

Every Child Ready to Read @ Dallas®

Rhyming Fun in a Box

By Dorayne Breedlove

Links to Literacy: This activity develops vocabulary and letter-sound awareness through rhyming words.

What you'll need:

1 cardboard box

Objects from your house that rhyme, for example:

Shell/Bell

Sock/Clock

Money/Honey

Bat/Hat

Can/Fan

Shoe/Glue

What to do:

Put all items in the box and set aside time to play this rhyming game with your child.

Begin by singing this song.

Rhyming Time

(Tune: "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")

Let us play a game

It is rhyming time

There are many things I have

In this box that rhyme

Pull out an object and be sure your child knows the name. For a younger child, pull out three objects that do not rhyme, then begin to pull objects that do rhyme with the first three objects. Continue doing this with three objects at a time until all objects have rhyming matches. For an older child, pull out all the objects that do not rhyme with each other. Then pull out the rhyming objects one at a time for your child to figure out. Have fun putting all the objects from the box back to its original place in your home. Play again using different objects.

Variations:

For older children, after playing the game, go around the house and find other things that rhyme together. You may just point to an object you see and say, "What rhymes with book?"

"What rhymes with keys?" Reverse roles so that your child points to an object and you have to come up with a rhyming word.

Notes:

Instead of using a box, clip out pictures from magazines and rhyme the pictures with other pictures or just use your words to come up with the rhymes. Keep pictures in an envelope.

Suggested books:

The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss

Move Over, Rover! by Karen Beaumont

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Peekaboo Game

By Dorayne Breedlove

Links to Literacy:

This activity helps children learn vocabulary, letter-sound relationships, and storytelling skills through simple objects from your home.

What you'll need:

4 objects from your home, for example:
small teddy bear, keys, an apple, a shoe
4 scarves or handkerchiefs

What to do:

Place each item on the ground and cover with the scarf or handkerchief.
Put your child on your lap or next to you and say this chant with a steady rhythm.

*I was walking in the park one day
And what do you think I found
Lots of things on the ground
Lying all around*

*I brought them home and covered them up
To play a game with you
Name the things that I found
With this game called Peekaboo*

Uncover each item one at a time from left to right so your child can name the item. Each time you uncover an item, say "Peekaboo! What did I find?" Then cover them up again. For a younger child, repeat the same action. For the older child, ask where each item is hiding. For example: Ask "Where is the teddy bear?" Your child will point to the scarf or handkerchief and as you lift the scarf, say "Peekaboo! I found you!"

Add more challenge by mixing the items around, then ask where each item is.
Have fun with your child putting all the objects away. Play again using different objects.

Variations:

For older children, after playing the game, go around the house and find other objects. Challenge your older child by adding even more objects for them to remember. Reverse roles so that your child asks you where an object is and you will have to point to the correct scarf or handkerchief.

Another variation can include finding objects that rhyme. After uncovering the objects, ask your child which items go together because they rhyme.

Notes:

This activity also develops memory and recall skills.

Suggested books:

Peekaboo Morning by Rachel Isadora
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin
Hooray for Harry by Kim Lewis

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Make Egg Shakers

By Dorayne Breedlove

Links to Literacy: This activity highlights the rhythms and patterns in a book and helps children learn letter-sound relationships.

What you'll need:

10 plastic eggs
½ cup of each material: rice, beans, salt, paper clips, pennies
electrical tape
basket
*permanent marker for variation

What to do:

With your child, divide the eggs into pairs. Place half of each material into the eggs so that 2 eggs have rice, 2 eggs have beans, 2 eggs have salt, etc. Wrap electrical tape all around the center of the egg so that the egg stay securely in place. Put the eggs in the basket and have your child find the matching eggs by shaking each egg and listening to the sound it makes. Put on some fun music and shake your egg shakers to the beat.

Variations:

For a younger child, use large plastic eggs. For the older child, add even more sound from other materials you have around your house (buttons, beads, rocks, etc.). It can become very challenging to match sounds as some eggs may have similar sounds. For Letter Knowledge, use a permanent marker and place an “R” on one egg with the rice, “B” on one egg with the beans, “S” on one egg with the salt, etc. The child can match the sounds and also begin to recognize the letters each item in the egg begins with.

Suggested music:

“Shake” on CD “Songs for the Whole Day” by Thomas Moore

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Painting with Colored Yolk

By Dorayne Breedlove

Links to Literacy: This activity gives children a chance to practice making letters.

