

Rhymers Are Readers: The Importance of Nursery Rhymes

Activities

Nursery Rhymes with a Twist (as seen on ZOOM)

Cast: Mother Goose, Jack, Jill, cat, cow, dog, two rhythm clappers, two bakers, and Little Jack Horner

Props: a cardboard sun and moon, a cake, a pie, a rocking chair, and a book

Costume ideas: reading glasses for Mother Goose, matching hats for Jack and Jill, face makeup for the cat, cow, and dog, and baker hats

Setting: outdoors

(Mother Goose, off to the side, is reading from a book of nursery rhymes and rocking in a rocking chair. Jack and Jill go up the hill, and Jill pretends to snowboard. The sun is shining behind the scene.)

Mother Goose: Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water. Jack fell down and broke his crown, and Jill came snowboarding after!

(Mother Goose turns page in nursery rhyme book. The cat, cow, and dog take positions.)

Mother Goose: Hey-diddle-diddle, the cat and the fiddle, the cow jumped over the moon. The little dog laughed to see such sport, and then he tried it the next afternoon!

(Mother Goose turns page in nursery rhyme book. The rhythm clappers and bakers take positions. Clappers clap to the song.)

Mother Goose: Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man! Bake me a cake as fast as you can. Pat it, and prick it, and mark it with a Z. Then put it on the table for the ZOOMers and me.

(Mother Goose turns page in nursery rhyme book. Little Jack Horner takes position.)

Mother Goose: Little Jack Horner sat in a corner, eating his holiday pie. He stuck in his thumb and pulled out a strawberry and said . . .

Jack Horner: Hey! What happened to the plum?

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Here Is the Beehive

(Hold up a fist.)

Here is the beehive. Where are the bees?

They're hidden inside, where nobody sees.

Watch! Watch! as they come out of the hive.

One, two, three, four, five! (Count with your fingers.)

Bzzzzzzzz! (Make flying motions with your hand.)



Let the children dress up as the nursery rhyme characters and act them out as you say them.



Share treats that go with the rhymes, such as plums after reciting "Little Jack Horner."



Make booklets out of the nursery rhyme. Put pictures (or have the children draw pictures) and one phrase of the rhyme on each page.



Put each phrase of the rhyme on a card and mix the cards around. Have the children put them in the right order.

Use instruments (or clapping, snapping, stomping, etc.) to enhance the rhythm of the rhyme. Recite rhymes and songs that use movement, such as "Do Your Ears Hang Low?" and "The Hokey Pokey."



Use boxes to create "blocks," with each side showing a picture that represents part of a nursery rhyme. Children can stack them to tell the nursery rhyme as written, or they can mix them up and come up with their own rhymes. Be silly!

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Caterpillar

Instructions for making a caterpillar sock puppet:

Glue pom-poms for the caterpillar's eyes and nose on the outside of an old sock. Turn the sock inside out. Glue a felt butterfly on the toe of the inside of the sock. Begin the poem with your hand inside the sock so that the caterpillar is seen on the outside. When the caterpillar spins a cocoon, pull the cuff up over the head. To reveal the butterfly, turn the sock inside out.

Rhyme

A caterpillar crawled to the top of a tree.

"I think I'll have a nap," said he.

So under a leaf he began to creep.

He spun a cocoon, and he fell asleep.

For six long months, he slept in his bed.

Until spring finally came along and said,

"Wake up, wake up, you sleepy head!"

Out of the leaf he did cry,

"Look! I've become a butterfly!"

Actions without a sock puppet

(Extend your left arm. Wiggle right index finger down your left arm.)

(Pretend right index finger is talking.)

(Wrap left hand around right index finger.)

(Shake left fist.)

(Hook thumbs together. Extend fingers.)

(Wiggle fingers like wings.)

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Butterfly Crafts, Fingerplays, and Poems

My Friendly Caterpillar

My friendly caterpillar (Fingers crawl up arm.)
Made its cocoon one day. (Close hands together.)
It turned into a butterfly
(Open hands with thumbs hooked together.)
And quickly flew away. (Flap hands.)

Butterfly Life Cycle Bracelet

Take one pipe cleaner and thread pony beads on in the following order: one white bead to represent the **egg**, one red bead to represent the **head** of the caterpillar, three green beads to represent the caterpillar's **body**, a glitter bead to represent the **chrysalis**, and one **butterfly** bead at the end. After the children are done with the bracelet, ask them individually to tell about their life cycle bracelet.

