Nursery Rhymes, Songs and Fingerplays

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Learning to read begins well before the first day of school. Phonological awareness is a child’s ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. Being able to hear the similarities and differences within words is critical to the process of learning to read.

Use the nursery rhymes, songs and fingerplays in this booklet to get you started. Clap and dance while you sing songs, emphasize the rhyming words and make up your own silly rhymes. Have fun with words and start your child on the right road to reading success.
Nursery Rhymes

LITTLE BOY BLUE
Little Boy Blue, come blow your horn.
The sheep are in the meadow,
The cows are in the corn.
Where is the little boy who looks after the sheep?
He’s under the haystack, fast asleep!
Will you wake him? No, not I.
For if I do, he’s sure to cry.

THIS LITTLE PIGGIE
This little piggie went to market.
This little piggie stayed home.
This little piggie had roast beef.
This little piggie had none.
And this little piggie cried, “Wee! Wee! Wee!”
All the way home.

SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE
Sing a song of sixpence, a pocket full of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie.
When the pie was opened, the birds began to sing;
Wasn’t that a dainty dish to set before the king?
The king was in the counting house, counting out his money.
The queen was in the parlor, eating bread and honey.
The maid was in the garden, hanging up the clothes,
When down came a blackbird and snipped off her nose!
LITTLE JACK HORNAR
Little Jack Horner sat in the corner,
Eating his Christmas pie.
    He put in his thumb
    And pulled out a plum,
And said, “What a good boy am I.”

HEY DIDDLE, DIDDLE
Hey diddle, diddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon.
The little dog laughed to see such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

JACK AND JILL
Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water.
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

Up Jack got and home did trot
As fast as he could caper.
He went to bed and bound his head
With vinegar and brown paper.
TWO BLACKBIRDS
There were two blackbirds sitting on a hill,
The one named Jack, the other named Jill.
   Fly away, Jack!  Fly away, Jill!
   Come back, Jack!  Come back, Jill!

BAA, BAA, BLACK SHEEP
Baa, baa, black sheep have you any wool?
   Yes, sir, yes, sir, three bags full.
One for the master, and one for the dame,
And one for the little boy who lives down the lane.

HORSIE, HORSIE
Horsie, horsie, don’t you stop,
Just let your feet go clipetty clop;
Your tail goes swish, and the wheels go round,
Giddy up, you’re homeward bound!

JACK SPRAT
Jack Sprat could eat no fat,
   His wife could eat no lean.
And so between them both, you see,
   They licked the platter clean.
WEE WILLIE WINKIE
Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town,
Upstairs and downstairs in his nightgown.
Rapping at the window, crying through the lock,
Are the children all in bed, for now it's eight o'clock?

MARY, MARY QUITE CONTRARY
Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells and cockle shells,
And pretty maids all in a row.

RUB-A-DUB DUB
Rub-a-dub dub
Three men in a tub.
And who do you think they be?
The butcher, the baker,
The candlestick maker.
Throw them out—knaves all three.

STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT
Star light, star bright,
First star I see tonight.
I wish I may, I wish I might,
Have the wish I wish tonight.
HICKORY DICKORY DOCK  
Hickory dickory dock  
The mouse ran up the clock.  
The clock struck one.  
The mouse ran down  
Hickory dickory dock.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET  
Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet  
eating her curds and whey.  
Along came a spider  
and sat down beside her,  
and frightened Miss Muffet away.

HUMPTY DUMPTY  
Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall;  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the king’s horses and all the king’s men  
Couldn’t put Humpty together again.

BYE, BABY BUNTING  
Bye, baby bunting,  
Daddy’s gone a-hunting,  
Gone to get a rabbit skin  
To wrap the baby bunting in.
OLD MOTHER HUBBARD
Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard,
To fetch her poor dog a bone;
But when she got there
The cupboard was bare
And so the poor dog had none.

GEORGIE PORGIE
Georgie Porgie, puddin' and pie,
Kissed the girls and made them cry;
When the boys came out to play,
Georgie Porgie ran away.

PAT-A-CAKE, PAT-A-CAKE
Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man,
Bake me a cake as fast as you can.
Roll it, and pat it, and mark it with a “B”
And put it in the oven for baby and me!
**PETER, PETER, PUMPKIN EATER**

Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater,
Had a wife and couldn't keep her;
He put her in a pumpkin shell
And there he kept her very well.

**THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN**

There was an old woman who lived in a shoe,
She had so many children she didn't know what to do;
She gave them some broth without any bread;
She kissed them all soundly and put them to bed.

**OLD KING COLE**

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe,
And he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

**1, 2 BUCKLE MY SHOE**

1, 2, Buckle my shoe;
3, 4, Shut the door;
5, 6, Pick up sticks;
7, 8, Lay them straight;
9, 10, A big fat hen.
ROCK-A-BYE, BABY
Rock-a-bye, baby, on the tree top,
When the wind blows the cradle will rock;
When the bough breaks the cradle will fall,
Down will come baby, cradle, and all.

LITTLE BO-PEEP
Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And doesn't know where to find them;
Leave them alone, and they'll come home,
Wagging their tails behind them.

DICKERY, DICKERY, DARE
Dickery, dickery, dare,
The pig flew up in the air;
The man in brown
Soon brought him down,
Dickery, dickery, dare.

ROSES ARE RED
Roses are red,
Violets are blue,
Sugar is sweet
And so are you.
FIVE LITTLE DUCKS
Five little ducks went out to play
(Hold up five fingers)
Over the hill and far away
(hide fingers behind back)
Mother duck said, “Quack, quack, quack, quack”
(Make hand into duck bill and open and close)
But only four little ducks came running back.
(Hold up four fingers)
(Repeat until no ducks come back-4, 3, 2, 1, 0)
So mother duck said,
“QUACK, QUACK, QUACK, QUACK”
And five little ducks came running back!

SHAKE MY SILLIES OUT
(Do appropriate movements with each verse)
Gotta shake, shake, shake my sillies out,
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out,
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out,
And wiggle my waggles away.

Repeat with
Clap my crazies out...
Jump my jiggles out...
Yawn my sleepies out...
Shake my sillies out...
FIVE LITTLE MONKEYS
Five little monkeys, jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped his head.
The mama called the doctor and the doctor said,
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"

Repeat with
Four little monkeys, jumping on the bed...
Three little monkeys, jumping on the bed...
Two little monkeys, jumping on the bed...
One little monkey, jumping on the bed...

RING AROUND THE ROSIE
Ring around the rosie
A pocket full of posies
Ashes, ashes, we all fall down!
(Children circle around, singing the chant. At the end of the verse, they do what the song says, and all fall down.)

I'M A LITTLE TEAPOT
I'm a little teapot, short and stout,
Here is my handle (put one hand on hip)
Here is my spout (put other hand curved up).
When I get all steamed up, hear me shout.
Tip me over and pour me out (lean to side with spout)!
THE ITSY, BITSY SPIDER
The itsy, bitsy spider went up the water spout.
(Move fingers up toward sky)
Down came the rain and washed the spider out.
(Bring fingers down and back)
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain
(Make “sun” with hands over head)
And the itsy, bitsy spider
climbed up the spout again.
(Move fingers up toward sky)

Repeat with
“Great big spider” using deep voice.

HEAD AND SHOULDERS, KNEES AND TOES
(Throughout, touch appropriate part of own body)
Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.
Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.
Eyes and ears, and mouth and nose,
Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.

TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STAR
Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are.
CLAP YOUR HANDS
Clap, clap, clap your hands,
Clap your hands with me.
(\textit{Clap hands together})
Clap them fast \textit{(increase speed)}
Clap them slow \textit{(dramatically slower)}
Clap your hands with me.

\textit{Repeat with}
\textit{Stomp your feet...}
\textit{Pat your knees...}

WIGGLE FINGERS
Wiggle fingers, wiggle so \textit{(wiggle fingers)}
Wiggle high \textit{(raise hands and wiggle fingers)}
Wiggle low \textit{(lower hands and wiggle fingers)}
Wiggle left \textit{(wiggle fingers to the left)}
Wiggle right \textit{(wiggle fingers to the right)}
Wiggle fingers out of sight \textit{(wiggle fingers behind back)}

BINGO
There was a farmer, had a dog
and Bingo was his name-o.
B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O
And Bingo was his name-o.
\textit{(Repeat second time and clap in place of “B.”}
\textit{Continue singing adding claps for each letter until the spelling of B-I-N-G-O is all clapping.)}
**IF YOU’RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT**

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.
If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.
   If you’re happy and you know it,
   Then your face will surely show it,
   If you’re happy and you know it,
      Clap your hands.

