

Dyslexia Sound Safari — Listen, Match & Discover

A playful sound-based game. There is no timer and no score to beat. Read the words aloud, have somebody else read them, point, circle, clap, tap or answer verbally. The aim is to explore sounds and notice patterns — not to test spelling.

SAFARI STOP 1 — Rhyme Trail

Circle the word that rhymes with the first word.

cat	hat	cup	fish
light	night	net	leaf
boat	coat	book	bird
tree	bee	train	toy
moon	spoon	mouse	map

SAFARI STOP 2 — First-Sound Spotter

Which two words begin with the same sound?

sun	sock	cat
fish	fan	van
ball	book	dog
moon	map	rain
train	tree	shoe

SAFARI STOP 3 — Clap the Syllables

Say each word naturally and clap or tap its beats. Write or circle how many you hear.

Word	1	2	3	4
cat	■	■	■	■
rabbit	■	■	■	■
banana	■	■	■	■
elephant	■	■	■	■
computer	■	■	■	■
butterfly	■	■	■	■

My sound-safari note: _____

Sound Matching Safari

SAFARI STOP 4 — Which Sound Is Different?

Three words are in each row. Circle the one that begins differently.

dog	door	sun
fish	fan	moon
cat	cup	ball
rain	run	tree
shoe	ship	book
goat	game	leaf

SAFARI STOP 5 — Ending-Sound Explorer

Say the words aloud. Which two have the same ending sound?

cat	hat	dog
fish	dish	fan
book	look	light
rain	train	road
cake	lake	cup

SAFARI STOP 6 — Sound Family Camp

Add another word to each sound family. Made-up words are allowed if they fit the sound pattern.

Family	Words already here	My addition
-at	cat, hat, mat	_____
-ight	light, night, right	_____
-ake	cake, lake, make	_____
-op	hop, top, mop	_____
-ain	rain, train, pain	_____

SAFARI STOP 7 — Sound Swap

Change the first sound to make a new word. Example: **cat** → **hat**.

Start word	Change it to...	New word
map	starts with T	_____
light	starts with N	_____
cake	starts with M	_____
pan	starts with C	_____

log	starts with D	_____
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Silly Sounds & Listening Challenges

SAFARI STOP 8 — Silly Rhyme Maker

Make a real or nonsense rhyme. The sillier the better — the sound pattern matters more than whether it is a real word.

Word	My rhyme
frog	_____
blue	_____
cake	_____
star	_____
mouse	_____
tree	_____

SAFARI STOP 9 — Listen Carefully

Ask someone to read each row aloud without showing you first if you want an extra listening challenge. Which word sounds different?

1	pin	tin	pan
2	coat	boat	cat
3	light	right	lot
4	bee	tree	boy
5	fan	man	fish
6	book	look	lake

SAFARI STOP 10 — Build Your Own Sound Safari

Create a sound challenge for somebody else. You could make a rhyme puzzle, first-sound challenge, syllable clue or odd-sound-out.

My challenge	_____
Words/clues	_____
Extra clue	_____
Answer	_____

My Safari Toolkit

☐ I said it aloud	☐ Someone read it to me
☐ I clapped the beats	☐ I repeated the sound
☐ I looked for a pattern	☐ I asked for a clue
☐ I pointed instead of writing	☐ I made up a silly word

Something that helped my brain today: _____

Sound Safari — Answer & Support Guide

Suggested answers

1 Rhyme Trail: hat, night, coat, bee, spoon. **2 First sounds:** sun/sock; fish/fan; ball/book; moon/map; train/tree. **3 Syllables:** cat 1; rabbit 2; banana 3; elephant 3; computer 3; butterfly 3 (natural pronunciation can vary slightly by accent).

4 Different first sound: sun, moon, ball, tree, book, leaf. **5 Same ending:** cat/hat; fish/dish; book/look; rain/train; cake/lake. **6:** open answers that fit the sound family. **7:** tap, night, make, can, dog. **8:** open real or nonsense rhymes. **9:** pan, cat, lot, boy, fish, lake. **10:** open-ended.

How to use this resource

This game can be used one-to-one, with a parent or carer, in a classroom, in tutoring, or as a relaxed home activity. It works best when the adult treats spoken language, pointing and movement as equally valid ways to respond. If writing slows the activity down or increases pressure, remove the writing requirement.

Dyslexia-friendly support

Allow extra processing time. Repeat a word without making the learner feel they should have heard it the first time. Break longer words into chunks, exaggerate a sound when useful, and let the learner watch your mouth as you say it. Some people find rhythm, tapping and movement make sound patterns easier to notice.

What this game is — and is not

Sound awareness can be one useful part of literacy support, but dyslexia is broader than one skill. Performance on these activities should never be used as a diagnosis, intelligence measure or judgement of effort. Accent, language background, hearing, attention, speech and individual processing differences can all affect how a sound task feels.

Keep it playful

Stop before frustration takes over. Skip a challenge, offer two choices, turn a difficult word into a silly one, or let the learner become the caller. Success can mean noticing a pattern, asking for repetition, finding a strategy or simply staying curious.

Space to Breathe Therapy