



# Songs, Word Play, and Letters

Standard Connection:  
ALL ELA (RF); ELA.RL.4.4b;  
ELA.L.PK4.1a, 1b; ELA.L.PK4.2, 2d;  
ELA.L.PK4.4, 4a; ELA.L.PK4.5, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d;  
ELA.L.PK4.6

## Songs, Word Play, and Letters: Day 1

**Materials:** flannel board and pieces for “Down by the Bay,” *Dazzling Diggers*, *The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)*, chart paper

### Down by the Bay

Procedure:

- Tell children, “The first song we will sing today is that silly song about the animals down by the bay.”
- Sing one or two verses the children know.
- Make up some new verses, such as “a goat wearing a coat” or “a hen using a pen.” (Make flannel pieces beforehand for any new verses you add.)
- As you sing, linger on the first sound of the second word of a rhyming pair (grow/go; snake/cake) so children can chime in on these words.

### Dazzling Diggers [and Those Words Rhyme]

Procedure:

- Say, “We have a new book today; it is all about how diggers work.”
- Show the cover of *Dazzling Diggers*, underline with a finger while reading the title, author, and illustrator.
- Then, read the book, keeping the natural rhythm of the verse.
- When you have finished, go back to some of the pages and read them again. After reading each one, say something like, “I noticed two words that have the same last part - words that rhyme; ground and pound—they both have ‘ound’ as their last part.”
- Read a couple more pages with rhyming word pairs (lift/shift, haul/tall) and invite children to tell you which words rhyme.

### Come On and Join In the Game

Procedure:

- Say, “Now we are going to sing a song about joining in to play a game with our friends. The name of the song is “Come On and Join In the Game’.” Ask children to stand up for the song.
- Sing four or five verses (“clap,” “sneeze,” “yawn,” “jump,” and “snap fingers”) and model the motions.

## Interesting-Sounding Words [and *The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)*]

### Procedure:

- As you hold up the book, say, “Next, we are going to talk about some of the interesting-sounding words in the book, *The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)*.”
- You might say, “Mozzarella is an interesting-sounding word. Say it with me: Mozz - a - rell - a. Mozzarella is a long word, isn’t it? Mozzarella is a kind of cheese you put on a pizza. Mozzarella starts with the sound /m/, and we write /m/ with the letter M.”
- Write M on the easel so children can see it, labeling your actions in making it (“a straight line down, and then a diagonal line down, a diagonal line up, and a straight line down...”).
- Then say, “Another interesting word is pepperoni. Let’s say it together. Pep - per - o - ni. Pepperoni starts with /p/, and we write that sound with the letter P.” Write P so children can see it. Describe your actions (“a long vertical line, and then a line that starts at the top of the long vertical line, goes out, and then curves back to the middle...”).
- You might say, “A third word that sounds very interesting is delicatessen. Let’s say that one together, too: Del - i - ca - tes - sen. The Little Red Hen bought her mozzarella cheese and her pepperoni at a delicatessen, which is a kind of store. Delicatessen starts with /d/, and we use the letter D to write that sound.” Write D, so children can see it. Describe your actions as you write the letter.
- Comment that some words are really fun to say and that we will talk about some more interesting-sounding words on another day.
- The interesting-sounding words from *The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)* can easily be worked into a lunchtime conversation. This will give children more practice in saying the words and help them to understand their meaning more fully.

## Songs, Word Play, and Letters: Day 2

**Materials:** poetry poster, flannel board and pieces for “Five Green and Speckled Frogs,” *A Letter to Amy*, chart paper

### Five Green and Speckled Frogs

#### Procedure:

- Say, “Today we are going to start by singing “Five Green and Speckled Frogs.”
- As you place the log on the flannel board say, “I am going to put the brown, speckled log right here at the top of the flannel board. Here is the cool, blue pool that I will put beside the log. Now count the frogs with me so we are sure they are all here today.” Count the frogs with the children as you place them on the log.
- Sing the song, as usual.