What you'll need:

2 pieces of sliced bread
1 clean water color brush
Food Coloring
4 eggs
4 small bowls
1 cup of water
*package of prepared sugar cookies for variation

What to do:

Separate eggs and put each yolk in a small bowl. Scramble yolk until it is smooth. Add 2-3 drops of food coloring into each bowl so that each bowl is a different color. Mix food coloring and yolk together until blended. Paint the bread by dipping the water color brush into the yolk mixture. Clean the yolk paint by dipping the brush in the cup of water. When your child is finished, place the bread in the toaster for a colorful treat.

Variations:

For younger children, they can finger paint on a large sugar cookie before it goes into the oven to bake. Older children can have fun with sugar cookies and the paint brushes.

Suggested books:

Big Fat Hen by Keith Baker
The Little Red Hen by Byron Barton

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Creating Paper Plate Masks

By Holly Lapinski

Links to Literacy: This activity extends a book by dramatizing and role playing characters in a story.

What you'll need:

Paper plates
Markers and/or crayons
Thick craft glue and/or Tape

Scissors
Paint stirring stick for hand held masks
String for tie on masks.

Optional items:

Assorted scraps of paper: Colored, tissue, gift wrap, wallpaper, etc.
Assorted scraps of craft items: Ribbon, yarn, string, buttons, pom poms, fabric, felt, foam shapes, stickers, pipe cleaners/chenille stems, googlie eyes, beads, pasta, macaroni, dried beans, etc.

What to do:

Draw or glue a face onto a paper plate.
Add details: Cut out eyes, yarn hair, paper cup snouts, egg carton noses, paper curl beards, ribbon eyebrows, pipe cleaner ears, etc.

Option 1

Glue or tape the paint stick to the bottom of the mask

Option 2

Use a stapler to attach the ties or punch holes to attach string for a tie on mask. Reinforce with tape where the strings are attached so they don't pull off.

Variations:

For older children, encourage them to do as much as they can on their own. Let your child cut out scraps of paper with scissors—remember to supervise. Make your own mask so your child sees you working independently. Ask your child to help you just as you are helping them. Act out a book you are reading or make up new stories with your character masks.

Notes:

Animal Masks

These are fun and easy to make by using paper cups for pig snouts or dog muzzles, pom poms for kitty noses. Paper or fabric works great for floppy ears or craft foam for stand up ears. Beads, dried beans, macaroni, pom poms and packing peanuts make excellent spots on leopards or dogs. Have fun and use your imagination.

Mini masks

If you and your child use small paper plates, craft sticks or tongue depressors may be used instead of a paint stick. You may want to create several so you can change characters. These are great to use as puppets.

Easy puppets

If you do not choose to cut out the eyes of your mask, you and your child can use them for puppets and put on a puppet show. You can even attach fabric or paper at the bottom of the plate for clothing. For an easy stage or puppet theater just go behind any table, crouch down and hold your paper plate puppet so it can be seen. Scenery and props can just be placed on the table. Use a cloth on the table so the audience can't see you.

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Contact Paper Collage

By Holly Lapinski

Links to Literacy: This activity extends a story and helps children pay closer attention to story details and patterns.

What you'll need:

Clear contact paper

Tape

Template or design (See Notes)

Optional: Paper clips, string, yarn or fishing line

Collage materials: Scraps of colored paper, colored tissue paper, wrapping paper, magazine pages, stickers, yarn, string, confetti, fabric, foam shapes, etc.

Marker and/or permanent marker

Scissors

What to Do:

Cut 2 pieces of contact paper to fit the desired template size

Peel off the back of one piece and place sticky side up over template or design.

Secure with tape or stickers.

Place cut up colored paper, tissue paper, confetti, yarn, string, etc. using the template or design as a guide

Peel off the backing on the other piece of clear contact paper

Press the second sheet sticky side down to seal your design.

Trace around outside edge of design or template

Cut out design

Attach a paper clip and/or string and display.

Variations:

For younger children, make collage pages of objects they like and recognize from the books and/or rhymes you recite. Examples: Toys, family and animals.

For older children, create templates in the shape of an object from the book you are reading together and write the word on the template. Have your child decorate the lines of the word first and then decorate the rest or find pictures in magazines or newspapers that match the shape. Do multiple projects and make a book or mobile. (See Notes)

Notes:

Making a Template

A template is a guide or pattern that can be used more than once. It can be as basic as a geometric shape like a circle or triangle. It may be a specific shape like a heart, car, butterfly or flower. It can also be more complex depending on the story you and your child are reading. Draw or trace your design on paper. Use a marker that will show through the clear contact paper. Coloring book pages make great templates.

