

Making the Most of Songs and Rhymes

Why Is Sharing Songs and Rhymes Important?

Sharing Songs and Rhymes helps children to:

- Develop communication skills such as turn taking, attention and listening through face-to-face interactions with the adults
- Learn new words and phrases
- Develop anticipation through repetition and Pause and Wait
- Have fun with beats and rhythms
- Explore sound patterns in words including rhymes, syllables and alliteration
- Learn early numeracy skills

How to support Songs and Rhymes:

- Early Years settings and schools can identify a **rhyme/ song of the week**. This can be shared throughout the setting and with families and practised daily. E.g. through group times, when putting on shoes and coats, moving from one area to another, when tidying up.
- Links should be made with **families** to support children's engagement with songs and rhymes. E.g. displayed in the setting for families to see, shared through blogs, websites and social media, provided with books with rhymes and songs.
- Use props and pictures when sharing songs and rhymes and include opportunities to enable children to **revisit familiar rhymes** through their play.
- Provide a selection of books that have songs and rhymes that you can share with the children.

Links to Support Songs and Rhymes

- [World Nursery Rhyme Week](#) sponsored by Music Bugs is usually in November
- [Highland Literacy – Phonological Awareness](#) – [Rhyme Awareness](#) and [Rhyme Production](#)
- [Highland Literacy – Rhymes and Rimes](#)
- [Scottish Book Trust – Bookbug](#)
- [Hanan Book Nook](#)

Are children ready to listen? Let them know song and rhyme time is going to happen a few minutes before and remember that their attention span is still developing. Use visuals (such as your timeline) to help with this.

Don't introduce too many new songs or rhymes in one go. It's hard to learn new songs and rhymes. You can help by:

- repeating
- sending the words home
- sharing with families
- breaking it down
- using props/ visuals/ or showing what it means
- having a song/ rhyme of the week

Use props/actions and visuals to help children choose a song or rhyme and to support children to learn vocabulary and language.
e.g. choosing boards, song bags, song boxes or a visual board for a specific rhyme (Humpty Dumpty)

Ensure songs and rhymes are developmentally/ stage appropriate and follow the children's interest/ are relevant to IDL/ learning. It is beneficial to split children into small groups for story time to enhance attention and interaction for both adults and children.

Songs and Rhyme

Remember your Words Up key messages when singing songs and telling rhymes!

Exposure to Songs and Rhymes is an important way for children to learn emerging literacy skills

Pause and wait; to let the children take a turn. Song and Rhyme time should be interactive to encourage language and communication

Quiet Time To Talk: plan your song and rhyme at a time where there will be minimal distractions/ background noise.

Be Careful with Questions:
Children need you to tell them about rhyme and sounds in words in order to learn about them. You can use non-words or nonsense words too.
e.g. "chair and bear sound the same at the end...they rhyme"
"bear has a 'b' sound at the beginning"
"rabbit and chabbit sound the same at the end"