### Three Little Monkeys

Procedure:

- Say, “Those five green and speckled frogs seem to have fun together in the cool pool, don’t they? Now I am going to teach you a new poem about three little monkeys who have fun together, too. The name of this poem is ‘Three Little Monkeys’.”
- Hold up one hand with three fingers extended, with thumb and little finger clasped over one another, beneath them. Show children how to move their hand back and forth.
- Chant the poem (do not show poetry poster yet), and as you chant, fold back one of the three fingers with each verse. Go slowly so children can do the poem and motions with you.
- After reciting the monkey poem, show children the poetry poster. Read the title as you underline the words with your finger. Talk about the illustration: “Here are the three little monkeys swinging on the tree branches — 1, 2, 3 (point to and count them), and here’s the crocodile beneath them in the water.” Suggest, “Maybe the monkeys should find another place to play!!”

### Guess What Word I am Saying [and *A Letter to Amy*]

Procedure:

- Hold up the book, *A Letter to Amy*. Say, “We have been reading the story, *A Letter to Amy*, and now I am going to say some words from the story in an interesting way; a way that is not quite right. I want you to say the words the right way. If I say p – (pause) –arty, p- (pause) – arty, you would say ‘party.’” Give one more example if you think children need it to understand the task. (In this task, you provide onset-rime parts of words (or the onset and the rest of the word) in a two-syllable word.)
- Say some words in the “interesting way” and give children time to repeat the word the right way. You can use the following words:
  - mail: m- (pause) -ail    • Willie: W- (pause) -illie
  - rain: r- (pause) -ain    • wind: w- (pause) -ind
- After you say the word parts once, repeat them a second time before children say the word the right way.
- After children guess the word, use the word in a sentence to convey its meaning.
- An example of this would be: “Yes, party is the word I was saying. Peter invited Amy to his birthday party.”

### Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes

Procedure:

- Say, “We’ve been sitting for a while, so let’s stand up and move our body from head to toe! We are going to sing ‘Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes’.”
- Sing the song and make the motions, as usual. Tell children that you will sing the song a second time, this time humming the tune and touching the body parts without saying the words out loud.

## Songs, Word Play, and Letters: Day 3

**Materials:** poetry posters, flannel board and pieces for “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and “Bingo”, *Dazzling Diggers*, uppercase letter cards, children’s name cards. (Optional: skillet, mixing bowl, spoon, pancake turner)

### Old MacDonald Had a Farm

Procedure:

- Say, “Today, we are going to start with the song ‘Old MacDonald Had a Farm’.”
- “First, I am going to put the farmer, Old MacDonald, right here at the top of the flannel board. Then, I’ll put the barn beside him. I am going to put all the animals we will sing about at the bottom of the flannel board and then move them one by one up here to the top of the flannel board as we sing about them. Let’s sing about the cow first and then do the pig second.”
- Sing the song, as usual, using all the animals you placed on the flannel board.
- When you are finished singing, ask the children to say the animals’ names with you as you remove them from the flannel board.

### Bingo

Procedure:

- Say, “Now we are going to sing the song about the other farmer who had a dog named Bingo.”
- “First, I am going to put the letters we use to write Bingo’s name on the flannel board, and I want you to say the letter names with me. First, we need the letter B (place B on the board). The second letter we need is I. I will put it beside the B. The third letter we need for Bingo’s name is N. Now we have B- I- N (point to each letter as you say it).” Continue this way until all letters in Bingo are on the board.
- Sing the song as usual, removing one letter for each verse and replacing each letter with a clap (or turning each letter over to reveal a pair of clapping hands).

### Mix a Pancake

Procedure:

- Tell children, “We are going to learn a new poem today called ‘Mix a Pancake.’” Recite the poem and model appropriate motions.
- Show children the poetry poster and point out parts of the illustrations that match the words in the verses. For example, say: “Here’s the bowl of pancake batter with the spoon for mixing. And here’s the skillet - a kind of pan - that we fry the pancakes in. This is a giant pancake - a very, very big pancake - up here that the cook has just tossed up and flipped!” (If possible, show a skillet, spoon, mixing bowl, and pancake turner to the children)

### **Dazzling Diggers [and Those Words Rhyme]**

#### **Procedure:**

- Show the cover of the book and ask children if they remember the title. Point to the *D* in *Dazzling* and say /d/ as a clue, then point to the *D* in *Diggers* and say /d/ as a second clue. Confirm their answer by reading the title as you underline it with your finger. Also, read the name of the author and illustrator.
- Read the book, keeping the natural rhythm of the verse. Point to the pictures to help children link names to objects.
- Go back to a few pages and comment on rhyming words. For example, say: “The words *big* and *dig* have the same last part— ‘*ig*’. They rhyme. Some words do not have the same last part - like *crash* and *break*. They don’t rhyme. But *big* and *dig* rhyme, and so do *break* and *shake*.” As you say the word pairs that rhyme, segment the rime portion of the word.
- Go to a few more pages with rhymes and read them. This time, ask children if they can think of any words you have just read that rhyme - words that have the same last part.
- If children do not respond quickly, read the page again, lingering a bit on the rhyming words to emphasize them. If children still do not respond, say the words one after the other. For example, say: “*Track* and *jack* have the same last part — ‘*ack*’. They rhyme.”