Make Your Own Book

You and your child can make multiple projects of the same shape or similar size and use them as pages for your own no tear books. Assemble by stapling along one edge or punch holes along one side with a paper punch and bind together with chenille stems/pipe cleaners or plastic lacing. If you use string or yarn, wrap a small piece of tape around the end so it is easier to thread through the holes.

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Contact Paper Collage (continued)

By Holly Lapinski

Mobiles

Make several smaller collage projects, add strings or hangers and attach to a stick or clothes hanger. String beads or macaroni on chenille stems/pipe cleaners to use as the hangers. Tie two or more sticks or hangers together if desired. Hang to display.

Mosaics

Typically, a mosaic is a collage that shows a design or image made from materials that are similar in size, but have different color variations or shapes. The most popular mosaics are made with pieces of tile glued onto a surface and then filled in with grout. You and your child can explore this medium with macaroni, dried beans and peas, beads, paper bits, confetti, foam stickers, etc. Use the clear contact paper for flat materials. Glue or tape pieces to your template or design when using materials that stick up. Paper plates are great for heavier materials. Creating mosaics will help your child learn patterns and sorting as well as help develop fine motor skills.

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Playing with Clay

By Holly Lapinski

Links to Literacy: This activity gives children another way to learn better shapes and letter-sound relationships.

What you'll need:

- Play dough or self hardening clay, or bake in the oven clay (store bought or homemade - recipes below)
- Surface to work on (for easy clean up use plastic place mats or plastic flannel backed table cloth)
- Assorted cookie cutters
- Assorted objects to make texture (suggestions: rubber stamps (no ink), spongy stamps, forks, spoons, plastic necklaces, rolling pin)

What to Do:

Roll, flatten, pinch, shape, cut, stamp and/or texture your clay to make shapes, objects, or words that relate to the story you are reading together or rhymes that you recite or sing. Squish them up and start again if using play dough, air dry, or bake depending on the clay you and your child have chosen to work with.

Variations:

For younger children, make cut out hands by flattening the clay and having your child hold his hand on the clay while you draw around it with a pen. Press hard enough that the pen cuts the clay. Have your cut out hands holding washable objects or use them to make birds, animals, flowers, etc.

For older children, start to form letters by writing with snakes (rolls or ropes of clay called coils). Form things that start with that letter or spell out the words. Make and/or write a word that rhymes with the first word. Examples: Spell b-o-x and make a box, then make/write f-o-x and then make a fox. You can change the first letters to help them see it is the same root. Make your favorite things out of clay and use them to tell a story.

Notes:

Play dough, air dry clay and bake in the oven clay can be found at your local craft/hobby store or in the children's activity section at your local super store.

Homemade Clay Recipes

Use a plastic bowl and spoon for mixing up these easy clay recipes. For even color distribution, add color to the water before mixing with dry ingredients. Alum can be found in the baking section of your local supermarket and acts as a preservative. Store clay in reseal able plastic bags or containers.

Play Clay

2 cups flour
1 cup salt
6 Tablespoons alum
2 Tablespoons salad oil
1 cup water
Food coloring or package of unsweetened Kool-aid

Mix dry ingredients and then add water with color added if desired. Mix together until smooth.

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Playing with Clay (continued)

By Holly Lapinski

Air Dry Clay

4 cups flour

1 teaspoon alum

1 ½ cups salt

1 ½ cups water

Clay can be dyed with food color before forming or painted after dry

Mix salt, flour and alum in a bowl. Add water gradually to form a ball. Knead (roll, pound and pull) adding water until it no longer falls apart. Store clay in the refrigerator. Use at room temperature. Let finished projects dry at room temperature (about days) It will become hard and can be painted.

Salt Dough

¾ cup water

3 Tablespoons of salt

1 teaspoon cooking oil

1/3 cup water

Food color or paint

Mix together all ingredients (except water) in a bowl with your hands. Add water a little at a time until the dough is smooth and doesn't stick to the side of the bowl. If it gets too sticky add a little flour. If it is too crumbly add more water. Sprinkle flour on the table, a mat or board and knead until smooth.

Dough can be stored in a sealed bag or container in the refrigerator for a couple of days. Bake in preheated 250 degree oven for about 3 hours until firm. Baking times will vary depending on the size and thickness of your object. Make sure it is hard all through. Cool before painting.

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