<div align="center">**Phonemic Awareness Task: Elkonin Boxes**</div>
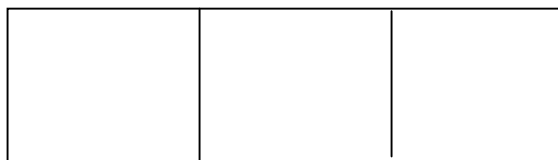
Elkonin sound boxes are used so that students can have a visual representation of the discrete phonemes in a word.

- Have children draw three boxes on a sheet of paper or dry-erase board.

- Distribute counters to the children. Have them place counters above the boxes. Model the activities before children begin.
- Follow the same procedure as in "Say It and Move It." For each phoneme, children move a counter to each box in a left-to-right progression.

For example: Say the word *let*.

Children move the counters that represent the sounds they hear in the word:_____
/l/ /e/ /t/
Children say the word again, sliding their finger below the boxes from left to right: *let*.

Other Activities for Elkonin Boxes
- Ask children to listen for a certain sound in a word. Say a word that has that sound. Children place a counter in the first box if they hear the sound in the beginning of the word, in the middle box if they hear the sound in the middle of the word, and in the last box if they hear it at the end of the word.

  For example, "Listen for the /m/ sound in the following words. Place a counter in the first box if you hear the /m/ sound at the beginning of the word; place a counter in the middle box if you hear the sound in the middle of the word; or place it in the last box if you hear the /m/ sound at the end of the word. Listen carefully: *ham*."

  Other sample words: *man*, *lemon*, *dream*, *mix*, *time*

- Replace the counters with several letters after appropriate letter-sound correspondences have been introduced.
  For example, give children the letters *a*, *l*, *p*, *s*, and *n*.
  Have children place the corresponding letters in the boxes for the phonemes as you say words. For example, say, "*Lap*. The cat sat in my *lap*."

- Have children write letters in the boxes as you dictate words. For example, say, "Spell the word *big*. The *big* dog barked at the squirrel.
  Big: /b/ /i/ /g/."
  Adapted from Blachman et al. (2000).

  The Western Regional Reading First Technical Assistance Center (WRRFTAC) developed a set of instructional templates to strengthen current reading instruction by making it more explicit and systematic. The templates utilize the effective instructional techniques identified by Carnine (2006). Strengs of these routines include their universal application to any curriculum, consistent formatting, the ability to differentiate instruction, and the increased repetition of accurate student practice. The following phonological templates can be found in the

resources section: Card #4 – Template for Onset-Rime Blending, Card #5 – Template for Phoneme Blending, and Card #6 – Template for Phoneme Segmentation (WRRFTAC, 2007).

In Kindergarten and First Grade, it is necessary for phonemic awareness to be taught on a daily basis. This instruction generally takes place during whole class time and should not last more than a half hour. In later elementary, phonemic awareness instruction only takes place for intervention purposes or as a brief warm up to an explicit phonics lesson.

Phonological awareness skills are highly generalizable. For this reason, it is beneficial for students to learn many phonological representations including words, rimes, and phonemes. For example, the following chart, based on research by Wylie and Durrell (1970), depicts 37 phonograms which form the basis of more than 500 primary-grade words:

Phonograms				
Ack	Ail	ain	ake	ale
Ame	An	ank	ap	ash
At	Ate	aw	ay	eat
Ell	Est	ice	ick	ide
Ight	Ill	in	ine	ing
Ink	Ip	ir	ock	oke
Op	Ore	or	uck	ug
Ump	Unk			

Source: Teaching Reading Sourcebook, p.39

Knowing which phonemes are most common in English, and knowing which phonograms (rimes) and sound/spellings are most frequent in English enables educators to tailor instruction to emphasize high-frequency phonemes and spellings. When students know the relationship between the phonograms and the sounds they represent, spelling is made easier and more efficient, and literacy increases.