo, rubato (expressive), or fermata (hold)
- Teach children to conduct the class.
- Use children's songs of varied tempos.
- Locate music for classroom transitions according to tempo, volume, energy, etc.
- Use slower tempos for classroom relaxation activities.

Dynamics - The volume of sound; the loudness or softness of a musical passage.

- Teach volume dynamics and
- Show children markings - f for forte and p for piano.
- Discuss the early name of the piano and one of the first keyboards to play both loud and soft - the pianoforte.
- Sing, speak, play softly - piano or pianissimo.
- Conduct volume changes by raising arms for crescendo and lowering arms for decrescendo.
- Create drum rolls
- Show dynamic markings for crescendo and decrescendo.

- Develop sensitivity to loud and soft music in movie scores.
- Discuss the appropriate dynamics for events in a story.



Literacy Elements

See the Introductory discussion of the English Language Arts standards and Mathematics standards for suggestions on how to use music to reinforce learning.

- Find the rhymes in songs
- Sing and rap nursery rhymes, jump rope rhymes
- Listen to and play syllables
- Create word rhythms and accents
- Use vowel sounds in singing
- Enunciate Consonants
- Examine diphthongs in singing
- Vocabulary and Concept Development
- Repetition and Memorization
- Patterns in pitch or tone
- Reading lyrics
- Sing songs that tell stories
- Use stories with music
- Listen and sing songs about characters and events. (Folk Songs, Opera, Musicals, Cartoons)

- Listen to background "mood" music in a movie of story.
- Sing songs for celebrations - Holidays, Patriotic, Multicultural
- Learn concepts of print in music notation
- Learn concepts of tone color and timbre
- Practice musical conversations - Questions and Answers
- Play recorders or song flutes
- Sing and play games
- Move and dance to activity songs



Numeracy Elements

- Echo rhythms and patterns
- Create a musical timeline - Understand the concept of time and units of measurement, beginning, middle, end, etc.
- Play, clap, march to steady beat
- Examine metronome - count ticking of the beat
- Count number of beats in a minute - Watch the clock
- Count and play word syllables, patterns, phrases
- Count measures in 4/4 or 3/4 or 6/8 time.
- Locate natural strong beats in measures - **1-2-3-4** (odds or evens)
- Examine the equal division of beats by measures. Most children's music is counted by duples - twos or fours. (**1-2-1-2** or **1-2-3-4**). However, some music is triple, counted by threes or sixes. (**1-2-3** or **1-2-3-4-5-6**). Children can learn to aurally discriminate between duple and triple meter as they learn to group notes in patterns of twos and threes.
- Classify notes by long, short, equal - Length of time
- Understand the importance of rests indicating silence equal to notes of the same value.
- Understand fast and slow tempos.
- Identify, sort, and classify note values in rhythmic notation.
- Examine the mathematical relationships between whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes.
- Examine musical scale construction - whole and half step combinations for major and minor scales. Count the 8 tones of a major scale.
- Analyze the difference between music and noise.
- Recognize the sounds of instruments and voices by timbre.
- Look at sound waves of different materials in a computer sound recording program.
- Create chords and triads
- Examine notes and learn the different multiplication principles of the rhythmic notation - stems, flags, etc. as they signify doubling of note values.
- Look at the ratios of note values in the rhythm section.
- Rhythmic notation is a tangible method of demonstrating fractions in sound.
- Examine the physics of sound and the overtone series with a fundamental tone and a natural mathematical ratio of vibrations.
- Examine tone quality and timbre in terms of frequencies.
- Use a MIDI sound synthesizer to create drum beats and musical patterns.
- Digitize sound on the computer.

Children's Classroom Music Products

- Musician's Friend Classroom Music - <http://www.musiciansfriend.com/srs7/g=bo/search?c=5628&c=5592&c=5405>
- Classroom Music - <http://www.wbw.com/Classroom-Music-d8.music>
- Music for Little People - <http://store.musicforlittlepeople.com/musical-instruments.html>



Handbells - http://www.musiciansfriend.com/srs7/g=perc/search/detail/base_pid/449619/

These colored bells are easy to play. See the bells Powerpoint presentation with simple songs presented in colored-coded notation. Demonstrate the concept of sound vibration by letting the sound die away or stopping the sound with your hand or body. Count the 8 bells in the musical major scale. Listen to the difference between low do and high do (the 2 red bells).