Handi-Pillars

To make this cute caterpillar, make a palm print with yellow paint to represent the caterpillar's head. Use a different color of paint to make each hand print segment of the caterpillar's body, creating a pattern. When the paint is dry, use a marker to add more details.

Cupcake Liner Butterflies

Items required: cupcake liners, markers, crayons, and pipe cleaners. 1) Flatten out cupcake liners. 2) Color liners with markers or crayons. 3) Pinch liners in the center and wrap with pipe cleaners. 4) Use the left over pipe cleaner to make antennae.

Butterfly Song: "Pretty Butterfly"

Sing to the tune of "Up on the House Top" (Christmas song).

First comes a butterfly and lays an egg.
Out comes the caterpillar with many legs.
Oh, see the caterpillar spin and spin
A little cocoon (chrysalis) to sleep in.
Oh, oh, oh, look and see. Oh, oh, oh, look and see.
Out of the cocoon (chrysalis) my, oh, my—
Out comes a pretty butterfly.

Life Cycle With Macaroni

Submitted by Peg

Put everything on a paper plate divided into four sections.
Eggs: rice
Caterpillar: spiral pasta
Cocoon: shell pasta
Butterfly: bowtie pasta

Longly Spells Butterfly

Bother them and they will fly away.
Under the flowers,
They will stay.
Then when they are sure that you have left,
Every one of them will leave that place,
Red, black, yellow, and gold.

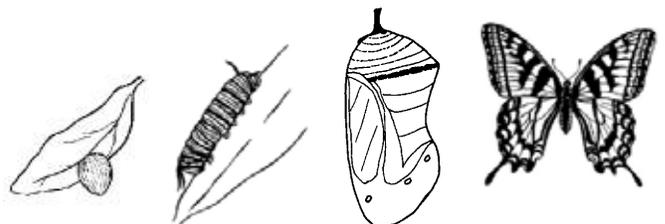
For every one there's a new pattern,
Like hearts and circles,
In one little line,
Every color will combine.
Swiftly they fly into the sky.

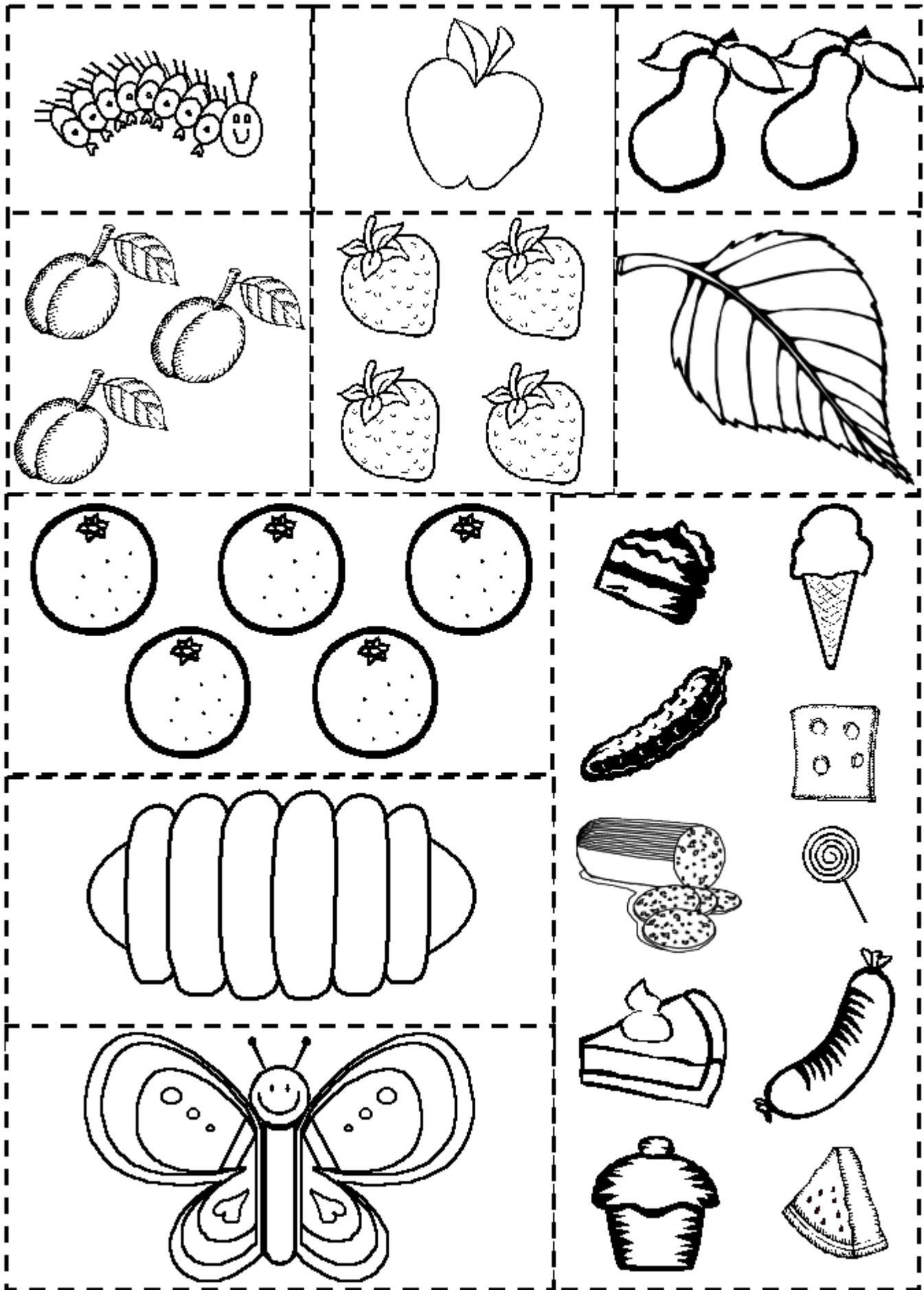
Crissy, age 13, Dempsey Middle School, Delaware, OH

