



All About Rhymes

Nursery rhymes help your child to develop as a communicator and a storyteller. Sharing nursery rhymes with your child is a great way to support their social listening skills and develop their memory for things that they have heard (auditory memory).

Understanding and identifying rhymes is an important step in developing literacy skills in reading and writing.

There are many different types of nursery rhymes which help children to make sense of the world and to develop gross and fine motor control while they 'tune in' to the rhymes.

Rhymes that use the whole hand:

These rhymes using the whole hand help your child to look, listen and respond, which will help them understand the conventions of conversation and create a sense of anticipation and lots of fun and laughter too!

Open them, shut them

Open them, shut them, open them, shut them
Give a little clap, (clap, clap)
Open them, shut them, open them shut them
Put them on your lap (lap lap)
Creep them, creep them, creep them, creep them
Right up to your chin (chin chin)
Open up your big wide mouth.....
But don't you put them in!

I have ten little fingers

I have ten little fingers
and they all belong to me.

I can make them do things,
Would you like to see?

I can shut them up tight,
I can open them wide.

I can put them together,
I can make them all hide.

I can make them jump high,
I can make them jump low.

I can fold them together,
and hold them just so.

Rhymes that use the fingers

When sharing finger rhymes, encourage your child to look at their own fingers as they say the rhyme. This will help to develop hand-eye co-ordination and develop eye – tracking, which is an important skill for being able to read words on a page. With these rhymes, fingers are representing something else – for example in 'Tommy Thumb', each of the fingers is a different character:

Tommy Thumb, Tommy Thumb, where are you?

Tommy Thumb, Tommy Thumb, where are you?
Here I am, here I am, how do you do.

Peter Pointer, Peter Pointer where are you?
Here I am, here I am, how do you do.

Toby Tall, Toby Tall, where are you?
Here I am, here I am, how do you do.

Ruby Ring, Ruby Ring, where are you?
Here I am, here I am, how do you do.

Baby small, Baby small where are you?
Here I am, here I am, how do you do.

Fingers all, Fingers all, where are you?
Here we are, here we are, how do you do.

In Two Little Dickie Birds, fingers are representing birds.

Two little dickie birds sitting on a wall,

Two little dickie birds sitting on a wall,
One named Peter,
One named Paul.
Fly away, Peter!
Fly away, Paul!
Come back, Peter!
Come back, Paul

Rhymes that cross the body

Rhymes that encourage children to stretch across their body (crossing the mid-line) help develop tracking skills and stimulate the left and right side of the brain.

Wind the bobbin up

Wind the bobbin up, wind the bobbin up
Pull, pull, clap clap clap.
Wind it back again, wind it back again
Pull, pull, clap clap clap.
Point to ceiling, point to the floor
Point to the window, point to the door
Clap your hands together, 1,2,3
Put your hands upon your knee.

Roly Poly

Roly poly, roly poly up up up
Roly poly, Roly poly down down down
Roly poly, roly poly out, out , out
Roly poly, roly poly in in in
Roly Poly ever so slowly
Roly Poly, ever so fast!

Rhymes that have a steady beat

Sharing nursery rhymes which have a steady beat will help your child to tune into natural rhythms of their own language:

Higgledy Piggledy My Black Hen

Higgledy Piggledy My Black Hen
She lays eggs for gentlemen
Sometimes nine and sometimes ten
Higgledy Piggledy my black hen.

To Market to market to buy a fat pig

To Market to market to buy a fat pig
Home again, home again, jiggedy jig
To market to market to buy a fat hog
Home again, home again, joggedy jog.