*Repeat with*
*Stomp your feet...*
*Shout hurray...*
*Peekaboo...*
*Slap your knees...*

**WHEELS ON THE BUS**

The wheels on the bus go round and round, 
   Round and round, round and round, 
   The wheels on the bus go round and round, 
      All around the town.

*Repeat with*

The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish... 
The driver on the bus says “move on back”... 
The people on the bus go up and down... 
The babies on the bus go “wah, wah, wah”... 
The parents on the bus go “shh, shh, shh”...

*Adaptations*

The horse on the farm goes neigh, neigh, neigh... 
The cow on the farm goes moo, moo, moo... 
The lamb... 
The pig...
APPLE TREE
Way up high in an apple tree,
(Hold arms above head, fingers spread)
Two little apples did I see.
(Make fists)
So I shook that tree as hard as I could.
(Wiggle entire body)
Down came the apples.
(Lower arms)
Mmmmmmmmmmm, they were good!
(Rub tummy)

FIVE LITTLE JACK-O-LANTERNS
Five little jack-o-lanterns sitting on a gate,
(five fingers up)
The first one said, “Oh my, it’s getting late!”
(one finger up)
The second one said, “I hear a noise.”
(two fingers up)
The third one said, “It’s just some silly boys!”
(three fingers up)
The fourth one said, “They’re having Halloween fun.”
(four fingers up)
The fifth one said, “Come on, let’s run!”
(five fingers up)
“Oooooo,” went the wind,
And out (clap on word “out”) went the lights,
And the five little jack-o-lanterns rolled out of sight.
(roll hands around each other)
OPEN, SHUT THEM
Open, shut them.
Open, shut them.
Give a little clap. *(clap)*
Open, shut them.
Open, shut them.
Put them in your lap.

Creep them, creep them,
*(walk fingers up chest to chin)*
Creep them, creep them,
Right up to your chin.
Open up your little mouth, *(open mouth)*
But do not let them in.

Falling, falling,
Falling, falling,
Right down to the ground.
*(touch the ground with fingers)*
Then you pick them up again,
*(bring hands back to lap)*
And turn them round and round.

Faster, faster
Faster, faster
Give a little clap. *(clap faster)*
Slower, slower
Slower, slower
Place them in your lap. *(place hands in lap)*
I WISH I WERE
(Tune: If You’re Happy and You Know It)
Oh, I wish I were a little bar of soap, bar of soap.
Oh, I wish I were a little bar of soap, bar of soap.
   I’d go slidy, slidy, slidy
   Over everybody’s body.
Oh, I wish I were a little bar of soap, bar of soap.
Oh, I wish I were a little juicy orange, juicy orange.
Oh, I wish I were a little juicy orange, juicy orange.
   I’d go squirty, squirty, squirty
   Over everybody’s shirty.
Oh, I wish I were a little juicy orange, juicy orange.
Oh, I wish I were a little blob of mud, blob of mud.
Oh, I wish I were a little blob of mud, blob of mud.
   I’d go gooey, gooey, gooey
   Over everybody’s shoey.
Oh, I wish I were a little blob of mud, blob of mud.
Oh, I wish I were a little cookie crumb, cookie crumb.
Oh I wish I were a little cookie crumb, cookie crumb.
   I’d go crumby, crumby, crumby
   Over everybody’s tummy.
Oh, I wish I were a little cookie crumb, cookie crumb.
   Oh, I wish I were a little radio, radio.
   Oh, I wish I were a little radio, radio.
   I’d go CLICK!
TEDDY BEAR, TEDDY BEAR
(Do appropriate action with each verse)
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch your toes.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch your nose.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, climb the stairs.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say your prayers.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light.
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say good night!

THESE ARE BABY’S FINGERS
These are baby’s fingers
(touch baby’s fingers)
These are baby’s toes
(touch baby’s toes)
This is baby’s belly button
(point to baby’s belly button)
Round and round it goes
(draw circle around baby’s belly button)
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