

# Simon Says

## LESSON MODEL FOR

### Phoneme Blending

#### Benchmarks

→ Ability to blend spoken phonemes to form one-syllable words

#### Strategy Grade Level

→ Pre-K-Grade 1

#### Grouping

→ Small group

#### Materials

→ Hand puppet



Blending and segmenting phonemes are the two phonemic awareness skills most useful for acquisition of decoding skills (National Reading Panel 2000). Phoneme blending requires students to listen to a sequence of separately spoken sounds and then to combine them to form a word. An effective method for teaching students the concept of phoneme blending is to use a puppet that speaks in “secret language” (Lane and Pullen 2004). The idea is that the puppet can only say words one sound at a time. This sample lesson model can be adapted and used to enhance instruction in phoneme blending in any commercial reading program.

### Develop Oral Language

Because it is very difficult to work with sounds in an unfamiliar word, it is important that students know the body-part names used in this lesson. To ensure that students develop in-depth knowledge of body parts, play a practice game of Simon Says.

**Leader:** Simon Says, “Close your eyes”  
(Students close their eyes)

**Leader:** Simon says, “Wiggle your finger”  
(Students wiggle a finger)

**Leader:** “Nod your head”  
(Students do nothing)

**Leader:** Simon Says “Lift your foot”  
(Students lift a foot)



### Teach/Model

Introduce students to the puppet. Say: *This is Simon. Simon likes to talk in a funny way. He likes to say words one sound at a time. Listen as Simon says the sounds in the word.* Hold up the puppet and in a Simon voice say: /n/ /ō/ /z/? (Nose) Good. Let's try another one. Hold up the puppet and say: Simon says /n/ /ē/. The word is knee. Ask: What word does Simon mean when he says the sounds /n/ /ē/? (Knee) Say: That's correct, knee.

## Small-Group Guided Practice

Say: *Now it's your turn to figure out what Simon is saying. Listen as Simon says the sounds in a word.* Hold up the puppet and say: *Simon says /ar/ /m/. Ask: What word is Simon trying to say? (arm)* Repeat with /l/ /e/ /g/, leg.

Review the rules of Simon Says. Then say: *Now we are going to play Simon Says, but this time I will talk like Simon. After I say the sounds, you will say the word and then perform the action. Remember, you move only when Simon says so. Let's try it.* Play the role of the leader, using the example below.

**Leader:** Simon says "Touch the tip of your /n/ /õ/ /z/."

What's the word? (Nose) Students touch the tip of their nose.

**Leader:** Simon Says "Blink your /ī/ /z/

What's the word? (Eyes) Students blink their eyes

**Leader:** Simon says "Shake your /l/ /e/ /g/"

What's the word? (Leg) (Student's shake a leg).

Repeat with Neck (/n/ /e/ /k/) and Toes (/t/ /õ/ /z/) Choosing what Simon says and doesn't say.

Continue the game, using other one-syllable body-part names in the following sequence: arm, knee, lips, wrist, foot, heel, head, hand, and waist.

### CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

If a student responds incorrectly, model the correct response. For example, say: *My turn. Simon says touch your /n/ /õ/ /z/. The word is nose. Touch your nose. Say: Your turn. Simon says touch your /n/ /õ/ /z/. Ask: What's the word? (Nose) Say: Yes, nose*

### OBSERVE & ASSESS

Questions or Observation	Benchmarks
What word is /n/ /õ/ /z/? (Nose)	Student can blend spoken phonemes to form a whole word