Nursery rhymes are important for young children because they help develop an ear for our language. Both rhyme and rhythm help kids hear the sounds and syllables in words, which helps kids learn to read! Here are some activities and recommended poetry books to aid your child's developing poetry, rhythm, and rhythm skills.

Today's children have screens everywhere they turn. Many of us know a toddler (perhaps our own!) who can operate an iPad. Things are surely different than when we were kids! Aren't nursery rhymes a thing of the past? They shouldn't be.

Nursery rhymes. These little poems and songs have been around for centuries. Despite all the changes the world has seen in the last 500 years, nursery rhymes are here to stay. Below are ten reasons why kids need to learn nursery rhymes. Nursery rhymes and other popular rhymes and songs are for kids of all ages!

1. Nursery rhymes are the perfect first stories. The bouncy rhythm catches their attention, and the short length means I might be able to finish a rhyme before little hands grab the book.

2. Nursery rhymes can boost early language development. Not only does the repetition of rhymes and stories teach children how language works, it also builds memory capabilities that can be applied to all sorts of activities.

3. Knowing nursery rhymes can build social skills and promote a sense of community. Children bond over a shared story, and when you have a classroom (or houseful) of children who know the same rhymes, they have fun reciting and singing together.

4. Loving nursery rhymes opens the door to a love of all books. Even before they can read, children can sit and learn how a book works. This extends to the pictures and music associated with nursery rhymes: it is a full visual and oral experience.

5. Kids who know nursery rhymes are equipped to be better readers. Listening to nursery rhymes strengthens kids' ability to hear the sounds in words.

6. Listening to nursery rhymes builds vocabulary. The more stories and rhymes kids hear, the larger their vocabulary. A strong vocabulary improves listening comprehension, social conversations, writing, and more!

7. A love for nursery rhymes opens the door to creativity. Act out rhymes, create nursery rhyme crafts, illustrate favorite rhymes, and write your own. Plus, listening to rhymes without pictures lets your child create mental images in his head.

8. Nursery rhymes connect us to the past. Don't you love reading a favorite picture book from your childhood to your own kids? When you share nursery rhymes that you knew as a child, you can have that same joy.

9. Singing nursery rhymes can improve fine motor skills and coordination. When children do finger plays (think “I’m a Little Teapot”) and act out other rhymes (like “Jack Jumped Over a Candlestick”), they can even improve muscle strength!

10. Nursery rhymes are just plain fun. Silly rhymes and nonsensical verse are appealing to kids. That’s why these rhymes are still popular after 500 years!

Ten Top Nursery Rhymes for Young Children

1. Humpty Dumpty
2. Row Row Row Your Boat
3. Ring A Ring A Roses
4. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
5. The Wheels On The Bus
6. Inky Binky Spider
7. Old MacDonald
8. Little Monkeys Jumping On The Bed
9. This Is The Way The Lady Rides
10. Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day

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Infants: Tape Resist Snowflakes
Materials: blue non-toxic washable paint, tape, paper, zipper bag
Lay tape on paper in a snowflake pattern. Allow infant to finger paint on top of the paper and snowflake design. This can also be done inside of a zipper bag for young infants. Once paint dries, peel tape to reveal snowflake pattern on blue background.

Toddlers: Handprint Snowflakes
Materials: white washable non-toxic paint, plastic fork, blue construction paper, cotton swabs, optional salt or glitter
Guide children to stamp snowflake patterns onto the paper, adding smaller dots with cotton swabs to fill in the page. Allow them to sprinkle salt or glitter to complete design (optional).

Preschoolers: Fork Painted Snowflakes
Materials: white washable non-toxic paint, plastic fork, blue construction paper, cotton swabs, optional salt or glitter
Help children use a fork to paint snowflakes using winter colors in shades of blue and purple. Make small dots with fork handle before dipping it in paint. Allow the paints to dry before sprinkling with salt or glitter to complete design (optional).

Schoolagers: Salt Painted Snowflakes
Materials: card stock, pencil, school glue, table salt, liquid watercolors, eye dropper
Allow children to draw snowflake pattern on the paper with pencil. Have them trace over the designs with glue. Pour salt on the glue in a heavy layer. Allow to dry. Use watercolor paint and eye dropper to paint the snowflakes using winter colors in shades of blue and purple.

Toddlers and Preschool Fall Kits
Meeting Milestones: Birth to 12 Months
Meeting Milestones: 12 Months to 24 Months
New die cuts include: Mini Farm Animals, Wreath, Large Snowman, Pennant, Large Squirrel, Eye Glasses, Hot Air Balloon, Dr. Seuss Hat, Emoji’s, Tent, and Campfire.

We also have several new backpack kits for varying ages. We are open from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm. When there is a training scheduled in Montgomery the Resource Library is open until 6:00 pm. Make plans to come by and check out these new items soon. For additional information, please call Claire Wallace at 334-270-4100 ext. 267.

Infant Quality Tip
Why Does My Baby Need Tummy Time?
Tummy Time helps your baby develop the back, neck, and shoulder muscles needed to meet infant developmental milestones. It may also help prevent early motor delays and conditions such as flat head syndrome and twisted neck. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends placing babies on their bellies to sleep and on their tummies to play.

Tummy Time can begin as soon as your baby comes home from the hospital. Your baby should work up to an hour of Tummy Time per day by 5 months of age. Aim for a few minutes at a time, several times a day.

AELG Face-to-Face - Montgomery
Montgomery’s Child Care Education and Training Program will be offering the Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Course in March. The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Course is written to promote continuity of high quality care and learning for children from birth through five years of age.

This course consists of nine training sessions that are a guide for understanding child development and learning, and for implementing best practices in order to prepare children for success in school and in life.

The Alabama Early Learning Guidelines Credential is an important milestone on the Career Lattice of Alabama Child Care and Education Professional Development System - Pathways to Quality Care and Education.

Please see the Montgomery calendar for the dates and times of the course. The Dothan Child Care Education and Training Program will be offering the AELG Course in the Spring quarter. Please continue to check their calendar for the dates and times of the course.

To register for these online courses please contact Lisa Nunn at lnunn@aptv.org. Registration opens on December 10, 2018. Space is limited.

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