Glockenspiel - http://www.musiciansfriend.com/srs7/g=home/search/detail/base_pid/470262/

This set of glockenspiel bell bars are good for classroom use because you can pull out only the bars you will be using. Each child can take one bell and mallet. Using the black bells only will give you the pentatonic 5-note scale. You can divide the black bells in half and practice musical melody questions and answers with the teacher and a student. Count 8 beats for the question and 8 beats for the answer. Improvise the melodic question and answer with your students. Demonstrate lower and higher pitches or tones by the size of the tone bar. Listen as you play the larger bars (lower pitch or tone) and move through the musical scale to the smaller bars (higher pitch or tone). Explore vibration by demonstrating deadening of the sound as you hit the tone with your mallet.



Step Bells - http://www.musiciansfriend.com/srs7/g=bo/search/detail/base_pid/470066/



The step bells are an excellent way to demonstrate pitch and vibration from low to high. Show students how the size of the bar results in changing pitch.



Rhythm Instruments

Rhythm instruments can be used to teach steady beat. Children can learn aural discrimination by playing rhythm echoes. Play the syllables in words, nursery and jump rope rhymes. Use the BINGO song and teach children to recognize the BINGO rhythm. Use the rhythm cards to learn how to read rhythm. See the Powerpoint presentation - Rhythm Echoes.



- Rhythm Band Instruments - <http://www.musiciansfriend.com/srs7/g=perc/search?b=2266>
- Rhythm Instruments - http://www.musiciansfriend.com/srs7/g=perc/search/bigpid/base_id/108338/



Tambourines



Rhythm Band in a Backpack



World Rhythm Instruments



Remo Musical Fruits and Vegetables



Remo Drums

The Indian Gathering Drum is a wonderful instrument for calling children to a circle on the floor. Rhythm echoes with teacher and student can be played on one drum with the teacher and student each taking one of the soft mallets. A rhythm echo relay is effective with older students. Keep a steady beat in mind as the teacher plays a rhythm. Each student lines up to play the echo and hands off the mallet to the next in line. The goal is to keep the rhythm echoes going without losing the beat.



The Metronome

The metronome is a great way for children to begin to understand tempo. The old fashioned metronome provides the numbers of beats per minute. Children can hear and see the beat as they change the tempo. Newer, electronic versions are also available. An online resource that you may find useful is Metronome Online - <http://www.metronomeonline.com/>.

Making Your Own Instruments



Nancy Stewart

- Songs to Use with Rhythm Instruments - <http://www.nancymusic.com/PRINThomemade2.htm>
- Homemade Instruments - <http://www.nancymusic.com/PRINThomemade.htm>
- Musical Crafts Projects - <http://familycrafts.about.com/od/musicalcrafts/>
- The MudCat Cafe - <http://www.mudcat.org/kids/>
- Family Corner - http://www.thefamilycorner.com/family/kids/crafts/9_musical_instruments.shtml
- Instrument Building Zone - <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~graypoodles/index.html>
- A to Z Homes Cool Homeschooling - <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~graypoodles/index.html>
- Potamas Place - How do I...? - <http://www.potamasplace.net/viewpath.php?group=54&id=167>
- Family Fun - <http://familyfun.go.com/parenting/learn/activities/feature/famf78music/famf78music3.html>



Rhymes, Raps, Chants, Fingerplays

Songs for Teaching: Using Music to Promote Learning - <http://songsforteaching.com>

- Language Arts - <http://songsforteaching.com/reading.htm>
- Phonics Songs - <http://www.songsforteaching.com/phonics.htm>
- Music for Teaching Math - <http://www.songsforteaching.com/mathsongs.htm>

Nursery Rhymes

- Songs for Teaching: Nursery Rhymes - <http://www.songsforteaching.com/nurseryrhymes.htm>
- Early Literature - <http://www.earlyliterature.ecsd.net/resources1.htm>
- Enchanted Learning - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Rhymes.html>
- Paint a Rhyme - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/rhymes/painting/>
- Musical Nursery Rhymes for Babies - <http://www.indianchild.com/nursery%20rhymes.htm>
- Nursery Rhymes - <http://www.zelo.com/family/nursery/>
- Grandpa Tucker's Rhymes and Tales - <http://www.night.net/tucker/>
- Nursery Rhymes and Silly Stuff - <http://www.smart-central.com/>

