

Family Literacy Guided Lesson

For Los pollitos dicen/ The Baby Chicks Sing

NY State Learning Standards

Learning Standard 4 for English Language Arts:

As listeners, students will use the social communications of others to enrich their understanding of people and their views.

Learning Standards 2 for Languages Other Than English:

Students will develop cross-cultural skills and understandings.

Learning Standard 4 for the Arts:

Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts shape diverse cultures.

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About the Book

Los pollitos dicen/ The Baby Chicks Sing

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This delightful collection of games and songs provides a panorama of traditional nursery rhymes from Spanish-speaking cultures. Children from all cultures will frolic to the playful words and actions of *Al corro de la patata (Ring Around the Potato)*, rejoice in the rhythm and rhyme of *Tortillitas para mamá, Tortillitas para papá (Corn cakes for Mama, Corn cakes for Papa)* and be comforted by the tender sentiment expressed in *Los pollitos dicen (The Baby Chicks Sing)*. Charming watercolor drawings, traditional melodies and game directions add to the appeal of the rhymes, all of which have been translated into English.

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The Language/Literacy Connection

Nursery Rhymes and Reading

Short and catchy with sing-song verses and intriguing characters; these are attributes that make nursery rhymes irresistible to children. Children love to chant the rhyming phrases – *¡Uno, dos, tres, cho! ¡Uno, dos, tres, co! ¡Uno, dos, tres, la! ¡Uno, dos, tres, te! ¡Bate, bate, chocolate!* - move to the melodic patterns – *Here we go looby loo, here we go looby light; here we go looby loo, all on a Saturday night*, and act out the simple directions – *Teddy bear, Teddy bear, turn around, Teddy bear, Teddy bear, touch the ground*. It is self-assuring to children to master these tiny rhyming stories and comforting to hear gentle lullabies. The rhythmic word games are both satisfying and fun!

But more than just fun, children's early knowledge of nursery rhymes contributes to their later success as readers. Repeated readings and reciting introduce new vocabulary, familiarize children with the language of poetry, and make them aware of common word families. According to reading specialists Cullinan and Galda, (1998. *Literature and the Child 4th edition*, New York: Harcourt Brace) it is easier for children to read words they see in print if they have previously heard them spoken or read. Reading researchers Maclean, Bradeley and Bryant found that knowledge of nursery rhymes is strongly related to the development of more abstract phonological skills and significantly correlated with later reading ability (1987. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 33, 255-281).

Early Childhood Education-Infant/Toddler Level

Say and Sway

PLS-4 Skills

Auditory Comprehension

11. Anticipates what will happen next

Expressive Communication

12. Plays simple games

Before the Visit

Gather Needed Materials

- ♦ A nursery rhyme book in English or Spanish

Prepare Lesson Props

- ♦ Review two or three nursery rhymes that lend themselves to movement

Moving to Rhymes

- ♦ Turn to *Un elefante / One Elephant* on page 10. Point to the elephants. Say: *Look at the elephants in this picture. What do you think they are doing? (Pause.) I think they are dancing. Is that what you think?* Say to the parent: *Young children like movement. The rhythm of nursery rhymes make them easy to move with and fun. Let's try this one. Hold (child's name) securely in your arms and follow me as I move about like an elephant.* Bend over slightly and lumber along. Gently sway your arms in front of you as you sing the first verse of *Un elefante/One Elephant*. Continue swaying around the room as you say or sing two or three verses.
- ♦ When the child grows weary of this movement, turn to *Arre, caballito/Giddyup, Little Pony* on page 8. Say: *Here is another song that has movements for babies.* Hold the child on your knees and gently bounce up and down as you repeat the words of the song. Say to the parent: *You can repeat these two songs and movements as often as you and (child's name) like. The more you repeat them, the easier it will become for (child's name) to distinguish between the individual words in the songs.*
- ♦ Say: *Here are some more nursery rhymes. You can say and sway to them.*

