



BABY'S FIRST STORIES

Songs & Rhymes to share when
baby is on your knee

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TIPS FOR READING WITH BABIES

Don't wait until bedtime to share books with your baby. Read and look at books any time! Often babies are most receptive to books when they are wide awake, just fed and ready to play.

Keep books in the car and in your diaper bag so you have something to share while waiting at the bank or the doctor's office.

If your baby is grabbing for the book, hand her a rattle to keep her hands and mouth busy while she looks and listens to the book.

Talk about what you see in the book. Babies are absorbing the world around them. Is there a picture of a garbage truck? Make a connection between that picture and the real truck outside.

Take cues from your child. If he has no patience with finishing a book, stop and come back to it later. Babies and toddlers will stretch their attention spans as they grow older.

Remind caregivers to share stories and songs with your child.

Make visiting the library part of your routine. If you come every week, your baby will learn that borrowing books is important to you.

Borrow books with different artistic styles. Babies will become accustomed to looking at all kinds of pictures and you may be surprised by what attracts him!

Use the songs and rhymes in this booklet to make your day go smoothly. Use rhymes while you tie your baby's shoes, change her diapers and prepare his rice cereal.

When in doubt...try a book!

GOOD MORNING

Good morning, good morning, good morning to you.

Good morning, good morning, good morning to you.

(*Spanish*) Buenos días, buenos días, buenos días para ti...

(*French*) Bonjour, bonjour, bonjour a toi...

(*German*) Guten Morgen, guten Morgen, guten Morgen für dich...

(*Russian*) Dobroye utro, dobroye utro, dobroye utro vam...

(*Greek*) Kalimera, kalimera, kalimerasas...

(*Persian*) Sobé'-etoon, sobé'-etoon, sobé'-etoon bea khair...

(*Mandarin*) Zao an, zao an, zao an wen ho ni...

(*Cantonese*) Zou sen, zou sen, zou sen hmenn ho nay...

(*Hebrew*) Boker tov, boker tov, boker tov yeladim...

I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD

I've been working on the railroad all the livelong day.

I've been working on the railroad just to pass the time away.

Can't you hear the whistle blowing,

Rise up so early in the morn.

Can't you hear the captain shouting,

"Dinah blow your horn."

Dinah won't you blow,

Dinah won't you blow,

Dinah won't you blow your horn.

Dinah won't you blow,

Dinah won't you blow,

Dinah won't you blow your horn.

Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah,

Someone's in the kitchen I know,

Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah,

Strummin' on the old banjo.

And singing fee fi fiddly I O,

Fee fi fiddly I O,

Fee fi fiddly I O,

Strummin' on the old banjo.

I'M IN THE MOOD FOR SINGING

I'm in the mood for singing, hey, how about you?
I'm in the mood for singing, hey, how about you?
I'm in the mood for singing, singing the whole day through.
Hey, hey, what do you say, I'm in the mood for that today.
Hey, hey, what do you say, I'm in the mood for that.

I'm in the mood for dancing...

I'm in the mood for reading...

(Add any verses you wish.)

-Traditional

WHEELS ON THE BUS

The wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round.
'Round and 'round, 'round and 'round.
The wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round,
All through the town.
The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish...
The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep...
The driver on the bus says "Move on back" ...
The people on the bus go up and down...
The doors on the bus go open and shut...
The money on the bus goes clink, clink, clink...
The babies on the bus go "waah, waah, waah" ...
The mummies and the daddies say "I love you."

-Traditional

DOWN BY THE STATION

Down by the station
Early in the morning
See the little puffer bellies
All in a row.
See the engine driver
Pull the little throttle.
Chug! Chug! Choo! Choo!
Off we go!

-Traditional

FIVE LITTLE DUCKS

Five little ducks that I once knew,
Fat ones, skinny ones, fair ones too.
But the one little duck with the feather on her back,
She led the others with a quack, quack, quack.
Quack, quack, quack, quack, quack,
She led the others with a quack, quack, quack.

Down to the swimming hole they would go,
Weeble, wobble, weeble, wobble, to and fro.
And the one little duck with the feather on her back,
She led the others with a quack, quack, quack...

Up from the swimming hole they did come,
Weeble, wobble, weeble, wobble, ho, hum, hum.
And the one little duck with the feather on her back,
She led the others with a quack, quack, quack...