### **If Your Name Starts With \_\_\_\_, Clap Just Once**

#### **Procedure:**

- Tell children, “We are going to play the name game with letters again. This time, though, you will clap your hands once when I hold up the first letter in your name, instead of raising your hand or touching your ear. I might tell you to clap more than once, so you need to really listen carefully!”
- Play one round of the game. Sometimes, instead of saying clap one time, say, “Clap two times/ three times.” Most children will probably know the first letter in their names but have the name cards ready in case a child does not respond when his/her first letter is shown. Hold up the name card and point to the first letter, naming it and telling the child that he/she may clap hands.

## Songs, Word Play, and Letters: Day 4

**Materials:** poetry poster, flannel board and pieces for “Five Green and Speckled Frogs” and flannel letters: P, E, T, E, R (with clapping hands on the back of each – see note), name card with *Peter* on it; *A Letter to Amy*, *The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)*

### Five Little Ducks

Procedure:

- Say, “The first song we are singing today is ‘Five Little Ducks.’ Let’s get our hands ready to make the hills (model) and the quack, quack, quack (model).”
- Sing the song, as usual.

### Story-Character Bingo [and *A Letter to Amy*]

Procedure:

- Tell children: “You are going to sing ‘Bingo,’ but instead of singing about the farmer’s dog, you are going to sing about the boy who is the main character in *A Letter to Amy*.” (Show book cover and point to Peter’s picture) See if children can guess whom they are going to sing about.
- Show a card with Peter’s name written on it. Use the card as a guide to help select the flannel letters to spell Peter. Point to the P in Peter and say, “Peter begins with P, so the first letter we need is a P. Here it is.” Place it on the board.
- Then, point to the second letter in Peter and ask, “What is the second letter in Peter? Yes, it is an E. I’ll put the E right beside the P. Now I have P-E. (point to each letter as you name it). What is the third letter in Peter’s name? Yes, it is a T. I’ll put the T beside the E. Now we have P-E-T.” Proceed the same way with the remaining letters.
- Tell children the song has the same tune as “Bingo” but with different words. Say, “It goes like this: “There was a boy who mailed a letter, and Peter was his name-o. P-E-T-E-R (3 times), and Peter was his name-o.”
- Then sing the song, substituting a clap for each missing letter, just as you do in “Bingo”.  
Note: (It is helpful to have the letters for P-E-T-E-R on flannel squares. Put the letters on one side of the square and the clapping hands on the other side.)

### HUSH!

Procedure:

- Show the cover of *HUSH!* and say, “We have read this story before, so you will remember the title is \_\_\_\_” (pause to give children a chance to respond). Confirm their answer by saying the title in a whisper and putting your finger to your own mouth.
- Point out the mother doing the same thing on the cover of the book.
- Ask children why the mother is whispering the word. Ask children the meaning of the word *hush*.
- Read *HUSH!*, lingering on the first sound in *sleeping* and *nearby* every time, so children can chime in.
- Comment as you read about the whereabouts and actions of the baby.
- After you have read the story, go back through it and comment on some of the words. As you explain a word’s meaning, point to the appropriate picture. Examples: for a ‘*lean*, black cat,’ you might say, “*Lean* means the cat is skinny, not fat.” For, ‘*don’t come leaping*,’ you might say, “This means stop making those big jumps.”

