

Tip Sheet: Play Rhyming Games with Children

FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

For additional support on this topic, visit <https://bit.ly/QTRhyme> to view a short video.

WHY?

Children with solid phonological awareness skills tend to be better readers. Phonological awareness develops while children are in preschool and elementary school. Help children pay attention to the sounds in words and support their phonological awareness development by playing **rhyming games** and singing **rhyming songs**.

WHAT?

Phonological awareness is the understanding that language is made up of sounds and the ability to detect the individual sounds of spoken language. **Syllables** are made up of **onsets** and **rimes**. The **rime** is the last part of the word that has the vowel, and the **onset** is the part of the word that comes before that. For example, in the word *chat*, the onset is *ch* and the rime is *at*. Words that **rhyme** have the same rime but different onsets, such as in *chat*, *hat*, *flat*, *mat*, and *bat*. Games and songs that use rhyme help children pay attention to the onsets and rimes in words.

HOW?

Try adding a rhyming song or game to your morning circle time or as a fun transition between activities. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Say two words and ask children to give you a thumbs-up if the words rhyme or thumbs down if they don't rhyme.
- When it's time for children to line up, ask them to give you a word that rhymes with a word you say before they get in line. If they have difficulty with this task, give them choices. For example, "Which word rhymes with hat – cat or sit?"
- Play rhyming bingo. Create bingo sheets with pictures. Children place a marker on the picture when you say a word that rhymes with it.
- Play "I Spy" with rhyming words. For example, "I spy, with my little eye, something that rhymes with block (clock)."
- Play rhyming word shuffle. If you say words that rhyme, the group takes two steps forward. If they don't rhyme, they take two steps back.
- Collect items, some that rhyme and some that don't, to bring to circle time. Ask the children to pick out the items that rhyme with one another.



TEACHER TIP

With young children, try a rhyming song that uses their names, such as the Name Game or Willoughby Wallaby Woo.