



# Songs, Word Play, and Letters

## Songs, Word Play, Letters: Day 1

**Materials:** poetry poster, poems written out on small index cards, 1 set of uppercase letters, 1 set of children's name cards and teacher's name card, flannel board, and "Five Green and Speckled Frogs" flannel pieces (5 green speckled frogs, 1 brown speckled log, 1 blue pool, several black bugs).

### If You're Happy

Procedure:

- Say, "The first song we are going to sing today is "If You're Happy."
- Sing the first verse slowly and do motions (clapping hands) as you sing.
- Sing and model motions at a slower pace so children who are not familiar with the song or motions can follow along, if they want to try.
- Ask children to sing the song again with you. This time, sing two verses, using clapping hands in the first verse and tapping knees in the second.

### If Your Name Starts With [Name a Letter], Raise Your Hand

Procedure:

- Say, "We're going to play a game with our names. I'm going to hold up a letter, like this."
  - (Hold up the first letter from your own name.)
- "If your name starts with [name letter], raise your hand. My name starts with [name letter], so I'm raising my hand." Then show your name card, point out the first letter so they will learn the meaning of "starts with". Then say, if applicable, "[child's name] starts with [name letter], so he can raise his hand, too. I will hold up a letter for everybody's name. Everyone will get a turn today to play this game."
- If a child whose name starts with the letter you hold up does not respond, pull out that child's name card, point to the first letter and say, "Your name starts with the letter B, Bobby, so you may raise your hand."

### Stand Up

Procedure:

- Say, "Next, we are going to learn a new poem called "Stand Up." We all need to stand to do the motions to this poem."
- Do all the motions as you recite the poem.



## Five Green and Speckled Frogs

Procedure:

- Introduce the song by telling children you are going to sing a song about 5 frogs that jump off a log into a cool, blue pool. As you place the log on the flannel board say, “Here’s the log and here are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 speckled frogs sitting on the log (count the frogs as you place each one). We say that the frogs are speckled because they have spots all over their bodies. I’ll put the cool pool over here, and some little bugs next to it.” Sing the song, moving one frog each time. For verses 1-3 state the number of frogs remaining, while pointing to them. On the last three verses, pause briefly to allow children time to notice the number of frogs remaining before you say their number.
- Point to the bugs on the flannel board when you come to that point in the song. Model eating the bugs by saying “glub, glub, glub”. Rub your stomach while singing “most delicious”. Sing the song again if you think children will enjoy it. Say, “That was so much fun, I think we’ll do it again! Let me put the frogs back over here on their log, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 frogs. (Count each frog as you move it to the log.) Now we are ready! Let’s sing this fun song again!”

## Songs, Word Play, Letters: Day 2

**Materials:** Poetry poster, flannel board and flannel pieces for “Down by the Bay” (snake, cake, dog, mouse, house, waves, and 3 watermelons) and “Diddle, Diddle, Dumpling” (boy, bed, a pair of stockings, and 2 shoes).

### If You’re Happy (and Those Words Begin with the Same Sound)

Procedure:

- Say, “The first song we are going to sing today is “If You’re Happy.”
- Sing three verses: clapping hands, stomping feet, and shouting “Hooray!”
- After singing the song, say, “I noticed that some of the words in the song begin with the same sounds. “Happy” and “Hands” begin with the same sound; they sound the same at the beginning; /h/, happy and /h/, hands. Both of these words begin with the /h/ sound.”
- Say, “‘Hooray’ begins with the /h/ sound too! /h/...hurray. Those are three words we just sang that all begin with the same sound. /h/ happy, /h/ hand, and /h/ hooray! That’s really interesting!”
- Then, to transition to the poem that is next, say something like, “We used our hands for clapping in this song, and now we are going to do a poem about all the things that the fingers on our hands can do. This poem is called “Ten Little Fingers.”



## Ten Little Fingers (and Chiming in With Rhyming Words)

Procedure:

- Recite poem, using index card with words for reference, if needed. Do not show poem.
  - Say, “Let’s do that poem once again.” This time, pause briefly before the second word in each pair of rhyming words so children can chime in (me/see, wide/hide, and low/so). There’s no need to tell children to say the rhyming words. Pausing just before you say them will prompt them.
- Hold up both hands with fingers splayed and ask children to do the same. Say, “There is something else we can all do with our fingers. We can count them!” Lead counting by bending 1 finger down at a time on one hand and then the other, until all ten have been counted.

## The Itsy, Bitsy Spider

Procedure:

- Say, “We are going to sing “The Itsy, Bitsy Spider” next. In this song, we can use our fingers to represent the spider going up the waterspout”. Demonstrate how to do this.

## Down by the Bay

Procedure:

- Say, “Now we are going to sing a funny song about some very silly animals. The name of the song is “Down by the Bay.”
- Sing the song and place the appropriate animals on the flannel board as you sing. Remove the last flannel piece before you put the next one on the board.

