

# Lesson Plan: Nursery Rhyme Play & Discover

## Lesson Overview

**Target Age:** 12–24 Months (Toddlers)

**Duration:** 30–45 minutes (Flexible for toddler attention spans)

**Theme:** Exploring rhythm, rhyme, and sensory play through classic Nursery Rhymes.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the learner will:

- Practice receptive language by following simple hand gestures (e.g., "up," "down," "round and round").
- Develop fine motor skills by interacting with sensory materials related to rhymes.
- Identify at least two animals or objects from the rhymes through pointing or vocalizing.
- Engage in rhythmic movement and social bonding through song and play.

## Materials Needed

- A "Rhyme Bag" (a colorful tote or pillowcase)
- Hand puppets or finger puppets (Spider, Sheep, Cow)
- A small spray bottle with water or a small bowl of water
- Cotton balls or faux fur scraps
- Toy bus or a round lid to turn
- Plastic eggs or simple shakers/rattles
- Soft board books of nursery rhymes

## 1. Introduction (The Hook)

### Activity: The Mystery Rhyme Bag

*Goal: Capture attention and introduce the concept of "rhyme time."*

- Sit on the floor with the learner. Shake the "Rhyme Bag" to make a sound with the shakers inside.
- **Talking Points:** "Listen! What's in my bag? Shake, shake, shake! It's time for songs! Are you ready to play?"
- Sing a quick "Hello Song" to the tune of *Farmer in the Dell*: "We're here for Rhyme Time, we're here for Rhyme Time, hi-ho the derry-o, we're here for Rhyme Time!"

## 2. The "I Do" (Direct Instruction & Demonstration)

### Rhyme: The Itsy Bitsy Spider

*Goal: Model hand movements and connect words to physical sensations.*

- **The Song:** Sing slowly, using exaggerated hand motions for the spider climbing and the rain falling.
- **The Demonstration:** Show the spider puppet. Make it "crawl" up the learner's arm gently.
- **Sensory Element:** Spray a tiny mist of water in the air or let the learner dip a finger in a bowl of water when the rain "comes down."
- **Talking Points:** "Look at the spider! He goes up, up, up! Oh no, rain! Splash! The spider is wet. Can you say 'Up'?"

### 3. The "We Do" (Guided Practice)

**Rhyme: The Wheels on the Bus**

*Goal: Active participation and imitation of gross motor movements.*

- **The Movement:** Sit facing the learner. Use a toy bus or just your hands.
- **The Practice:** Encourage the learner to roll their hands "round and round." Help them move their arms if they need a physical prompt.
- **Variations:** Do the "wipers" (swish arms) and the "horn" (beep their nose or a button).
- **Talking Points:** "The bus goes round and round! Can you move your hands like this? Beep, beep! Good job pushing the horn!"

### 4. The "You Do" (Sensory & Creative Exploration)

**Rhyme: Baa Baa Black Sheep / Old MacDonald**

*Goal: Independent exploration of textures and sounds.*

- **The Setup:** Place a pile of cotton balls (wool) and animal figurines or pictures on the floor.
- **The Activity:** Let the learner touch the "soft wool." Give them a shaker to play along as you sing *Baa Baa Black Sheep* or *Old MacDonald*.
- **Autonomy:** Let the learner choose which animal to play with next. If they pick the cow, sing the cow verse.
- **Talking Points:** "Soft sheep! Feel the wool. It's so soft. Shake your shaker! Moo says the cow. What does the sheep say?"

### 5. Conclusion (Closure & Recap)

**Activity: The "Twinkle" Cool Down**

*Goal: Transition to a calm state and reinforce the lesson's highlights.*

- Lower the lights or sit in a cozy spot. Sing *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* while doing slow "sparkle hands."
- **Recap:** Briefly mention what you did. "We saw a spider, we rode the bus, and we felt the soft sheep! You did a great job singing today."
- **Success Criteria:** The lesson is successful if the learner engaged with at least one sensory material and attempted one hand motion or sound.

## Adaptability & Differentiation

- **For High Energy Learners:** Focus on *If You're Happy and You Know It* to allow for jumping, clapping, and stomping.
- **For Quieter/Sensory-Sensitive Learners:** Use soft puppets and focus on board books where they can point to pictures rather than big movements or water sprays.
- **For Early Talkers:** Pause at the end of a familiar line (e.g., "Twinkle, twinkle, little...") and wait 3 seconds to see if they fill in the word ("Star!").

## Assessment Methods

- **Formative (During Lesson):** Observe if the child tracks the puppets with their eyes, reaches for the sensory materials, or attempts to mimic a "clap" or "wave."
- **Summative (End of Lesson):** Place two objects (e.g., the spider and the sheep) in front of the child. Ask, "Where is the sheep?" and see if they point or reach for the correct item.