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Welcome to Nursery Rhyme Readers!

“One of the easiest and most accessible ways to improve children’s sensitivity to the phonemes that make up our language is through the use of children’s books that play with speech sounds through rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and phonemic manipulations.”

—GRIFFITH & OLSON (1992); YOPP (1995)

Learning to read is an exciting and important development for any child, a gift that opens doors to a whole new world. What better way to introduce the reading process to children than through text with which they are already familiar—the very same well-loved nursery rhymes that have delighted children for generations. All of the features that make nursery rhymes enjoyable for children to listen to and recite—their rhyme, repetition, predictability, and just plain silliness—make them perfect for introducing children to the magic of reading!

Research shows that there is a strong relationship among young children’s familiarity with nursery rhymes, their phonological development, and their future success in reading and spelling. Now, with the Nursery Rhyme Readers program, you can solidify this relationship and support children’s early experiences with print.

Nursery Rhyme Readers is a series of favorite nursery rhymes especially chosen for their appeal to children. As a component in your classroom, the 12 titles in the series will enable you to do the following.

Motivate children to read. Children will love meeting their favorite nursery rhyme characters in these delightfully illustrated, colorful books. The playful texts and scenarios will draw children in over and over again and reinforce the idea that learning to read is fun!

Make the connection between speech and print. Because nursery rhymes are most familiar as an oral tradition, these Nursery Rhyme Readers reinforce the idea that the spoken word can be written down, and what is written down can be read. And because the text is familiar and predictable, children will be able to follow along and will soon be reading on their own.

Nurture developing literacy skills. Timeless classics, favorite nursery rhymes help children appreciate language and reading. One of the best ways to develop reading skills is through rhyming activities, and these storybooks are chock-full of opportunities for doing so!



Teach conventions of reading and print. The readers reinforce the concepts of following a line of print from left to right and turning the pages, and they also teach conventions of print such as capital letters and punctuation.

Develop phonemic awareness. The rhythm, rhyme, repetition, and alliteration found in nursery rhymes helps children develop phonemic awareness, a prerequisite for learning to read and one of the most important predictors of early reading success.

Build early phonics skills. The rhyming texts and wordplay elements of nursery rhymes are perfect for teaching beginning and ending consonants, vowel sounds, blends, rhyming words, phonograms, and more, giving children tools for decoding many words.

Improve fluency. Nursery rhymes are easily picked up by young children, who love being able to recite them. Children quickly learn the predictable, repeated sounds, and they are inspired to read the short texts over and over again, helping them gain fluency.

Build vocabulary. The variety of language and contexts in nursery rhymes provides opportunities for word building and also enables children to increase their sight-word vocabulary.

Build early reading skills. Children can use picture clues to help them read and understand the nursery rhymes and begin to develop concepts and skills such as retelling and recalling events, story structure, sequence of events, prediction, cause and effect, and problem and solution.

Build early writing skills. Children develop writing and creative skills as they innovate, extending the nursery rhymes with their own ideas and responses.

Inspire a love of reading. Most of all, Nursery Rhyme Readers are fun, and children learn best when they are having fun.

In addition to the storybooks, the Nursery Rhyme Readers program includes:

- * teaching tips that suggest ways to share the nursery rhymes and other materials in this teaching guide
- * a variety of activities that can be used with all of the nursery rhymes
- * reproducible versions of all 12 nursery rhymes to give children further exposure and practice with them
- * an individual lesson and activity sheet for each nursery rhyme
- * additional reproducibles



Humpty Dumpty



Humpty Dumpty
sat on a wall.

Humpty Dumpty
had a great fall.

All the King's horses
and all the King's men
could not put Humpty
together again.

Humpty Dumpty

Learning With the Nursery Rhyme

See pages 6–7 for suggested ways to read and share the book with children. Then focus on the following activities.

A New Name for Humpty Dumpty Say aloud the word *Humpty* in parts: /h/...umpty. Have children blend the word. Have children blend the word *Dumpty* the same way. Tell children that the words rhyme because they sound the same at the end. They both end with *umpty*. Show children how you can make another word that rhymes by changing the first sound—for example, you can change /d/ to /b/ and make *Bumpty*. Invite children to say *Humpty Bumpty*. Then ask them to change Humpty Dumpty’s name again by changing the first sound in *Bumpty*, for example, *Humpty Mumpty*. Children can also make up new names that rhyme, such as *Higgy Piggy*, *Lucky Bucky*, or *Hacky Packy*. Make a list of these silly rhyming names and have children recite the nursery rhyme with the new names.

Short /a/ Wordplay Say aloud the following words from the rhyme: *sat, put, had*. Ask children: *Which two words have the same middle sound?* Orally segment the words so that children can listen for the short /a/ sound in *sat* and *had*: (/s/ /a/ /t/, /h/ /a/ /d/) Then, reread the rhyme slowly, asking children to find another word with the short /a/ sound (*and*). Play a game in which you slowly recite a list of one-syllable words and children cheer “Yay!” when they hear the short /a/ sound.

All in the Family Write the word family *-all* on the chalkboard or on chart paper. Say: “The letters a-l-l make the /all/ sound.” Distribute the reproducible version of the nursery rhyme. Have children find and circle the words with this pattern (*wall, fall, All, all*) and then generate a list of other words that rhyme. Copy, cut out, and distribute the broken egg templates on page 34. Instruct children to complete the eggs by writing an onset (beginning sound) and rime (vowel and letters that follow) on each half of the egg for words in the *-all* family, such as *ball, call, hall, mall, and tall*. Have children take apart the eggs and then put them back together, reading the words. Use the eggs for other word families as well.