During the Visit

- ♦ With the child and the parent sitting together, look at the pictures in *Los pollitos dicen / The Baby Chicks Sing*. Name some of the animals that are pictured in the illustrations. Infants and toddlers are learning new words and labeling supports their budding language development. Turn to *La casa del conejo / The Bunny's House* on page 6. Point to the rabbit on the left side of the page. Say: *Look at this rabbit. I think she feels happy because she is smiling.* Point to the other rabbit. Ask: *How do you think this rabbit feels? (Pause.) I believe he feels happy too.* Say to the parent: *Children of (child's name) may not have enough expressive language to answer questions. When you ask a question, pause and then answer the question yourself. This is a way to model language for (child's name).*

Ride a Horse to Boston

Traditional

Ride a horse to Boston.
Ride a horse to Lynn.
Be careful little baby,
Don't fall in!

Gently bounce your baby up and down on your lap. On the last line, keeping a secure hold, let the baby "fall" through your legs.

Dance to your Daddy

Traditional

Dance to your Daddy
My little baby.
Dance to your Daddy,
My little lamb.
You shall have a fish
In a little dish.
You shall have a fish
When the boats come in.

Hold your baby in your arms and dance around the room.

Jack be Nimble

Traditional

Jack be nimble,
Jack be quick,
Jack jump over
The candlestick.

*Hold your child on your lap. When you say **jump**, gently bounce baby up and down.*

Early Childhood Education-Preschool and School Age Levels

Mine for a Rhyme

PLS-4 Skills

Auditory Comprehension

59. Understands rhyming sounds

Expressive Communication

63. Rhymes words

During the Visit

With the parent and child sitting together, look through *Los pollitos dicen / The Baby Chicks Sing*. Read several songs of particular interest to the child or parent. Talk about the pictures and guess about the content of the poems based on the illustrations. Ask: *What do you see in this picture?* Point to the accompanying poem and say: *This is the poem that tells about the picture. What do you think the poem is about?* Read each verse of the poem and ask a question related to the words.

Before the Visit

Gather Needed Materials

- ♦ Large container – about the size of a roasting pan
- ♦ Rice – to fill the container half full
- ♦ Several small items in pairs that rhyme, i.e., a nail and a pail, a ring and a piece of string, a toy truck and a rubber duck, etc.

Prepare Lesson Props

- ♦ Pour the rice into the container and bury the small items in the rice.

An Example

- ♦ Read *Los pollitos dicen / The Baby Chicks Sing* on page 4. After the first verse ask: *Why are the baby chicks saying peep, peep, peep?* (They're hungry and cold and sleepy.) *What do you think the mother hen will do?*
- ♦ Read the next verse. Ask: *What did the mother hen feed to her chicks?* (Corn and wheat.)
- ♦ Read the last verse. *How does mother hen put her chicks to sleep?* (She gives them a hug, cuddles them under her wing, and keeps them warm and snug.) Ask: *What does your Mom or Dad do when he/she puts you to bed?*
- ♦ Point to the music at the top of the page. Say: *These are musical notes.* This is what the melody part of music looks like when it is written.
- ♦ Ask the parent to read another poem in the book and repeat the process.

Mining for a Rhyme

- ♦ Say: *Words in songs and poems sound alike. Listen to these two words - SLEEP, PEEP. Do you hear the rhyming sound? Let's try another one - HUG, SNUG.*
- ♦ Place the rice pan on the workspace. Say: *I hid toys and other things in this pan of rice. Each hidden item has a "partner" - something that rhymes with it. Dig around in the rice until you find another object with a name that rhymes with the first object. If you find a ring, you have to dig in the rice until you find something that rhymes with ring, like a string. How many rhyming pairs can you find?*

A Fingerplay Rhyme

Say to the parent: *Fingerplays often use rhyming words to entertain and educate. They give children opportunity to use their fingers, hands, and sometimes their whole bodies to teach a skill and to tell a story.*

Here is a Beehive

Here is the beehive. Where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees.
Watch and you will see them come out of the hive.
One, two, three, four, five
Bzzzzzzzz . . . they all fly away.

