



Recognizing Words That Rhyme

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“I recall I saw a small ball fall in the mall”, say this sentence to your preschooler and wait for their reaction, did they notice something unique about it? It’s melodic and singsong-y. The reason it sounds so fun is because of what is called rhyming words. Rhyming words are words that start with different sounds, but end with the same combinations of sounds, such as cat and hat. Recognizing these is an important part of developing the necessary phonological awareness skills that will later on be used for reading. In this article, you’ll be discovering why identifying rhyming words is an important skill in early education and how to help your preschooler practice it.

Recognizing words that rhyme can have many benefits on your child’s language skills and processes, some of which are:

- Identifying smaller parts of a word
- Laying the groundwork for reading and writing
- Improving oral skills
- Developing prediction skills which in turn help develop spelling abilities

Rhyming words in themselves are fun, thus introducing them to children isn’t a hard process. Actually, most parents introduce rhyming very early on, in the newborn stage, through singing lullabies and nursery rhymes to their babies. This is the first step in a child’s journey to achieve phonological awareness. Nursery rhymes like Down by the Bay, Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, The Itsy Bitsy Spider, etc., are a great way for your child to first get exposed to rhyming words. Here are some nursery rhyme activities for your little one:

- Watch nursery rhyme videos together, like this "[Down by the Bay](#)" video from the Kids Academy website to help capture your child’s attention with the colorful and witty animation. You can pause for your child to guess the rhyme, using the animation as a visual hint.



Watch on [YouTube](#)

- Make up songs! "The little black cat chased the gray..." have your child help you find rhymes to finish the song.
- Sing a familiar nursery rhyme to your child, but intentionally make a mistake with the rhyming words so that your child would correct you. For example: "Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great meal!"

Next, help your child practice how to differentiate between words that rhyme, and words that don't. Find fun ways to motivate them, for example:

- Choose a word, then say random words that might or might not rhyme with it, and have your child jump when the word rhymes, and sit on the floor when it doesn't. This activity will help them learn how to identify rhyming words while moving their bodies, which is a great stimulator for children.
- Print out worksheets with images for your child to solve in their calm time. This "[First Words: Picture Rhymes](#)" worksheet from Kids Academy makes a great addition to your child's curriculum. For more worksheets on the subject for preschoolers, [click here](#).

Picture Rhymes

Look at the pictures. Say the name of each picture.
Circle the two things that rhyme.



- Play the rhyme family game. Give your child clues to several words that are from the same rhyme family. For instance, from the "-ot" family: "We cook food in this kitchen tool" (pot), "The opposite of cold" (hot), etc.

Learning rhyming is a very important phonological awareness skill, it is a precursor for future reading and writing. It also builds the ability to break words into smaller parts, thus facilitating the next step in your child's curriculum, learning letter sounds.

