

A8: Silly Songs

Lesson Objective: Children will identify changes in familiar rhymes and songs.

Materials

We have prepared several nursery rhymes and songs to use in this activity, arranged in order from easy (#1) to difficult (#5). Each line has links to PDFs of the original rhyme as well as an altered version with various “mistakes” added.

1. Old MacDonald Had a Farm: [original version](#) and [altered version](#)
2. The Wheels on the Bus: [original version](#) and [altered version](#)
3. Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush: [original version](#) and [altered version](#)
4. I’m a Little Teapot: [original version](#) and [altered version](#)
5. Five Little Monkeys: [original version](#) and [altered version](#)

You can also use other nursery rhymes that your child is familiar with.

Activity

Select one of the nursery rhymes in the [Materials](#) section above, starting with #1, and recite or sing it along with your child. Start out with the correct lyrics, to make sure she knows what the words are supposed to be.

Video: How to play Silly Songs

Remind the child to listen carefully to the words, and then go through the altered version we have provided. Each altered nursery rhyme contains one or more “mistakes” that your child must catch. When the child hears a nonsense mistake, she should say “stop.” Ask her to explain what the mistake is. Then ask her what the words should be.

Revisit this activity multiple times, gradually working your way through the list of nursery rhymes. As you go through the list of poems, the “mistakes” become more subtle, and therefore more difficult for the child to notice.

NOTE: Be sure to use poems that your child is already very familiar with. She won’t be able to catch the “mistakes” if she doesn’t know how the rhyme is supposed to go.

A8: Silly Songs (continued)

Small Groups (2-5 children)

Adaptation: Read the main activity, watch the video, and follow the instructions above, with the following changes:

Recite "One Two, Buckle My Shoe." For each line, substitute a different word that rhymes with the correct word but is not the correct one. For example: "Three, four, shut the floor." Have the children say "Boo!" when the incorrect word is used.

Use the correct word sometimes: "Three, four, shut the door." Tell the children they can cheer quietly ("Yay!") when the word is correct.