It’s a Story! Create a graphic organizer on chart paper by drawing a large egg shape and dividing it into three horizontal sections. Label the sections “Beginning,” “Middle,” and “Ending.” Read the label of each section, explaining that stories have these three parts. Invite children to complete the organizer by retelling the events in their own words. Prompt them with the questions below.

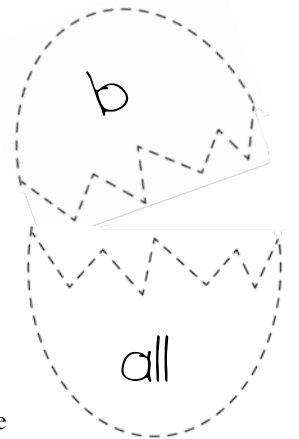
What happened at the beginning? (*Humpty Dumpty was sitting on a wall.*)

What happened next? (*Humpty fell off the wall and broke.*)

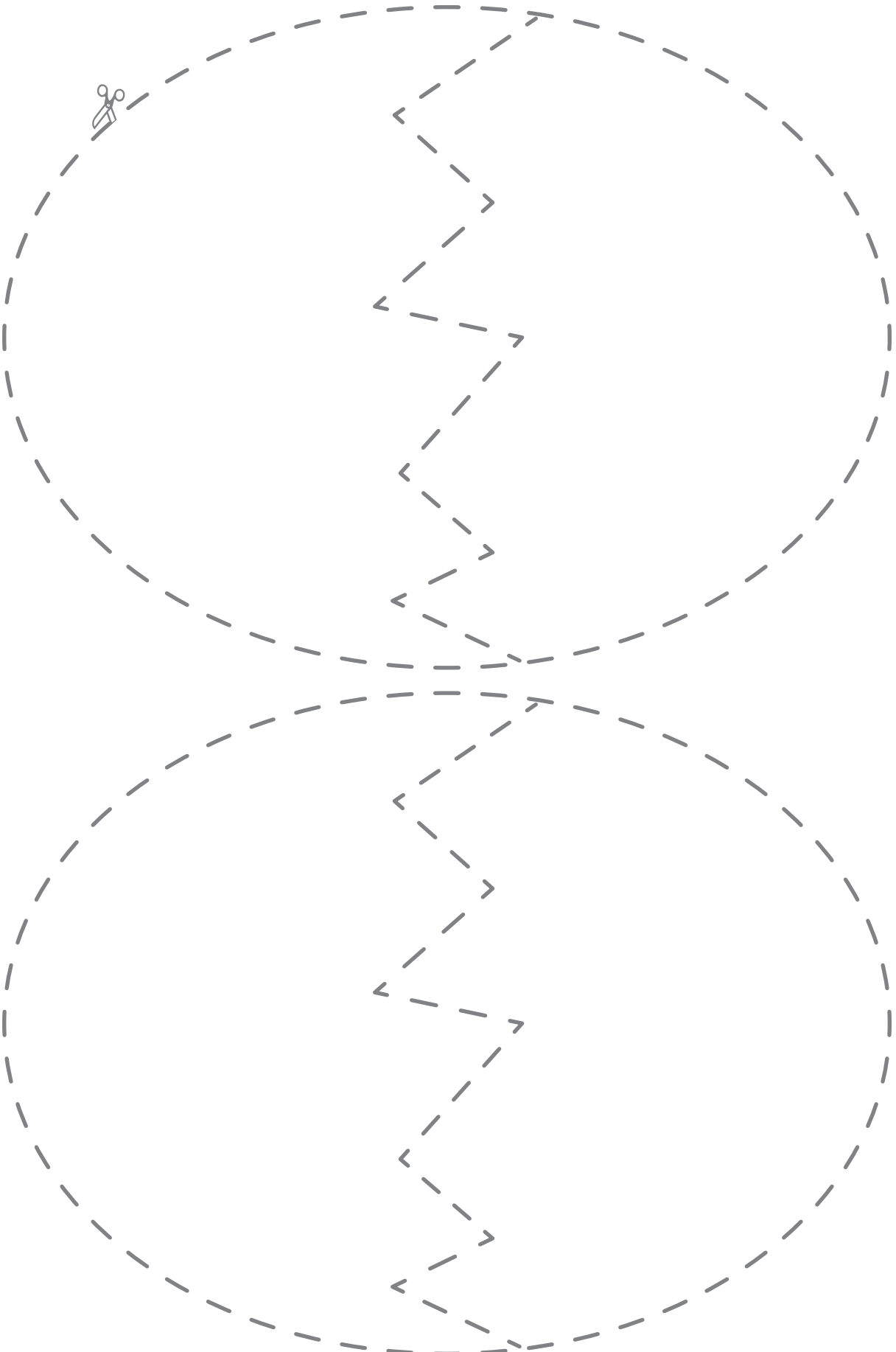
What happened at the end? (*The king’s horses and men tried to fix him but they couldn’t.*)

Now focus on the ending. Say: “Poor Humpty! He’s still broken!” Ask children to help Humpty by creating new endings to the story that would solve Humpty’s problem.

Punctuation Pointer Explain the use of the apostrophe in the word *King’s*. Have children replace *horses* and *men* in the text with other things that could belong to the king.



Humpty Dumpty, All in the Family





Humpty, Dumpty

Illustrated by Carolina Farías



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Designed by Jaime Lucero

ISBN: 978-0-545-26720-5

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Humpty Dumpty



sat on a wall.