-Traditional folklore

IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

If you're happy and you know it clap your hands.
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands.
If you're happy and you know it then your face will really show it.
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it stomp your feet...
If you're happy and you know it shout hurray...
If you're happy and you know it do all three...

-Traditional

SHAKE MY SILLIES

I'm gonna shake, shake, shake my sillies out.
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out.
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out,
And wiggle my waggles away.

I'm gonna clap, clap, clap my crazies out...
I'm gonna jump, jump, jump my jiggles out...
I'm gonna yawn, yawn, yawn my sleepies out...
I'm gonna stomp, stomp, stomp my grouchies out...
I'm gonna dance, dance, dance my dizzies out...
I'm gonna shake, shake, shake my sillies out...

-Traditional

I'M A LITTLE TEAPOT

I'm a little teapot, short and stout,
Here is my handle, here is my spout.
When I get all steamed up then I shout,
"Tip me over and pour me out!"

I'm a very special pot, it's true
Here, let me show you what I can do!
I can change my handle and my spout
Tip me over, and pour me out!

-Traditional

I AM A PUMPKIN

I am a pumpkin big and round.
Once upon a time I grew on the ground.
But now I have a mouth, two eyes and nose.
What are they for do you suppose?

When I have a candle inside, shining bright
I'll be a jack-o-lantern on Halloween night.

-Traditional

OLD MACDONALD

Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o
And on that farm he had a <dog>, e-i-e-i-o
With a <woof, woof> here
And a <woof, woof> there
Here a <woof>, there a <woof>
Everywhere a <woof, woof>
Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o.

And on that farm he had a horse...neigh, neigh...
And on that farm he had a cow...moo, moo...

-Traditional

THE GRAND OLD DUKE OF YORK

Oh the grand old Duke of York
He had ten thousand men.
He marched them up to the top of the hill
And he marched them down again.
When they're up, they're up.
And when they're down, they're down.
But when they're only half way up
They're neither up nor down.

-Traditional

OVER THE RIVER

Over the river and through the wood,
To grandmother's house we go;
The horse knows the way
To carry the sleigh,
Thru the white and drifted snow, oh!

Over the river and through the wood,
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes,
And bites the nose,
As over the ground we go.

-Lydia Maria Child

ITSY BITSY SPIDER

The itsy bitsy spider climbed up the water spout.
Down came the rain and washed the spider out.
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain,
And the itsy bitsy spider climbed up the spout again.

The itsy bitsy spider climbed up without a stop.
She spun a silky web right at the very top.
She wove and she spun and when her web was done
The itsy bitsy spider rested in the sun.

-Traditional

FIVE LITTLE MICE

Five little mice went out to play
Gathering crumbs along the way.
Out came pussycat, sleek and fat.
Four little mice came scampering back.
Four little mice went out to play...
Three little mice went out to play...
Two little mice went out to play...

One little mouse went out to play
Gathering crumbs along the way.
Out came pussycat, sleek and fat.
No little mice, and that was that.

-Traditional

TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

Twinkle, twinkle little star.
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high.
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle little star.
How I wonder what you are.

When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

Then the traveler in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark;
How could he see where to go,
If you did not twinkle so.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

-Traditional

GHOST OF JOHN

Have you seen the ghost of John?
Long white bones
With the rest all gone?
Ooooooooooooo
Wouldn't it be chilly with no skin on?

-Traditional

DOWN BY THE BAY

Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home I dare not go
For if I do, my mother will say,
"Did you ever see a bear combing his hair
Down by the bay?"

Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home I dare not go
For if I do, my mother will say.
"Did you ever see a bee with a sunburned knee
Down by the bay?"

Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home I dare not go
For if I do, my mother will say,
"Did you ever see a moose kissing a goose
Down by the bay?"

Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home I dare not go
For if I do, my mother will say,
"Did you ever see a whale with a polka dot tail
Down by the bay?"

-Traditional

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

This land is your land, this land is my land
From California, to the New York Island
From the redwood forest, to the gulf stream waters
This land was made for you and me

As I was walking a ribbon of highway
I saw above me an endless skyway
I saw below me a golden valley
This land was made for you and me

I've roamed and rambled and I've followed my footsteps
To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
And all around me a voice was sounding
This land was made for you and me -Woody Guthrie

GOOD NIGHT IRENE

Foxes sleep in the forest
Lions sleep in the dens
Goats sleep on the mountainside
And piggies sleep in pens.