## Diddle, Diddle, Dumpling

Procedure:

- Say, “Now, we are going to learn a new poem called “Diddle, Diddle, Dumpling.”
- Arrange the flannel pieces on the flannel board to make a scene depicting the poem. As you place the flannel pieces on the board, you might say, “I am going to put the bed right here in the middle of the flannel board. Here is the little boy, John. I will place him on the bed. I will put his shoe beside the bed, like this.”
- Recite the poem slowly as you point to the appropriate part of the flannel board scene. Don’t display the written poem yet, as children should learn to attend to the spoken words first.
- Repeat the poem as before. Then, display the poem and talk about the parts of the illustration that match the words in the poem’s verses.



## Songs, Word Play, Letters: Day 3

**Materials:** poetry poster, flannel board, and flannel pieces for “Five Green and Speckled Frogs” and “Down by the Bay,” Predictable book: *Over in the Meadow*

### Open, Shut Them

Procedure:

- Say, “Today we are going to start with the song “Open, Shut Them.”
- Sing the song while doing the motions. Say, “That is such a fun song! Let’s try it again, this time a little bit faster!”

### Five Green and Speckled Frogs (and Chiming in With Rhyming Words)

Procedure:

- Say, “We are going to sing “Five Green and Speckled Frogs” again today. First, I am going to put the speckled log on the flannel board. Help me count the frogs to make sure we have all five.” Have children count with you as you put the frogs on the board one at a time. “Now we need the cool, blue pool. I will put it over here on this side of the frogs.”
- Sing song, moving the frogs one at a time as you sing. Give children the opportunity to assess the 3, 2,1 frogs in the last 3 verses. Use the same motions to accompany “glub, glub, glub” and “most delicious”.
- Slow down slightly when you reach the second word of a rhyming pair (frog/log, pool/cool) so children can chime in on these words.
- Then say, “That is such a fun song to sing! Now I am going to put all the pieces away so we will have them when we sing this song again.” Name the pieces as you take them off the flannel board and count the frogs as you put them away. Children can join you in counting.
- Then say something like, “Frogs play in water and sometimes we find them in meadows. We are going to read a book next about some other animals and their mothers who live in a meadow.”

### *Over in the Meadow*

Procedure:

- Show the cover of the book and read the title, underlining the words with your finger as you read. Read the author’s and illustrator’s names the same way.
- Read *Over in the Meadow*, keeping the natural rhythm of the verse. Point to pictures on each page to identify objects/animals named.
- Say, “Let’s go back and look at some of the animals in the book.” Go to the page with the mother turtle. Say, “Here’s the mother turtle (point) and the baby turtle (point).”
- “These are turtles. The mother turtle tells the baby turtle to dig in the sand” (model digging action). Follow the same procedure for two or three more animals.



## Down by the Bay (and Chiming in With Rhyming Words)

Procedure:

- Say, “We just read a book about some animals that we would find in a meadow and now we are going to sing a silly song about some other animals that are down by the bay.”
- Sing the song and place the appropriate animals on the flannel board as you sing. Be sure to remove the last piece before adding a new one.
- Slow down a little before the second word in a rhyming pair so children can chime in (grow/go; snake/ cake; mouse/house)
- After you have finished singing the song, put the snake and cake back up on the flannel board. Say, “Snake and cake rhyme. Both words have ‘ake’ as their last parts-- /s//n/-ake and /c/-ake.” Then say both words again, separating–ake in each word from its onset, so children can hear the rime. Proceed in the same way with mouse/house and grow/go.

## Let’s Clap Our Names

Procedure:

- Say, “We are going to play a clapping game. I will say a name, and then together, we will say the name and clap the parts we hear in the name.”
- Model the activity by saying a name (not one from the class) slowly, segmenting the syllables. Then say the name again, this time clapping with each syllable. Do several names so that children will understand the activity.
- Then go around the circle, saying a child’s name slowly, breaking it into syllables, then saying the name again, clapping once for each syllable.
- Every child’s name should be used in this activity. Counting the number of syllables is not the focus and should not be stressed in this activity.

## Songs, Word Play, Letters: Day 4

**Materials:** poetry posters, flannel board, and flannel pieces for “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” (farm, chick, duck, cow, and turkey), uppercase alphabet

### Old MacDonald Had a Farm

Procedure:

- Say, “Today we are going to sing a song about a farmer and the animals he has on his farm.”
- Before singing the song, hold up each animal and identify it with the children.
- Sing the song, adding the appropriate flannel piece for each verse. Leave pieces on the board once they have been placed there until the song ends.
- Tell children they will sing the song another day.
- Say, “Now, we’ll put the chick, duck, cow, and turkey away for today.”  
(Ask children to name each animal with you as you remove them from the flannel board.)



## Ten Little Fingers (and Chiming in With Rhyming Words)

Procedure:

- Tell children you will recite a poem about ten little fingers.
- Recite the poem to the children, doing all the motions.
- As you recite the poem, slow down before the second word in a rhyming pair so children can chime in (me/see, wide/hide, low/so).
- After reciting the poem, hold up both hands with fingers splayed, and count fingers. Have children count their fingers as you count yours, bending one finger down at a time.

