

Phonics Games to play at home: Pre-School



Environmental Sounds

Main purpose: To develop children's listening skills

A listening moment

Go outside and see how many different sounds your child can hear. Can they name them all? Encourage them to try to make the sound themselves.

What is the learning?

- hearing and naming different sounds



Drum outdoors

Give your child a stick or wooden spoon, and take one yourself to join in and copy. Go outdoors and discover how different sounds are made by tapping or stroking, with their stick, eg a wooden door, a wire fence, a metal slide.

Support your child by finding different materials to try, or different ways of making a sound, eg by running the stick along a slatted fence. Ask your child to demonstrate their favourite sound.

Act as conductor and raises your stick high in the air to signal to your child to play loudly and lowers it to signal playing softly.

What is the learning?

- creating different sounds
- recalling sounds they have heard – by being able to choose a favourite
- noticing the difference between sounds



Teddy is lost!

Hide a teddy bear, or other toy, somewhere in the garden. Sing louder as your child searches and gets closer to, or quietly as he/she moves further away from the teddy.

What is the learning?

- respond to the difference in your sounds (loud and quiet)



Instrumental sounds

Drum along

Take a song or rhyme your child know well and get them to drum along with wooden or metal spoons and a pot or pan.

What is the learning?

- experience and develop awareness of making their own sounds



Body Percussion

Action songs

Singing songs and action rhymes are really important pre-reading skills and should be an everyday event. Get your child to add claps, knee pats and foot stamps or move in a particular way. Encourage your child to be attentive and to know when to add sounds, when to move, and when to be still.

What is the learning?

- keep in time with the beat
- create own body sounds



Roly poly

Rehearse the rhyme with the actions (rotating hand over hand as in the song 'Wind the bobbin up').

Ro ... ly ... po ... ly ... ever ... so ... slowly. Ro ... ly ... poly faster.

(Increase the speed of the action as you increase the speed of the rhyme.)

Now add in new verses, such as:

Stamp ... your ... feet ... ever ... so ... slowly. Stamp ... your feet faster.

Ask your child to suggest new movements.

Say hello ever so quietly. Say HELLO LOUDER!

What is the learning?

- creating different body sounds

Rhythm and Rhyme

Children who know 8 rhymes by heart by the age of 5 are often the best readers by the time they are 8.

Main Purpose: To experience and develop an awareness of rhythm and rhyme

Rhyming books

Encourage your child to join in with repetitive phrases such as 'run, run, as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man.' Stop as you come to the final word in the rhyme. Invite your child to complete it.



Learning songs and rhymes

Sing through the day! Sing as events occur e.g. 'It's raining, it's pouring, the old man is snoring'. Sing or chant nursery rhymes and encourage your child to move in an appropriate way (e.g. rock gently to the beat of 'See Saw Marjorie Daw', march to the beat of 'The Grand Old Duke of York', skip to the beat of 'Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush').

Hear the rhyme

Chant rhymes, such as 'Hickory, Dickory, Dock.' Introduce new rhyming words instead of tick-tock, eg mick-mock. Your child will enjoy hearing and joining in with the not-real words!

Act out rhymes

Get your child to act out rhymes, for example, 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall (bump, crash, bang!) All the King's horses and all the King's men (gallop, gallop, gallop) Couldn't put Humpty together again (boo, hoo, boo, hoo, boo, hoo).'

I know a word

Encourage your child to think about and play with rhyming words. The adult begins with the prompt "I know a word that rhymes with cat, you put one on your head and the word is...hat." To support your child, give them a choice of 2 words, eg 'is it hat or glasses?' As your child becomes familiar with rhyme, they will supply the missing word themselves.

Sounds at the beginning of words

I spy

A great game whilst walking, or in the car/bus. Say "I spy with my little eye, something beginning with..." and give the *sound* of the first letter (not the name of the letter.) Choose easy to spot words.

Support your child with clues, such as 'it's on the road.'

What is the learning?

- Understand that you can identify an initial sound from any word

Voice Sounds

Mouth movements

Explore different mouth movements with your child – blowing, sucking, tongue stretching and wiggling. Practising these movements regularly to music can be fun and helps children with their articulation.

What is the learning?

- Make different sounds with your mouth



Voice sounds

Show your child how they can make sounds with their voices, for example:

- Make your voice go down a slide – wheee!
- Make your voice bounce like a ball – boing, boing
- Sound really disappointed – oh
- Hiss like a snake – ssssss
- Keep everyone quiet – shshshsh
- Gently moo like a cow – mmmoooo
- Look astonished – oooooo!
- Be a steam train – chchchchch
- Buzz like a bumble bee – zzzzzzz
- Be a clock – tick tock.

This can be extended by joining single speech sounds into pairs (e.g. ee-aw like a donkey).

What is the learning?

- Make different sounds with your voice, including long and short sounds

Sound story time

Encourage your child to use their voices to add sounds to stories such as Bear Hunt, Chicken Licken or The Three Billy Goats Gruff.

Repeat favourite rhymes and poems in different voices together (e.g. whispering, growling, shouting, squeaking.)

What is the learning?

- create voice sounds

Oral Blending

Only start this when your child can accurately hear and say the first sound in a word.

I spy words

Gather objects with two or three letter sounds e.g. c-ar, k-ey, h-a-t, c-u-p, l-ea-f, b-oo-k, c-o-ne, b-oo-t, s-oa-p, c-oa-t, f-or-k, d-o-ll, sh-oe. Say “I spy with my little eye a k-ey.” Then invite your child to say the name of the object and hold it up. Your child can then try and copy the individual sounds and blend them together ‘k-ey is key’.

What is the learning?

- blend sounds together to hear and say a word