Chorus:
Irene goodnight, Irene goodnight
Goodnight Irene, goodnight Irene
I'll see you in my dream.

Whales sleep in the ocean
Zebras sleep on land
Hippos sleep by the riverside
And camels sleep on sand.

Coyote sleep in the canyon
A birdie sleeps in a tree
And when it's time for me to rest
My bed's the place for me. -H. Ledbetter & J.A. Lomar, adapted by Raffi

BOUNCING GAMES

This is the way the ladies ride, trit trot, trit trot.
This is the way the gentlemen ride, giddyup, giddyup.
This is the way the farmers ride, clip clop, clip clop.
This is the way the jockey's ride, gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop and fall off!
(*Bounces get more vigorous throughout the poem.*)

-Traditional

Trot, trot to Boston,
Trot, trot to Lynn,
Trot, trot to Marblehead
But don't fall in!

(*Gently, let the baby fall between your knees.*)

-Traditional

Father and Mother and Uncle John,
Went to market one by one.
Father fell off,
And Mother fell off,
But Uncle John went on and on and on and on.

-Traditional

Christopher Columbus was a very great man,
He sailed to America in an old tin can.
The can was greasy and it wasn't very easy,
And the waves grew higher, and higher and HIGHER!

-Traditional

Clip clop, clippity clop, ride a cock horse to the fair.
All the people along the way look up to see who's there.
Giddy-up dobbin, giddy-up, hey, let's go a little bit faster.
Trit, trot, trit trot the little horse minds his master.
When all of a sudden a gallop, a gallop, something has made him take fright.
Up and down and all over the place, hold on with all your might!
Whoa there, whoa dobbin, here's the fair at last,
Corey shall have a cranberry tart and you shall have sweet green grass.

—Clyde Watson

RHYMES FOR COUNTING FINGERS AND TOES

Beatie Bowe, big toe,
Mrs. Moore, next door,
Solomon Riddle in the middle,
Lucky Jim next to him,
And last of all, curled up small, fat little Billy Ball.

-Traditional

Big toe, tall toe, middle toe strong.
Funny toe, little toe, bongity bongity, bong.

-Traditional

This little piggie went to market,
This little piggie stayed home,
This little piggie had hot roast beef,
This little piggie had none,
And this little piggie cried "wee, wee, wee" all the way home.

-Traditional

Idaho potaTOE
Italian tomaTOE
Banana "oh chiciTOE"
Where is my PepiTOE?
What's that hiding in the grass?
Must be a mosquiTOE! Bzzzzzz, bzzzzz, bzzzz.
(*Tickle the bottom of baby's foot.*)

Unknown

This little cow eats grass.
This little cow eats hay.
This little cow drinks water.
This little cow runs away.
This little cow does nothing
But just lies down all day.

We'll chase her, we'll chase her, we'll chase her away!
(*After counting fingers, tickle up baby's arm*)

Unknown

RHYMES FOR COUNTING FINGERS AND TOES (continued)

One little finger standing on her own,
Along comes another one, now she's not alone.
Here comes the third one, strong and tall,
Next comes the fourth one, liveliest of all.
Stubby old Tom Thumb has nowhere to go,
Put him with the others and there's five in a row!
(*Start by putting up your pinkie and add one finger for each line on the poem.*)

-Unknown

ACTION RHYMES

The sun pops up in the morning sky,
The toast pops up,
And so do I! (*Pop the up in the air.*)

-Unknown

Up, up, up in the sky like this. (*Lift baby high.*)
Down, down, down for a great big kiss!
Up like this!
Down for a kiss!
Who's a very special baby?
(*You can substitute any loving adjective for "special". Try silly, funny, darlings, etc.*)

-Traditional

Round and round the garden,
Walks the teddy bear.
One step, two steps, tickle you under there.
(*Make circles on palm and walk up arm to tickle underarm.*)

-Traditional

How do you make raisin bread?
You roll it, you roll it, you roll it, you roll it,
And then you poke the raisins in

-Unknown

ACTION RHYMES (continued)

Creepy mouse,
Creepy mouse,
Going to play at baby's house.
Baby's home,
All alone.....GOTCHA!!!!

(*Walk your fingers gently up baby's arms and tickle under the chin for "gotcha"*)

-Unknown

Here are Grandma's glasses,
And here is Grandma's hat.
Grandma claps her hands like this,
And puts them in her lap.