## I'm a Little Teapot

Procedure:

- Show children an actual teapot and talk about what it is used for, then name its parts (handle, spout, lid). Also tip it as if pouring and name those actions (tipping and pouring). Use a teacup to pretend to pour tea into.
- Then say, "We have just talked about a real teapot and now we are going to sing a song in which we pretend that we are teapots!"
- Model how children should position themselves, with one arm up for a teapot spout and the other hand on a hip for handle.
- Sing the song slowly, using appropriate motions to accompany the song.
- Sing the song a second time.

## If Your Name Starts With [Name A Letter], Raise Your Hand

Procedure:

- Say, "Today we are going to play the name game again. I'm going to hold up a letter, like this. (Hold up the letter that starts your own name.) If your name starts with [name letter], raise your hand. My name starts with [name letter], so I'm raising my hand". Then show your name card, point out the first letter so they will learn the meaning of "starts with". Then say, if applicable, "[child's name] starts with [name letter], so he can raise his hand, too. I will hold up a letter for everybody's name. Everyone will get a turn to play this game."

## Stand Up

Procedure:

- Say, "Now, we are going to recite the poem "Stand Up." Let's all stand so we can do the motions and recite the poem."
- Recite the poem without displaying poem.
- Then say, "Next, we are going to sing the song "If You're Happy." We will stay standing, so we can do all the motions!"



## If You're Happy

### Procedure

- Sing two verses of the song, using clapping hands and stomping feet as motions.
- Sing a third verse - "If you're sad and you know it cry, 'waa, waa'." Rub your eyes for the motion. Mention this would be a good song for the baby in *Oonga Boonga/Crybaby*.

## Songs, Word Play, Letters: Day 5

**Materials:** Poetry poster, flannel board and flannel pieces for "Five Green and Speckled Frogs", predictable book: *Over in the Meadow*

### Five Green and Speckled Frogs (and Chiming in With Rhyming Words)

#### Procedure:

- Say, "We're going to sing "Five Green and Speckled Frogs" again today. First, I will place the speckled log near the top of the flannel board. Next, I will put the five green and speckled frogs on the speckled log (count frogs as you place them; invite children to join you), and I won't forget the cool, blue pool. I'll put that right here next to the log."
- Move the frogs and other pieces as usual. Pause briefly for children to assess 3, 2, and 1 frog(s) that remain in the last few verses.
- As you remove frogs, count them.

### Over In the Meadow (and Chiming in With Rhyming Words)

#### Procedure:

- Show the cover of the book. Say, "We read this book a couple of days ago, so you will remember the title is (pause for children to answer). Yes, *Over in the Meadow*." Underline the title with your finger as you read it.
- Read, keeping the natural rhythm of the verse. Point to pictures to identify animals/objects named.
- After reading, say, "I'm going to read this book again. This time, you can read some of the words with me. Linger on the first sound of the second word in a rhyming pair (sun/one) to signal children to chime in.

### Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes

#### Procedure:

- Tell children the next song has motions they can make only when standing up. Before singing, have children point to their head, shoulders, knees, toes, eyes, ears, mouth, and nose, one at a time, as you name the body parts and point to each on your own body.
- Sing "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" modeling the motions.



## If Your Name Starts With [Name A Sound], Raise Your Hand

Procedure:

- Say, “Next, we are going to play a game with your names. We played a name game yesterday and you raised your hand when I held up the first letter in your name. We are going to play the game a little differently today, though. In this game, you are going to raise your hand when I say the first sound in your name- the sound that is at the very beginning.”
- Model this activity for children by using a first sound not used in the children’s names. Say, “I’m going to say a sound, /t/, /t/. Let’s pretend that someone named Tabitha is in our class. If I said /t/ and then said, ‘If your name starts with /t/, raise your hand’, then Tabitha would raise her hand because her name starts with /t/.../t/...Tabitha”.
- Say, “Now, I’m going to say some sounds that I know are at the beginning of your names. When I say a sound, think about your own name. If it begins with the sound I say, then raise your hand. I’ll help you if you need it. I will say enough sounds so everyone will have a turn to raise his or her hand today.”
- Proceed with the game, using beginning sounds found in children’s names. Say beginning sounds clearly and accurately. If a child whose name starts with a sound called does not respond, say, “Teddy, your name starts with /t/. Teddy /t/, so you can raise your hand.” Children may not yet be familiar with thinking of their names as having a sound at the beginning and they may not be able to isolate the first sound from the rest of the name. This task will be harder for children whose names begin with a consonant blend (Brenda /b//r/) than for children whose names begin with a single consonant (Katy /k/). **Be sure to say the target sound (/t/), and not the letter name (“t”).** Repeat the sound enough to give children time to compare it to the beginning sound in their name.