- Mother Goose Pages - <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~pfa/dreamhouse/nursery/rhymes.html>
- Nicky's Nursery Rhymes - <http://www.nurseryrhymes4u.com/>
- Lalitha's Nursery Rhymes - <http://www.rhymesandsongs.com/>
- Nursery Rhyme Collection - <http://www.collingsm.freemove.co.uk/>
- Rhyme a Week - Early Literacy - http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/wil/rimes_and_rhymes.htm
- Nursery Rhymes - Origins - <http://www.rhymes.org.uk/index.htm>
- Preschool Rainbow - <http://www.preschoolrainbow.org/preschool-rhymes.htm>
- Kiddiddles - <http://www.kiddiddles.com/mouseum/busy.html>
- Preschool Education - <http://www.preschooleducation.com/scircus.shtml>
- Step by Step - <http://stepbystepcc.com/rhymes.html>

Jump Rope Rhymes

- Games Kids Play - http://www.gameskidsplay.net/jump_rope_rhymes/
- Streetplay - <http://www.streetplay.com/thegames/jumprope/jumproperhymes.html>
- Chants and Jump Rope Rhymes - <http://www.beachnet.com/~jeanettem/chants.html>
- Rope Games from 42Explore - <http://www.42explore.com/rope.htm>
- Physical Activity - <http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/gym/>

Fingerplays

- Songs for Teaching - <http://www.songsforteaching.com/fingerplays.htm>
- Index of Fingerplays - <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/fingerplayindex.htm>
- Fingerplays from Natural Learning - <http://www.naturallearning.com/fingerplays.html>
- Fingerplays - <http://www-personal.engin.umich.edu/~ajdrake/toddler/fngr2.htm>
- Rhymes and Fingerplays - http://members.tripod.com/~Patricia_F/learning.html
- Fingerplays from National Network for Child Care - <http://www.nccc.org/Literacy/fingplus.html>
- Fingerplays and Action Rhymes - <http://members.tripod.com/~ESL4Kids/fingerplays.html>
- BellaOnline - <http://www.bellaonline.com/subjects/1374.asp>

More Music and Literacy Resources

- Songs that Build Phonemic Awareness - <http://www.songsforteaching.com/phonemicawareness.htm>
- Phonological Awareness and Humpty Dumpty - <http://www.acsu.k12.vt.us/~Gemignani/pawareness.html>
- Phonemic Awareness - <http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content2/phoemic.p.k12.4.html>
- Phonological Resources - http://sss.usf.edu/cbm/phonological_resources.htm
- Montana Early Literacy - <http://www.soe.umt.edu/ders/MELP/phonologic/>
- MENC from Heartbeat to Steady Beat - <http://www.menc.org/publication/books/heartbeat/Chapter4.html>
- Software Music - <http://www.techlearning.com/shared/printableArticle.jhtml?articleID=18900785>
- Music Ideas for Classroom Use - http://www.educyberpg.com/Music/IDEAS_FOR_CLASSROOM_USE.html

- Music Makes you Smarter - <http://www.edu-cyberpg.com/Music/musicsmart.html>
- Music Spelling Rules - <http://www.gardenofpraise.com/spell1.htm>

What Is Phonological/Phoneme Awareness? Definitions from ERIC

Stanovich (1993-94) defines "phonological awareness" as the ability to deal explicitly and segmentally with sound units smaller than the syllable. He also notes that researchers "argue intensely" about the meaning of the term and about the nature of the tasks used to measure it. Harris and Hodges (1995) present a brief essay on phonemic awareness. Another oft-cited source (Adams, 1990) uses "phonemic awareness" almost exclusively. Phonological awareness sometimes refers to an awareness that words consist of syllables, "onsets and rimes," and phonemes, and so can be considered as a broader notion than phonemic awareness. Each term is widely used and perhaps (if incorrectly) used interchangeably.

Adams (1990) describes 5 levels of phonemic awareness in terms of abilities:

- to hear rhymes and alliteration as measured by knowledge of nursery rhymes
- to do oddity tasks (comparing and contrasting the sounds of words for rhyme and alliteration)
- to blend and split syllables
- to perform phonemic segmentation (such as counting out the number of phonemes in a word)
- to perform phoneme manipulation tasks (such as adding, deleting a particular phoneme and regenerating a word from the remainder).