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly

First I am an egg.
Then I am a caterpillar.
Now I am a cocoon.
Now I am a butterfly!

Nneka, First Grade, Chicago, IL





The Very Hungry Caterpillar sequencing cards

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Tiny Tim Poem

I have a little turtle;
His name is Tiny Tim.
I put him in the bathtub
To teach him how to swim.

He drank up all the water
And ate up all the soap.
Now he's home and sick in bed
With bubbles in his throat!
Bubble, bubble, bubble,
Bubble, bubble, bubble,
Bubble, bubble, bubble,
Bubble, bubble, POP!

I miss my little turtle,
Whose name is Tiny Tim.
I will call him on the telephone—
I would like to visit him.

Tiny Tim is better now;
His tummy doesn't hurt.
He will never eat the soap again—
He says it doesn't work.
Bubble, bubble, bubble,
Bubble, bubble, bubble,
Bubble, bubble, bubble,
Bubble, bubble, POP!

(Children love this. Sing it with a nice big green turtle puppet and a lot of expression!)

Tiny Tim Fingerplay

I have a little turtle; his name is Tiny Tim.
(Cup your hands together.)
I put him in the bathtub to teach him how to swim.
(Make motion like you are putting him in the tub.)
He drank up all the water
(Cup hands to your mouth like you are drinking.)
And ate up all the soap.
(Play like you are eating soap.)
Now he's home and sick in bed with bubbles in his
throat! (Put hands around throat.)

Creative Turtle Collage

Cut large turtle shapes from green construction paper. Provide the children with scraps of colored paper (any kind). The children can tear the paper into tiny pieces and stick them on the turtle shell.

Turtles: A Counting Poem

One lonely turtle, feeling so blue;
Along came another, and now there are two.
Two happy turtles, on their way to the sea;
Along came another, and now there are three.
Three happy turtles, wishing for some more;
Along came another, and now there are four.
Four happy turtles, going for a dive;
Along came another, and now there are five.

Turtle Cookies

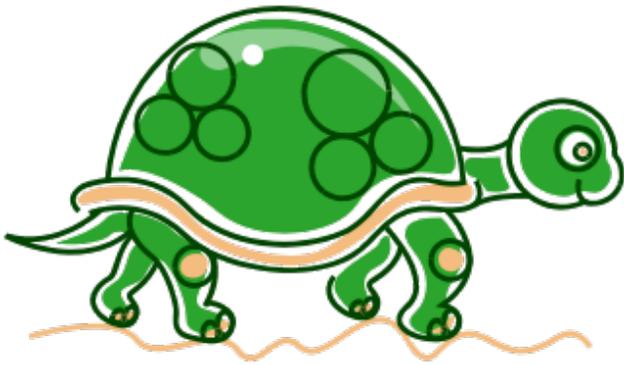
Make rolled sugar cookie dough, or buy refrigerated slice-and-bake dough. Give the children green jelly beans sliced in half horizontally. Push them into the dough to make arms, legs, and a head. Have the children shake green sugar on their cookie. Bake as directed.

Now read about Franklin!

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Props for “Tiny Tim Poem”



Props for “Turtles: A Counting Poem”

