

Isolating Beginning Sounds

Isolating beginning sounds is the ability to tell what sound a word begins with. It requires abstracting the sound from the word. Isolating beginning sounds can be assessed by simply asking a student to tell what sound a word begins with.

Isolating Beginning Sounds Test

Explain to students the purpose of the test. Tell students that you are going to ask them questions about the beginning sounds of words. Tell them that this will help you to plan ways for helping them to become good readers. Before administering the Isolating Beginning Sounds Test, make sure that students know what is meant by beginning sounds. Ask them to listen carefully for the beginning sound in a word. Emphasizing the sound /m/, say the word *man*. Explain that /m/ is the beginning sound in the word *moon*. It is the first sound. Emphasizing the /f/, say the word *fun*. Explain that /f/ is the beginning sound in *fun*. It is the first sound. Have students say the beginning sound in each of the following words. Ask, “What is the beginning sound in the word _____?” Write students’ responses in the blanks.

Sample: man

1. fox _____
2. song _____
3. mouse _____
4. hat _____
5. zoo _____
6. little _____
7. cat _____
8. ring _____
9. boy _____
10. tail _____

Interpretation: An adequate performance is 8/10. If students have difficulty with the task, you can make it into a combined learning/testing task. Help them with the items that they are unable to complete. Show them how to abstract the first sound. Model how you might do it. Note how well they respond to instruction and whether they learn the task.