*Hold up one hand with fist closed.
With other hand point inside of closed fist.
Cover closed fist with other hand.
Open fingers on closed fist one at a time as you count.
Make flying motion with fingers.*

Parenting Education Activity

Reasons for Rhymes

Listening to the rhyming sounds in nursery rhymes helps children build a strong foundation for success in reading. But nursery rhymes can be used to address other growth and development needs of children as well. How reassuring it is for children to think about the tender care that mothers, like mother hen in *Los pollitos dicen*, give to their children. How challenging to balance like the elephants in *Un elefante*. What skill is needed to crawl like the Eentsy Weentsy spider up the waterspout. Security, gross motor coordination, and small muscle control can be added to language and literacy development as important reasons to share nursery rhymes with children.

Nursery Rhymes That Support Children's Growth and Development

If these were your children what would you do? Make a list of nursery rhymes and ideas for sharing with these children that you can use when your own children need a little extra support.

Juan

Juan is a very active four-year-old who is continually on the move. Find a nursery rhyme that will celebrate his physical energy and direct it into literacy experiences with rhyming words. What games could you play with Juan to help him attend to and appreciate nursery rhymes? (Walk like an elephant while saying or singing *Un elefante / One elephant*, sing *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* and jump like a monkey.)

Jimmy

Jimmy is 4½ years old and will be starting kindergarten in the fall. His mother has been teaching him to print his name. Jimmy is frustrated by these writing lessons because the small muscles in his hands and fingers – the muscles used in writing – are not yet well developed. What nursery rhymes can Jimmy and his mother say together that will help him develop the muscles in his fingers? (Open and close fingers in *Open Them, Close Them*, crawl up the water spout in *The Eentsy Weentsy Spider*, or any other fingerplay.)

Elizabeth

Three year old Elizabeth was an only child until last month when baby brother Anthony was born. Now she has to share her mother's attention with this new family member. This is hard for her. What nursery rhymes might help Elizabeth regain her sense of security? What would be a good way for her mother to share the rhyme with her? (*Duérmete, niño* or any other lullaby.)

Margarita

Bright, active and affectionate – these are words that accurately describe 2½ year old Margarita. Non-verbal also describes her. Her concerned parents had her examined by the pediatrician at the health clinic. The doctor proclaimed Margarita a healthy child whose speech would develop with time and experience. What nursery rhymes can Margarita's parents repeat to her to give her the language experiences the doctor was referring to? Why are the rhymes good

experiences for Margarita? (*Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes* because some of the first words that children learn are names of parts of the body; *Tortillas / Little Corn Cakes* because there are just a few words in the rhyme and because Mama and Papa, two important people in the child's life, are named in the poem.)

Interactive Literacy Between Parents and Their Children

A Family Fiesta of Rhyme

Plan a family fiesta focused on words that are related to each other in a rhyming way such as the English words *car, star, far*, or the Spanish words *tía, pía, sinfonía*. Words that contain the same letter combinations are sometimes called word families. Word games that involve word families help children notice individual sounds in spoken language and build a foundation for reading success.

Make a Rhyming Word Piñata

No fiesta would be complete without a piñata. Make a rhyming word piñata. The process takes more than one day to complete and can be messy, so choose your work area carefully.

- ♦ Blow up a large balloon.
- ♦ Cover the outside of the balloon with a thin layer of newspaper strips soaked in flour water. When the newspaper strips dry, cover the balloon with a second and then a third layer.
- ♦ Finally, cover the entire balloon with patches of colored tissue paper.
- ♦ Print a different “word family” on each tissue paper patch.
- ♦ Cut a hole large enough for an index card near the top.
- ♦ Brainstorm with the family to think of rhyming word combinations, i.e.: *tall, hall*. Print each combination on an index card. Preschool children can look through magazines to find pictures of objects whose names rhyme and glue those pictures on index cards. Place all the index cards in the piñata.
- ♦ On the day of the fiesta, break the piñata and grab the cards. For each rhyming word combination, say a sentence that includes the two words and pass the card to another family member for another sentence.
- ♦ Serve potatoes, tomatoes, salad greens and fresh fruits and read the traditional poem *Al corro de la patata*.

Poems and Songs

Sing songs and recite poems. Notice the rhyming words in them.

