



# Nursery Rhymes, Songs and Fingerplays

[www.pplibraries.org](http://www.pplibraries.org)

[www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/growingreaderstogether](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/growingreaderstogether)

This book of traditional and contemporary rhymes was compiled from multiple sources by Pines & Plains Libraries.

Growing Readers Together (GRT) is the Colorado State Library's project addressing the needs of informal child care providers. GRT is funded by the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation.



**BUELL  
FOUNDATION**  
*Investing in Colorado's Future*



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education  
Colorado State Library

# Rhymers are Readers: The Importance of Nursery Rhymes

## Language Development

Hearing and singing nursery rhymes allows children to hear vowel and consonant sounds as well as be able to start putting sounds together. They can practice pitch, volume, voice inflection and rhythm of language. They're introduced to new vocabulary that they might not otherwise hear. Kids articulate words and begin to enunciate more clearly. Many of the hand movements that accompany rhymes follow a left to right pattern, which prepares kids for reading print from left to right.

## Cognitive Development

Nursery rhymes are based on patterns which help children with memorization. Rhymes introduce the concept of sequencing—the idea of a beginning, a middle and an end. This helps kids understand stories. Alliteration, onomatopoeias and imaginative imagery are in many rhymes and help kids build stronger language skills. Patterns are the building blocks of basic math skills. Many rhymes include numbers, counting, size and weight. Children can learn to add by counting forward and subtract by counting backward. The concepts of many and few can be learned through rhymes.

## Physical Development

Children develop their mouth and tongue muscles by using different sounds used in rhymes. The movements that accompany rhymes help with coordination. Kids use their whole bodies when they begin to act out the rhymes in dramatic play.

## Social/Emotional Development

Sharing rhymes establishes a secure bond between parent/caregiver and the child. It encourages positive physical touch, such as clapping along with the rhyme or bouncing the child on a lap. Kids can begin to develop a sense of humor when singing funny rhymes. The characters in songs and rhymes experience different emotions, so children are able to identify emotions and develop empathy. Through dramatic play, kids expand their imagination, creativity and their own sense of expression. Many rhymes are based on historical events, so it connects kids to the past as well.

Source: "Rhymers are Readers: The Importance of Nursery Rhymes"  
[www.kbyueleven.org](http://www.kbyueleven.org)

# Early Literacy: The Importance of Reading to Your Child

Reading or being read to is a whole brain activity. Research has shown that the more experience children have with books, the more likely they are to read early and well. It helps them develop important thinking skills, such as problem solving as well as social-emotional skills. The more you read with your child, or the children you care for, the more they begin to understand how books work and how enjoyable they can be. They start to recognize that printed words and pictures have meaning. Preschoolers that read more are better able to understand and empathize with other

people and see the world from the perspective of others. Sharing books expands children's minds, but it also expands their hearts by strengthening the bond with a caregiver that makes them feel loved, safe and secure, which are vital social-emotional milestones. Reading increases literacy, thinking skills, language development and positive relationships with others.

Source: "Learning to read and write doesn't start in kindergarten or first grade" by Rebecca Parlakian & Claire Lerner, [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

