Educational Solutions
for Children, Inc.

BUILDING STRONG READERS FROM BIRTH TO AGE FIVE!

# PRINT AWARENESS

## LITERACY TOOLKIT

## NURSERY RHYMES



Educational Solutions for Children, Inc. | Birth-5 Literacy Resource

Created through funding provided by the Comprehensive Literacy Grant Initiative.

# WELCOME, TEACHERS!

Educational Solutions for Children, Inc.

**Thank you for using the Print Awareness Literacy Center Toolkit!**



## 1 WHY NURSERY RHYMES MATTER

Nursery rhymes help young children develop essential language and literacy skills through repetition, rhythm, rhyme, and meaningful interactions.

As children listen, recite, sing, and engage with nursery rhymes, they build the foundational skills needed for future reading and writing success. Nursery rhymes provide rich opportunities to strengthen vocabulary, oral language, memory, listening comprehension, and phonological awareness in engaging and developmentally appropriate ways.

### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Vocabulary Development
- Sequencing Skills
- Oral Language Growth
- Phonological Awareness
- Listening Comprehension
- Print Awareness
- Memory and Recall
- School Readiness

## 2 RESEARCH-BASED BENEFITS

**BUILDS BRAIN CONNECTIONS**
Songs, rhymes, and repetition help children build strong neural pathways for language development.

**SUPPORTS PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS**
Children learn to hear sounds, syllables, and rhyming patterns that support future reading success.

**STRENGTHENS EARLY READING SKILLS**
Exposure to books, print, and language helps children understand how reading works.

## 3 HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

1. Read the nursery rhyme together.
2. Cut apart the strips.
3. Rebuild the rhyme.




4. Point to each word while reading.




5. Talk about the rhyme.
6. Complete extension activities.

## PERFECT FOR

- Classrooms
- Small Groups
- Intervention
- Take-Home Practice
- Literacy Centers
- Family Engagement



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# STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

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**This toolkit aligns with key early learning and literacy standards that support print awareness and early literacy development.**

## BIRTH–3
**(INFANTS & TODDLERS)**

Early experiences with songs, rhymes, and books build the foundation for lifelong reading.

### KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Engages in back-and-forth interactions using sounds, words, and gestures.
- Responds to and enjoys finger plays, songs, and rhymes.
- Explores books and shows interest in pictures, print, and story.
- Demonstrates early understanding that print carries meaning.
- Develops attention and memory through repeated experiences.

## PRESCHOOL
**(3–5 YEARS)**

Preschoolers strengthen print awareness and oral language through meaningful literacy experiences.

### KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Identifies that print carries meaning and has a purpose.
- Recognizes some letters, words, and signs in the environment.
- Understands that we read from left to right and top to bottom.
- Participates in shared reading and retelling of familiar rhymes.
- Uses vocabulary and oral language to express ideas and make connections.

## PRE–K
**(4–5 YEARS)**

Pre-K children use their knowledge of print to connect language with meaning and purpose.

### KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Demonstrates understanding of basic concepts of print.
- Identifies letters and their associated sounds.
- Recognizes and produces rhyming words.
- Reads and understands high-frequency words.
- Retells stories and rhymes in sequence using key details.

## KINDERGARTEN
**(5–6 YEARS)**

Kindergarteners apply print awareness skills to support reading comprehension and emergent writing.

### KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Demonstrates a deep understanding of concepts of print.
- Reads emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.
- Uses phonological awareness skills to decode and encode words.
- Writes letters, words, and sentences to express ideas.
- Comprehends and retells nursery rhymes and connected text.


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# ONE, TWO, BUCKLE MY SHOE

Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

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## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.




## VOCABULARY WORDS

Look at the pictures.
Talk about the words.


shoe


door


sticks


hen

Teachers can discuss meaning, beginning sounds, and vocabulary connections.

1 One, two, buckle my shoe.



2 Three, four, shut the door.



3 Five, six, pick up sticks.



4 Seven, eight, lay them straight.



5 Nine, ten, a big fat hen.



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

### I Can...

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

Ask:
*"What do you think this rhyme is about?"*

### DURING READING

Encourage students to:

- track print
- identify words
- notice rhyme

### AFTER READING

Discuss:

- *Which words rhyme?*
- *What happened first?*
- *What happened last?*



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# TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

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Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.




## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?



star



world



diamond



sky

1 Twinkle, twinkle, little star,



2 How I wonder what you are!



3 Up above the world so high,



4 Like a diamond in the sky.



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

### I Can...

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**
*"What do you see in the sky at night?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**

- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**

- *Which words rhyme?*
- *What is being compared to a diamond?*
- *What do you notice about the sky?*


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# RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY

Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

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## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.



## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?



rain




day



play



students

## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

**I Can...**

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

1 Rain, rain, go away, 

2 Come again another day. 


3 Rain, rain, go away, 

4 Little students want to play. 

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**
*"What do you like to do when it rains?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**

- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**

- *Which words rhyme?*
- *Why can't the students play?*
- *What do you like to do outside when it's not raining?*


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# I'M A LITTLE TEAPOT

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Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.



## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?



teapot



spout



handle



steam

1. I'm a little teapot,



2. Short and stout.



3. Here is my handle,



4. Here is my spout.



5. When I get all steamed up,
hear me shout!



6. Tip me over
and pour me out!



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

### I Can...

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**
*"What do you use a teapot for?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**
- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**
- *Which words rhyme?*
- *What happens when the teapot gets steamed up?*


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# APPLES ARE SO GOOD!

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Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.



## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?



apple



tree



yellow



red



pie



juice

1. Apples juicy, apples round,
   On the tree or on the ground.



2. Apples yellow, apples red,



3. Apple pie and juice and bread!



4. Apples crunchy, apples sweet,



5. Apples are so good to eat!



6. Apples are so good to eat!



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

### I Can...

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**

*"What is your favorite kind of apple?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**

- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**

- *Which words rhyme?*
- *What is your favorite way to eat apples?'*
- *Why are apples good for us?*


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# SNOWFLAKES FALLING

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Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.



## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?

| | |
|---|---|
|  snowflake |  snow |
|  ground |  falling |

1 Snowflakes falling all around.



2 Snowflakes falling on the ground.



3 Snowflakes falling, one, two, three.




4 Snowflakes falling, so fun to see!



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

### I Can...

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**
*"What do you see when it snows?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**
- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**
- *What do snowflakes look like?*
- *What happens when snowflakes fall on the ground?*
- *Why do you think snowflakes are fun to see?*


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# PUMPKINS EVERYWHERE!

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**Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.**

## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.




## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?



pumpkin



ground



round



fall

1. Pumpkins, pumpkins on the ground.



2. Pumpkins, pumpkins large and round.



3. Pumpkins, pumpkins take them all.



4. So many pumpkins it's time for fall!



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

**I Can...**

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**
*"What is your favorite thing about fall?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**
- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**
- *What do pumpkins look like?*
- *Where do pumpkins grow?*
- *What do we do with pumpkins in the fall?*
- *Why do you like fall?*


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# SPRING IS HERE

Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

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## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.



## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?



spring



flowers



bloom



flutter

1. Spring is here, come and see.



2. Flowers bloom for you and me.



3. Birds sing songs up in the sky.



4. Butterflies flutter by and by!



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

### I Can...

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**

*"What do you see in spring?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**

- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**

- *What blooms in the spring?*
- *What do you see outside in spring?*
- *Which words rhyme?*
- *How does spring make you feel?*


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# SHARING AT SCHOOL

Read, cut, and sequence the nursery rhyme.

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## STUDENT DIRECTIONS

- Read the nursery rhyme.
- Cut apart the strips.
- Put the nursery rhyme back in order.
- Point to each word as you read.
- Talk about the nursery rhyme with a partner.




## VOCABULARY WORDS

Talk about the pictures.
What do these words mean?



sharing



friends



kind



turns

1. Sharing toys is fun to do.



2. I'll share mine, and you share too.



3. We take turns and laugh all day.



4. Kind words help us work and play.



5. Sharing makes a happy day!



## PRINT AWARENESS FOCUS

### I Can...

- ☐ Point to each word
- ☐ Read left to right
- ☐ Find the first word
- ☐ Find the last word
- ☐ Identify a capital letter
- ☐ Identify punctuation

## TEACHER EXTENSION

### BEFORE READING

**Ask:**
*"What are some things we can share at school?"*

### DURING READING

**Encourage students to:**

- Track print
- Identify repeated words
- Notice rhyming words
- Point to words as they read

### AFTER READING

**Discuss:**

- *What are some things we can share?*
- *How do you feel when someone shares with you?*
- *Why is it important to take turns?*
- *Which words rhyme?*


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# FAMILY CONNECTION

**READ TOGETHER. LEARN TOGETHER. GROW TOGETHER.**

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## TALK

- Ask questions.
- Listen.
- Tell stories.

## READ

- Read 10 minutes every day.
- Point to words.
- Talk about pictures.

## SING

- Sing nursery rhymes.
- Clap and move to the beat.
- Repeat words and sounds.

## PLAY

- Count together.
- Build together.
- Pretend and imagine.

## FAMILY CHALLENGE

Can your family complete all 5 this week?

- ☐ Read together
- ☐ Sing together
- ☐ Tell a story
- ☐ Find five letters
- ☐ Draw a picture together

Every little moment helps your child grow!

## TRY THIS TONIGHT!

- Read one book together.
- Sing one nursery rhyme.
- Point to five words.
- Talk about your favorite picture.
- Give your child a hug and say, "I'm proud of you for learning today!"

## YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST TEACHER.

Thank you for being a part of your child's learning journey!


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# OBSERVATION CHECKLIST



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Use this checklist to observe and celebrate children as they build phonological awareness skills.

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____ Observer: _____

| SKILLS TO OBSERVE | CONSISTENTLY (Most of the time) | SOMETIMES (With support) | NOT YET (Needs more practice) | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **LISTENS ATTENTIVELY**<br>• Focuses on sounds in words, stories, and activities. | ○ | ○ | ○ | _____ |
| **IDENTIFIES SOUNDS**<br>• Recognizes and names beginning, middle, and ending sounds. | ○ | ○ | ○ | _____ |
| **BLENDS SOUNDS**<br>• Combines individual sounds to make words. | ○ | ○ | ○ | _____ |
| **SEGMENTS SOUNDS**<br>• Breaks words into individual sounds. | ○ | ○ | ○ | _____ |
| **RHYMES**<br>• Identifies and produces rhyming words. | ○ | ○ | ○ | _____ |
| **MANIPULATES SOUNDS**<br>• Adds, deletes, or substitutes sounds in words. | ○ | ○ | ○ | _____ |
| **PARTICIPATES ACTIVELY**<br>• Enjoys activities and tries their best! | ○ | ○ | ○ | _____ |

## STRENGTHS I OBSERVED:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

## NEXT STEPS:

- ★ Continue to build confidence.
- ★ Provide extra practice and support.
- ★ Encourage and celebrate every step!

## WHAT CAN HELP:

- ✓ Daily songs and rhymes
- ✓ Fun sound games
- ✓ Books and storytelling
- ✓ Hands-on activities
- ✓ Family practice at home


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