## I'm Thinking of \_\_\_\_ Word Clue Game [and *The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)*]

Procedure:

- Show children the cover of *The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza)* and tell them they are going to play a clue game with words from the story. Remind them to listen to all the clues and to think for a bit before raising their hands when they have an idea.
- For *pizza*, use these clues: "This is a kind of food. This food has a crust and toppings." If children do not guess from those clues, give this one: "This is the kind of food the Little Red Hen made." If children need another clue, say, "When we say this word, we hear two parts (clap 2 times)."
- For *bowl*, use these clues: "These are round dishes that are open on the top and used to hold food or liquids. The Little Red Hen mixed her dough ingredients in one of these." If children do not guess with those clues and need another one, use this one: "The word I am thinking of begins with /b/."
- For *money*, use these clues: "This is what people use to pay for things that they buy. The Little Red Hen used this when she went to the store to buy the things that she needed." If children don't guess with those clues and need another one, use this one: "The word I am thinking of begins with /m/."
- For *cheese*, use these clues: "This is a food that is made from milk products. The Little Red Hen used the mozzarella kind of this food on her pizza. The word I am thinking of begins with /ch/."

## Songs, Word Play, and Letters: Day 5

**Materials:** poetry posters, flannel board and pieces for "Down by the Bay" (Make flannel pieces beforehand for any new verses you add: sheep, jeep, pig, jig, duck, truck), chart paper

### Down by the Bay [and Those Words Rhyme]

Procedure:

- Say, "We are going to start by singing 'Down by the Bay.' We will sing some familiar verses, ones you already know, and then we will add some new verses."
- Sing the song as usual.
- Add new verses ("sheep driving a jeep," "pig dancing a jig," or "duck driving a truck").
- After singing, put the flannel pieces for sheep and jeep back on the board. Say, "Sheep and jeep rhyme; they both have the same last part - eep. /sh/---eep; /j/---eep" (segment the onset and rime portion of each word).
- Continue with other new animals/pieces.

### What Are You Wearing?

Procedure:

- Tell children, "I am going to teach you a new song today called, 'What Are You Wearing?'"
- Sing a verse using the name of one of the children: "[Child's name] is wearing a [color] shirt, a [color] shirt, a [color] shirt. [Child's name] is wearing a [color] shirt, all day long."
- Go around the circle and sing to every child.



## Five Juicy Apples

### Procedure:

- Show children the poem. Read the title and underline it with your finger. Point out the five juicy apples in the illustration. Ask children to count with you.
- Linger on the first sound of the second word in a rhyming pair (store/four, be/three, through/two, pair/there) so children can chime in as you recite the poem together.
- If there is not enough time for everyone to have their name used, tell children the rest will have a turn next time. Make a list of children's names ahead of time and cross off names as you use them in the poem.

## Mix a Pancake

### Procedure:

- Show the poem and ask if they remember the name of this poem. Then say, "Yes, (point to title) it says right here, 'Mix a Pancake.'" As you read the title, stress the /m/ as you point to the M in Mix, and the /p/ as you point to the P in Pancake.
- Recite the poem. Ask children to join in.

## Three Little Monkeys [and Those Words Begin with the Same Sound]

### Procedure:

- Show the poem and ask children if they remember the name of the poem. Confirm their answer by reading the title, as you underline it with your finger.
- Recite the poem, using one hand and fingers to represent the three monkeys.
- When finished, say, "Some words in this poem begin with the same sound. *Crocodile* and *catch* begin with the same sound, don't they? They both begin with /k/. They have the same sound at the beginning: /k/ *crocodile*, /k/ *catch*. *Me* and *monkey* also begin with the same sound: /m/ *me*, /m/ *monkey*."
- You also might say, "Some words in the poem do not begin with the same sound. *Monkey* and *crocodile* don't begin with the same sound: /m/ *monkey*, /k/ *crocodile*. But *crocodile* and *catch* do start with the same sound: /k/ *crocodile*, /k/ *catch*."

## Interesting-Sounding Words [and *A Letter to Amy*]

### Procedure:

- Show children the book, *A Letter to Amy*. Say, "In this story, *A Letter to Amy*, there are some interesting-sounding words that I would like to talk about."
- Say, "*Envelope* is an interesting word to say because it has three different parts. Let's say it together, *en - ve - lope*. Now clap out the parts with me."
- Say, "*Hopscotch* is another interesting word to say. How many parts does it have? Let's say it and then clap it. Yes. It has two parts, doesn't it? *Hop - scotch*."
- Say, "What about the word, *Saturday*? Let's say it and then clap it: *Sat - ur - day*. It has three parts, doesn't it?"
- Invite children to say other long words and divide them. If a child provides a short word, compare it to a long word already discussed. Say, "*Tiger* is not as long as *crocodile*, but it is still an interesting word to say."