La piñata

Traditional

La piñata está colgada
y la tienes que romper,
que te venden los ojitos
para que no puedas ver.
Dale, dale, dale no
pierdas el tino,
porque si lo pierdas,
pierdas el camino.

Three Cornered Hat

Traditional

My hat it has three
corners.
Three corners has my
hat.
If it had not three
corners,
It would not be my hat!

Al corro de la patata

Traditional

Al corro de la patata
Comeremos ensalada
Como comen los
señores
Naranjitas y limones
¡Achupé! ¡Achupé!
Sentadita me quedé.

Make Party Hats!

Use your imagination to make hats for the family to wear to the Fiesta of Rhyme. Look around your home for supplies. Follow these directions to make a three-cornered hat.

- ♦ Cut three pieces of light-weight cardboard - each 11 inches long and 4 inches wide.
- ♦ Tape the strips together end-to-end to form a triangle.
- ♦ Adjust the size of the hat to fit the wearer.
- ♦ Print nursery rhymes, poems and songs on the sides of the hat.

Adult Literacy - ABE Level

Word Families

Groups of words that share a like combination of letters are called word families. For example, *bell*, *cell*, *swell* and *tell* are all members of the *ell* word family. Words that belong to the same family are easy to read because they rhyme. Once a reader is able to read one word in the family, it is easy to sound out other words in that same family.

Putting Word Families Together

Word Families

| | | | | |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| ack | ate | eet | ent | ice |
| ight | oat | oom | ore | ump |

♦ The following words belong to one of the 10 word families listed above. Draw 10 columns on a sheet of paper. Write a word family at the top of each column. Then, write each of the words below in the correct column.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|------|-------|--------|
| Zoom | More | Crate | Fleet | Gloat | Right | Rent | Lore | Slice | Chore |
| Boat | Went | Snack | Stump | Dice | State | Sweet | Lent | Pump | Throat |
| Whack | Track | Back | Greet | Light | Plate | Night | Goat | Float | Date |
| Sent | Room | Core | Pore | Tight | Dent | Bump | Loom | Rump | Fate |
| Feet | Sleet | Doom | Nice | Mice | Crack | Attack | Rice | Gloom | Vice |
| Hate | Dump | Might | Rack | Bright | Lump | | | | |

Another Word in the Family

♦ Complete the following sentences with words from common word families. Some letters are already provided.

- You will have to buy milk at the ___ore.
- I heard the ducks on the pond say ___ack, ___ack.
- The sound of the firecracker made me ___ump.
- When I was in the navy he was my ship___ate.
- Her house is located at the corner where the two streets __eet.
- The floor needs sweeping, so get the ___oom.
- It's cold tonight; you should wear your ___oat.
- At camp we slept in a __ent.
- Gamblers bet their fortune on the throw of the ___ice.
- The growling dog gave me quite a ___ight.

Listening for words that Rhyme

♦ Read the following nursery rhymes to the learner. Can he/she pick out the words that rhyme?

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>I'm a Little Teapot</p> <p>I'm a little teapot, Short and stout. Here is my handle. Here is my spout. When I get all steamed up, Hear me shout, Tip me over and pour out.</p> | <p>Five Little Monkeys</p> <p>Five little monkeys Jumping on the bed. One fell off And bumped his head. Mama called the doctor, The doctor said, No more monkeys Jumping on the bed!</p> |
|--|--|

Adult Literacy - GED Level

Creating Limericks

A limerick is a rhyme that consists of five lines that have an aabba rhyme scheme. The first two lines of the poem end with rhyming words – for example, *cat* and *flat*; the third and fourth lines end with rhyming words – for example *wide* and *side*; the last line ends with a word that rhymes with lines one and two – for example *chat*. A limerick using *flat*, *cat*, *wide*, *side* and *chat* might read as follows.

*A strange looking three-colored cat
Knocked on the door of my flat.
With my door opened wide
I stepped to the side
And invited it in for a chat.*

Limericks are word plays that are meant to be fun! They don't necessarily have to make sense.

Getting Started

- ◆ Decide on a theme for your limerick. Your own name is a good place to begin.
- ◆ Create a pool of rhyming words to use in lines one, two and five.
- ◆ Create a second pool of rhyming words to use in lines three and four.

