

Bathtime Bubbles

Fish for sounds

Float foam letters or table tennis balls with letters written on them in the bath. Ask your child to catch the letter that makes the sound 'sss', mmm, k, k, k, etc.

My name

Float foam letters or table tennis balls with letters written on them in the bath. Ask your child to catch the letters in their name. Encourage them to say the name of each letter.

Bedtime Bliss

Rhyming Stories

Frequently read rhymes to your child. Authors who write beautiful rhyming or patterned stories include Dr Seuss, Lynley Dodd, Quentin Blake, Kaye Umansky, Julia Donaldson, Nick Sharratt and Claire Freedman.

Paint a picture!

Parents can brief a huge sigh of relief – there is no expectation that you should get paints out at bedtime! When you are sharing a book with your child, look at a page where the illustration is very detailed. Talk about the detail then ask your child to shut their eyes and remember everything they can about the illustration.

Rhyme Alternatives

Make up new words to rhymes and wait for your child to supply the last rhyming word:

Little Bo-**Big** has lost her... **pig!**

Jack and **Fred** went up to...**bed!**

Mary had a little goat, its face was long and **hairy**. Whenever it appeared at school, it looked all sad and **scary!**



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The development of listening skills, sequencing skills and memory skills are an important part of being successful when learning the phonic knowledge and skills necessary to read and spell. Your child needs to be able to hear different sounds and remember the order they heard them in. They also need to be able to remember sounds they have heard and letters they have seen. Children also need to be able to keep a steady beat and to develop an understanding of rhythm and rhyme. The development of these skills is referred to as phonological and phonemic awareness.

The following activities and games have been designed for you to play with your child to help them develop these skills in a fun way. Time does not have to be set aside to do these activities. They can all be played as part of the family routine: at mealtimes, whilst on the move, at playtime, at bathtime and of course at bedtime!

You can also support your child to develop these skills by reading lots of stories and poems containing rhymes and predictable patterns.

Mealtime Magic

Rhyming pairs

Make up some simple rhymes like these:

I like rice – it's very nice,

I like fish – on a dish,

I like peas – they make me sneeze.

Keep the beat!

Tap along to the beat of a song on the radio or CD.

On the move

Rhyme time

In the car, listen to and join in with nursery rhymes, counting rhymes or other children's rhyming songs.

My mother went to market

Play 'My mother went to market and bought ...'

Take it in turns to add something to the shopping list which begins with the same sound. Each time something is added you or your child must recall the entire list in the correct order!

'My mother went to market and bought a sandwich.'

'My mother went to market and bought a sandwich and a sock.'

'My mother went to market and bought a sandwich, a sock and a sausage.'

Tongue twisters

Make up sound sentences where most of the words begin with the same phoneme:

Jodie's jelly is juicy.

Cheeky Charlie chomped on chips.

Playtime

Sound effect city!

Whatever game your child is playing encourage them to make the sound effects ... and don't forget to join! For example, if they are playing with a train set, they might make the sound of the train chugging along the track, 'chchch'. In the park they might go down the slide saying 'wheee'. When reading together 'ahhh' might accompany a picture of someone relaxing in a chair.

Chopsticks

Using a paper plate and some chopsticks play a simple sequence of sounds to a steady beat on the reverse side of the plate. For example use the sticks to hit the:

floor, plate, floor, plate, floor, plate *or*

floor, plate, knock sticks together, plate, floor, plate, together, plate

Sound treasure hunt

Go round the house and find objects which have the same first sound. Make a collection of the objects on a tray (or pictures of the objects if they are big!). Talk about each object with your child and then, whilst they are not looking, remove one of the objects from the tray. Ask your child to have another look at the tray; they need to work out what is missing.

Catch me out

Deliberately say a word wrong in a rhyme and see if your child can spot the mistake. For example:

Jack and Jill ... went up the road.

Little Miss Muffet sat on a chair.

Hickory, Dickory, Dock the mouse ran up the wall.

Memory Pairs

There are many commercially available versions of this game. A pack of cards is needed which contains matching pairs of pictures. The cards are placed face down in rows. Take it in turns with your child to turn two cards over. If they match the player keeps the pair. If they don't match they are turned back over. The winner is the player with most pairs at the end of the game.