

Learn Some Rhymes

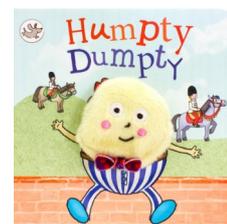
Experts in literacy and child development have discovered that if a child knows eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they are four years old, they are usually among the best readers and spellers in their class by the time they are in Year 3.

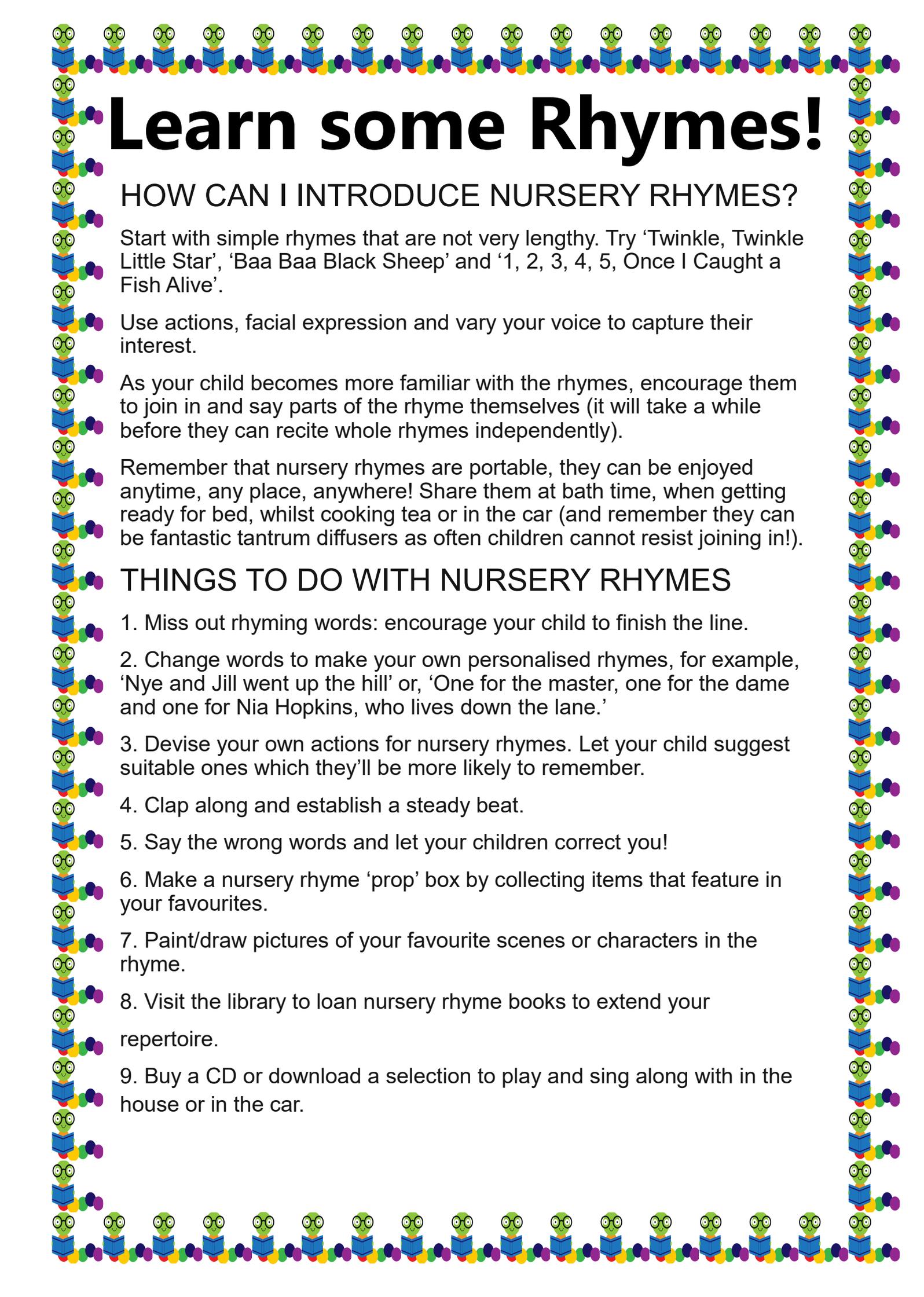
Why is this?

1. Nursery rhymes are a great way into learning early phonic skills (the ability to hear, identify and manipulate letter sounds).
2. Nursery rhymes give children practise in pitch, volume as well as in language rhythm.
3. Nursery rhymes expand your child's imagination.
4. Nursery rhymes follow a clear sequence of events.

Short nursery rhymes often tell a story and contain a beginning, middle and end. Whilst this may be a compact way of storytelling, these will be some of the first stories your child will be able to follow and understand. An engagement with a sequence of events will be a skill they need when reading.

5. Nursery rhymes are easy to repeat, so they become some of a child's first sentences.
6. Nursery rhymes improve a child's vocabulary.
7. Nursery rhymes are an early form of poetry.
8. Nursery rhymes contain sophisticated literary devices!
9. Nursery rhymes are fun!





Learn some Rhymes!

HOW CAN I INTRODUCE NURSERY RHYMES?

Start with simple rhymes that are not very lengthy. Try 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star', 'Baa Baa Black Sheep' and '1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I Caught a Fish Alive'.

Use actions, facial expression and vary your voice to capture their interest.

As your child becomes more familiar with the rhymes, encourage them to join in and say parts of the rhyme themselves (it will take a while before they can recite whole rhymes independently).

Remember that nursery rhymes are portable, they can be enjoyed anytime, any place, anywhere! Share them at bath time, when getting ready for bed, whilst cooking tea or in the car (and remember they can be fantastic tantrum diffusers as often children cannot resist joining in!).

THINGS TO DO WITH NURSERY RHYMES

1. Miss out rhyming words: encourage your child to finish the line.
2. Change words to make your own personalised rhymes, for example, 'Nye and Jill went up the hill' or, 'One for the master, one for the dame and one for Nia Hopkins, who lives down the lane.'
3. Devise your own actions for nursery rhymes. Let your child suggest suitable ones which they'll be more likely to remember.
4. Clap along and establish a steady beat.
5. Say the wrong words and let your children correct you!
6. Make a nursery rhyme 'prop' box by collecting items that feature in your favourites.
7. Paint/draw pictures of your favourite scenes or characters in the rhyme.
8. Visit the library to loan nursery rhyme books to extend your repertoire.
9. Buy a CD or download a selection to play and sing along with in the house or in the car.