Example:

- ◆ Your name: *Ben*
- ◆ Pool of words that rhyme with your name: *den, men, hen, gentlemen, wren*
- ◆ A second pool of rhyming words: *awoke, joke, bloke, poke, broke*

Your Turn

- ◆ Write your name here. _____
- ◆ Create a pool of words that rhyme with your name.

- ◆ Create a second pool of rhyming words.

Write a Limerick

Write a limerick for your name. Here is an example for the last name *Ward*.

The book-reading Grandmother Ward
*Had a book that she truly adored.
It was chucked full of rhyme,
Which she read all the time
And, guess what, she never was bored.*

A History of Limericks

These simple, humorous, and sometimes naughty, rhymes first made their appearance as much as six hundred years ago. They can be found in fourteenth century English nursery rhymes and poems, and even in the writings of Shakespeare.

Used as a type of folk

poetry, the lyrics of early limericks poked fun at people, often at the poet himself, and were chanted in pubs as drinking songs. In 1863 Edward Lear published a volume of "clean" limericks in his *Book of Nonsense*.

Today people who enjoy reading or writing limericks can find

inspiration and companionship on the Internet at web sites such as *Partners-In-Rhyme* (<http://www.net/hp/dioxide/partnersinrhyme/>). This site posts a new word everyday and invites writers from around the world to contribute limericks based on that word. Why don't you give it a try?

Adult Literacy - ELL Level

Rainbow Colors

Based on the last song in *Los pollitos dicen / The Baby Chicks Sing*, this lesson teaches ELL students useful vocabulary – color words – and helps students relate to the book.

Vocabulary

- ♦ Rainbow ♦ Red
- ♦ Orange ♦ Yellow
- ♦ Green ♦ Blue
- ♦ Violet

Lesson Props

- ♦ Copy of the song De colores / Oh, the Colors found on page 30 in *Los pollitos dicen / The Baby Chicks Sing*
- ♦ A drawing of a rainbow
- ♦ Paper arches (rainbow shape) cut from construction paper – one for each color word
- ♦ Two sheets of black construction paper
- ♦ Small amount of tempera paint in the colors red, yellow, blue, orange, green and violet
- ♦ A sponge cut into six squares

Introduce the Lesson

- ♦ Turn to page 30 in *Los pollitos dicen / The Baby Chicks Sing*. Together, sing or say the words of the song De colores / Oh, the Colors.
- ♦ Point to the rainbow on page 30 of the book. Say: *This is a rainbow. What is this? A rainbow.* Motion to the learner to repeat the word rainbow three times. Repeat: *This is a rainbow.*
- ♦ Place the drawing of the rainbow on the workspace. Say: *This is a rainbow. What is this?* Motion to the learner to say rainbow.
- ♦ Place the color arches on the workspace. Point to the red arch. Say: *This color is red. What color is this? Red.* Motion to the learner to repeat the word red.
- ♦ Repeat the procedure three times for all color words.
- ♦ Play Rainbow Colors. Say: *To make a rainbow, I need red. I need the red arch.* Motion to the learner to give you the red arch. Place the arch on the drawing of the rainbow. Repeat procedure for other colors.
- ♦ Change roles with the learner. Take the arches off the drawing and ask the learner to make a rainbow. Gesture at the arches and say: *What color do you need?* Motion for the learner to name a color. Give the learner the color he/she names. Continue procedure for other colors.

Extension

- ♦ Paint a rainbow. Place the black construction paper, paint and sponges on the workspace.
- ♦ Point to the red paint. Say: *This is red. What color is this?* Motion to the learner to repeat: *Red.* Repeat procedure for other colors.
- ♦ Say: *I need red.* Motion to the learner to give the red paint to you. Illustrate sponge-painting techniques.
- ♦ Repeat procedure for other colors.
- ♦ Change roles with the learner. Give a sheet of black paper to the learner. Say: *What color do you need for a rainbow?* Gesture at the paint and ask again: *What color do you need?* Motion to the learner to name a color. Give the learner the color he/she names. Continue procedure for other colors.