



2.2 Using song titles, slogans and rhymes to teach onsets and rimes

Notes on the Phonics Focus

What are onsets and rimes?

An onset is the opening unit of a syllable that comes before the vowel sound. For example, in the words “keep”, “sleep” and “chair”, the onsets are “k”, “sl” and “ch” respectively. A syllable is said to have a zero onset if its opening unit is a vowel sound instead of a consonant sound (e.g. the words “aim” and “ink”). The repetition of the same onset in two or more words produces an alliterative effect.

A rime is the ending unit of a syllable that includes the vowel and any consonant sound that follows. For example, in the words “tall”, “snow” and “fish”, the rimes are “all”, “ow” and “ish” respectively. The repetition of the same rime in two or three words produces a rhyming effect.

Why does the learning and teaching of onsets and rimes matter?

Knowledge of onsets and rimes can sensitise students to how letter sounds are manipulated to achieve alliterative or rhyming effects in contexts where such effects are critical for making a lasting impression (e.g. song and film titles, brand names, advertisement slogans, cheering chants, news headlines).

2.2.1 Using song titles and slogans

Suggested Activities

Level: S3

Materials:

- Activity Sheets (pp.27-28)
- Guidelines for Group Presentation (p.31)
- Audio clips of song titles (Tracks 3 & 4)

Objectives: Language-arts-related

- Identifying alliterative and rhyming features in song titles
- Understanding how vowel letter sounds and consonant letter sounds can be manipulated to achieve alliterative and rhyming effects
- Reading aloud song titles with alliterative and/or rhyming effects
- Creating slogans with alliterative and/or rhyming effects

Phonics-related

- Consolidating understanding of “onset” and “rime”