



CHILDREN'S CORNER

CELEBRATE MOTHER GOOSE DAY! – MAY 1

Rhymers Are Readers: The Importance of Nursery Rhymes

Songs and rhymes for young children have been passed down for generations. They are fun, children love them, and they provide a warm, nurturing experience between parent and child. What we may not be aware of as we recite simple nursery rhymes or sing songs with children is their enormous educational value. "Experts in literacy and child development have discovered that if children know eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they're four years old, they're usually among the best readers by the time they're eight." [Fox, M. (2001). *Reading Magic*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt.] (<http://www.kbyutv.org/kidsandfamily/readytolearn/file.axd?file=2011%2F3%2F2+Rhymers+are+Readers.pdf>)

**This little piggy went to market,
This little piggy stayed home,
This little piggy had roast beef,
This little piggy had none,
And this little piggy went wee, wee, wee all the way home.**

Why are Nursery Rhymes important to children?

- Language Development** – When children hear nursery rhymes, they hear the sounds vowels and consonants make. They learn how to put these sounds together to make words. They also practice pitch, volume, and voice inflection, as well as the rhythm of language. For example, listen to how you sound when you ask questions. Do you sound different when you tell a story? In nursery rhymes, children hear new words that they would not hear in everyday language (like fetch and pail in "Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water"). Nursery rhymes are short and easy to repeat, so they become some of a child's first sentences.
- Cognitive Development** – Since nursery rhymes are patterns, they help children learn easy recall and memorization. Nursery rhymes usually tell a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. This teaches children that events happen in sequence, and they begin to learn how to understand stories and follow along. Nursery rhymes use patterns and sequence, so children begin to learn simple math skills as they recite them. Many rhymes also use numbers, counting, and other math words that children need to learn, such as size and weight. Nursery rhymes also introduce alliteration ("Goosie Goosie Gander"), onomatopoeia ("Baa Baa Black Sheep"), and imaginative imagery. Children hear these rhymes and act out what they imagine the characters are doing.
- Physical Development** – Children develop their mouth and tongue muscles by using the different sounds in the rhyme. Rhymes that involve movement help with coordination. In dramatic play, children use their whole bodies to act out the nursery rhymes they hear.

Social/Emotional Development – Sharing nursery rhymes provides a safe and secure bond between parents and children. Positive physical touch between a parent and a child or between children, for example, during clapping rhymes, is important for social development. Funny nursery rhymes allow children to develop a sense of humor. Nursery rhyme characters experience many different emotions. This can help children identify their own emotions and understand the real emotions of others. When children act out the nursery rhyme stories they hear, they learn to imagine, be creative, and express themselves. Nursery rhymes teach history (“Ring Around the Rosie”) and connect children to the past.

Rhyme with children because

- ✓ Rhyming is silly and fun.
- ✓ Rhyming creates readers – Rhyming in early childhood positively impacts the later development of literacy skills.
- ✓ Rhyming teaches children the sounds of language.
- ✓ Rhyming teaches vocabulary.
- ✓ Rhyming is rhythm and beat.
- ✓ Rhyming teaches thinking skills.
- ✓ Rhyming is silly and fun.

Use this link to find more fun ideas to use nursery rhymes with children.

<http://www.kbyutv.org/kidsandfamily/readytolearn/file.axd?file=2011%2F3%2F2+Rhymers+are+Readers.pdf>

**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.**

Resources:

- <http://www.kbyutv.org/kidsandfamily/readytolearn/file.axd?file=2011%2F3%2F2+Rhymers+are+Readers.pdf>
- ALL MOTHER GOOSE BOOKS
- *A Rhyme a Week: Nursery Rhymes for Early Literacy* - http://curry.virginia.edu/go/wil/rimes_and_rhymes.htm
- www.earlyliteracylearning.org