



5 Skill-Building Fingerplays for Preschoolers

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An important tool in every preschool teacher's toolbox is fast and fun fingerplay songs that kids can dance along with while making movements with their fingers, hands, and more! Believe it or not, these interactive songs and dances help kids strengthen a wide range of important skills.

Whether your child is homeschooled, or you just want to extend the learning and fun of preschool to home, fingerplay songs and movements are an excellent addition to your daily routine!

Skills and Fingerplays

Here are basic skills that can be fostered with different rhyme, clapping and movements activities. Here are the most common combinations of skills and fingerplays:

1. Fine Motor Skills- Itsy Bitsy Spider

To start, choose a childhood favorite, such as Itsy Bitsy Spider. You're probably already familiar with the movements, or feel free to make up movements that seem unique and fun to you! Teach your children the movements with their fingers, showing them how to move the spider up the spout, the rain, etc. Teach your child to move their fingers along with the lyrics and music, so they know just when to wash the spider out, or move the spider back up the spout.

You might not realize it, but when your child sings and performs Itsy Bitsy Spider, they're working on sharpening their fine motor skills with their finger movements as they sing the song:

- Coordinating music, lyrics, and small movements all together
- Developing hand-eye coordination
- Flexing muscles and brains.



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2. Large motor skills - If You're Happy and You Know It

Some fingerplay songs feature big movements, allowing your child's entire body to get in on the fun! The classic song, If You're Happy and You Know It will have your kids moving all around, and you can even invent new movements to go with the song! Decide ahead of time what movements you'd like your child to practice, and work it into the song.

Then, see your little learner jump all around keeping up with the song as you sing and play along. This helps kids develop large motor skills like:

- Balance
- Jumping, or stretching
- Strengthening muscle groups.

3. Sense of community - Bingo Song

Getting silly together using fingerplay and clapping songs like Bingo song, your family will build a strong sense of togetherness. When children can let loose, acting silly and having fun with those they love, they learn to feel confident about themselves, and worry less about what others think about them.

This helps kids feel supported and to form a sense of belonging. When kids do this at home, they learn to be:

- Open and trusting with parents
- Competent and confident

- Feeling a strong sense of togetherness and community.



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4. Listening skills - Old MacDonald Has a Farm

Especially great for younger kids, a song like Old MacDonald Has a Farm can have your children pretending to act out animal movements while they sing and make the animal sounds. The trick is that your child must listen to the song to find out which letter to sing out next!

Using rhymes or songs that make your child switch movements and sounds ensures that your child will be intently listening as they anticipate the next animal, all while:

- Rhyming and repeating new words
- Strengthening important listening and auditory learning skills
- Keeping them on their toes, listening for what directions will come next.

5. Academic skills - Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

Fingerplay songs and rhymes come in all types, and some even reinforce early academic skills, such as counting. A great example is the popular childhood song, Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed. This song uses a countdown until no more monkeys are left on the bed.

While you probably don't want your little one jumping on the bed, they can certainly teach them movements to the song without involving a real bed. Other great rhymes include 1, 2, Buckle My Shoe, or 5 Little Mice. Use these to mix play and movement with [math skills](#).



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Bottom Line

As you can see, fingerplay is a great way to build a sense of togetherness, while giving your child's body and mind a workout! All you need is a repertoire of common childhood songs or classic nursery rhymes, and your family will have a blast learning, singing, and acting out fingerplay songs together!

Check out our [preschool books, songs and rhymes](#) for toddlers aged 2 to 5 - all in one app! Have a blast with a fantastic blend of adorable animations and kids' favorite music with Karaoke mode!