Here are Grandpa's glasses.
And here is Grandpa's hat,
Grandpa folds his arms like this.
And takes a little nap.

-Traditional

This is the choo-choo train,
Puffing down the track.
Now it's going forward,
Now it's going back. (*Swing arms to imitate a train.*)
Now the bell is ringing, (*Ring imaginary bell.*)
Now the whistle blows, (*Blow into hands.*)
What a lot of noise it makes
Everywhere it goes. (*Cover ears.*)

-Traditional

ACTION RHYMES (continued)

Baby in a rosebush,
Baby in a tree,
There's many a baby in the world,
But (*child's name*) is the one for me!

-Unknown

Baby, Baby Bumblebee,
(*Child's name*) is my cup of tea.
I'm as happy as can be
When I've got (*child's name*) on my knee.

-Unknown

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped her head.
Momma called the doctor and the doctor said,
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"

Four little monkeys...
Three little monkeys...
Two little monkeys...
One little monkey...

-Traditional

Here is the beehive (*Make a fist.*)
Where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees. (*Point to fist.*)
Here they come creeping out of their hive-
One, two, three, four, five! (*Slowly lift thumb and fingers one at a time.*)
They're alive!
Bzzzzz. (*Wiggle fingers.*)

-Traditional

ACTION RHYMES (continued)

Five fat peas in a peapod pressed.
(*Clasp both hands together in a fist.*)
One grew, two grew,
(*Extend thumbs together and then index fingers.*)
And so did all the rest.
(*Continue extending fingers.*)
They grew and they grew and they never stopped.
(*Move hands apart slowly.*)
They grew so fat that the peapod **POPPED!**
(*Clap hands together on the word 'popped'.*)

-Traditional

Thumbkin, Bumpkin, jolly and stout
Peter-into-Mischief roundabout
Long-and-lanky
Hanky-panky
Rum tum tiddly dinky
Snip snap moonslivers
One by one:
Thumbkin...
Peter...
Long-and-lanky...
Hanky-panky...
All done.

-Clyde Watson

Open, shut them, open, shut them,
Give a little clap, clap, clap.
Open, shut them, open, shut them,
Lay them on your lap, lap, lap.
Creep them, crawl them, creep them, crawl them,
Right up to your chin, chin, chin,
Open up your little mouth, but do not let them in!
Open, shut them, open, shut them,
To your shoulders fly, fly, fly.
Then like little birdies let them
Flutter to the sky. Good-bye!

-Traditional

Index to Songs

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Action Rhymes | 12-15 |
| Bouncing Games | 10 |
| Down By The Station | 2 |
| Five Little Ducks | 3 |
| Five Little Mice | 6 |
| Down By The Bay | 8 |
| Ghost Of John | 7 |
| Good Morning | 1 |
| Good Night Irene | 9 |
| Grand Old Duke Of York | 5 |
| If You're Happy And You Know It | 3 |
| Am A Little Pumpkin | 4 |
| I'm A Little Teapot | 4 |
| I'm In The Mood For Singing | 2 |
| Itsy Bitsy Spider | 6 |
| I've Been Working On The Railroad | 1 |
| Old MacDonald | 5 |
| Over The River | 5 |
| Wake My Sillies | 4 |
| Rhymes For Counting Fingers and Toes | 11-12 |
| This Land Is Your Land | 9 |
| Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star | 7 |
| Wheels On The Bus | 2 |

AUTHORS WHO SPECIALIZE IN BOOKS FOR BABIES & TODDLERS

These authors have many wonderful books suited to babies and toddlers. Many of them also write books for older children but if you browse through their titles, you will find some gems to borrow and share with your little one.

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Allan Ahlberg | Frank Asch |
| Byron Barton | Margaret Wise Brown |
| John Burningham | Eric Carle |
| Kay Chora | Joy Cowley |
| Donald Crews | Lois Ehlert |
| Ed Emberley | Denise Fleming |
| Eric Hill | Tana Hoban |
| Shirley Hughes | Ann Jonas |
| Bill Martin, Jr. | Bruce McMillan |
| Mary Murphy | Jan Ormerod |
| Helen Oxenbury | Fiona Pragoff |
| Peter Sis | Peter Spier |
| Nancy Tafuri | Shigeo Watanabe |
| | Rosemary Wells |

Keep Track of your family favorites: