

**Anima Phonics:  
Letters and Sounds Updated  
Phase 1**

Aspect 4:  
**Rhythm  
and Rhyme**

## Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme

### Tuning into sounds

#### Main purpose

- To experience and appreciate rhythm and rhyme and to develop awareness of rhythm and rhyme in speech

#### Rhyming books

Regularly include rhyming books as part of the daily book-sharing session. Read these books with plenty of intonation and expression so that the children tune into the rhythm of the language and the rhyming words. Encourage the children to join in with repetitive phrases such as *Run, run, as fast as you can, You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man*. Wherever possible make the activity multi-sensory to intensify learning and enjoyment.

#### Learning songs and rhymes

Make sure that singing and rhyming activities are part of the daily routine in small-group time and that extracts are repeated incidentally as events occur (e.g. *It's raining, it's pouring* as the children get ready to go outdoors in wet weather). Play with rhyming words throughout the course of the day and have fun with them. Sing or chant nursery rhymes and encourage the children to move in an appropriate way (e.g. rock gently to the beat of 'See Saw Marjorie Daw', march to the beat of 'Tom, Tom the Piper's Son' and 'The Grand Old Duke of York', skip to the beat of 'Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush').

#### Listen to the beat

Use a variety of percussion instruments to play different rhythms. Remind the children to use their listening ears and to move in time to the beat – fast, slow, skipping, marching, etc. Keep the beat simple at first (e.g. suitable for marching) then move on to more complex rhythms for the children to skip or gallop to.

#### Our favourite rhymes

Support a group of children to compile a book of their favourite rhymes and songs. They could represent the rhymes in any way they choose. The book can be used to make choices about which rhyme to say during singing time, or used for making independent choices in the book corner. Children may choose to act as teacher selecting rhymes for others to perform, individually or as a group.

Have a bag of objects which represent rhymes (e.g. a toy spider to represent 'Incy Wincy Spider', a toy bus for 'The Wheels on the Bus') and invite the children to choose their favourite.





## Rhyming soup

Ask a small group to sit in a circle so they can see a selection of rhyming objects (e.g. rat, hat, cat) placed on the floor. Use a bowl and spoon as props to act out the song. Invite the children, in turn, to choose an object to put into the soup and place it in the bowl. After each turn, stir the soup and sing the following song to recite the growing list of things that end up in the soup.

Sing the first part of the song to the tune of 'Pop Goes the Weasel':

*I'm making lots of silly soup*

*I'm making soup that's silly*

*I'm going to cook it in the fridge*

*To make it nice and chilly*

*In goes... a fox... a box... some socks...*



## Rhyming bingo

Give each child in a small group a set of three pictures of objects with rhyming names. (Such pictures are readily available commercially.) Hide in a bag a set of pictures or objects matching the pictures you have given to the children.

The children take turns to draw out of the bag one object or picture at a time. Invite the children to call out when they see an object or picture that rhymes with theirs and to collect it from the child who has drawn it from the bag.

After each rhyming set is completed chant together and list the rhyming names. As you name objects give emphasis to the rhyming pattern.

## Playing with words

Gather together a set of familiar objects with names that have varying syllable patterns (e.g. pencil, umbrella, camera, xylophone). Show the objects to the children, name them and talk about what they are used for. Wait for the children to share some of their experiences of the objects; for instance, some of them will have used a camera. Then encourage them to think about how the name of the object sounds and feels as they say it. Think about the syllables and clap them out as you say each word. Then clap the syllables for a word without saying it and ask: *What object could that be?*

As children gain confidence try some long words like *binoculars*, *telephone*, *dinosaur*.

### Look, listen and note

Look, listen and note how well children:

- understand the pattern of syllables in the words presented to them;
- sing or chant the rhyming string along with the adult;
- recognise that the words rhyme;

- join in with simple or complex rhythms;
- copy the rhythm;
- keep to the beat.

## Listening and remembering sounds

### Main purpose

- To increase awareness of words that rhyme and to develop knowledge about rhyme

### Rhyming pairs

In a pairs game, use pictures of objects with names that rhyme. The children take it in turns to turn two cards over and keep them if the pictures are a rhyming pair. If they are not a rhyming pair, the cards are turned face down again and the other person has a turn. Start with a small core set of words that can then be extended.

The children need to be familiar with the rhyming word families before they can use them in a game – spend time looking at the pictures and talking about the pairs.

### Songs and rhymes

Include a selection of songs within the daily singing session which involve children in experimenting with their voices. Simple nursery rhymes, such as ‘Hickory, Dickory, Dock’ provide an opportunity for children to join in with *wheeee* as the mouse falls down. Use this to find related words that rhyme: *dock*, *clock*, *tick-tock*. Substitute alternative rhyming sounds to maintain children’s interest and enjoyment.

### Finish the rhyme

Use books with predictable rhymes that children are familiar with and then stop as you come to the final word in the rhyme. Invite children to complete it. Use plenty of intonation and expression as the story or rhyme is recounted.

### Look, listen and note

Look, listen and note how well children:

- recognise rhyming words;
- listen and attend to the rhyming strings.

### Main purpose

- To talk about words that rhyme and to produce rhyming words

### Rhyming puppets

Make up silly rhyming names for a pair of puppets (e.g. *Fizzy Wizzy Lizzy* and *Hob Tob Bob*). Introduce the puppets to a small group and invite them to join in story telling, leaving gaps for the children to fill in rhyming words, for example:

*Are you poorly Lizzy? Oh dear.*

*Fizzy Wizzy Lizzy is feeling sick and...dizzy.*

*Bob is very excited. Today he is going to be a builder.*

*Hob Tob Bob has got a new...job.*



### Odd one out

Put out three objects or pictures, two with names that rhyme and one with a name that does not. Ask the child to identify the 'odd one out': the name that does not rhyme. Start with a small set of words that can then be extended. The children need to be familiar with the rhyming word families before they can use them in a game – spend time looking at the pictures and talking about the pairs.

### I know a word

Throughout the course of daily activities, encourage the children to think about and play with rhyming words. The adult begins with the prompt *I know a word that rhymes with cat, you need to put one on your head and the word is...hat*. This can be used for all sorts of situations and also with some children's names: *I know a girl who is holding a dolly, she is in the book corner and her name is...Molly*. As children become familiar with rhyme, they will supply the missing word themselves.

### Look, listen and note

Look, listen and note how well children:

- generate their own rhymes;
- complete sentences using appropriate rhyming words;
- make a series of words that rhyme.

## Considerations for practitioners working with Aspect 4

- It is important for children to experience a rich repertoire of poems, rhymes and songs. They need to build a stock of rhymes through hearing them repeated in different contexts. Parents and carers can play a valuable role in developing children's repertoires of rhymes. Keep parents and carers informed of any new rhymes you are learning with the children so that the adults can join in when the children start to sing them at home.
- For children learning EAL, songs and rhymes are a particularly effective way to remember whole sentences and phrases by tuning into the rhythm that accompanies them. This in itself is good practice for developing the speech patterns of the language; it is also important to attach meaning and ensure that contexts are understood.
- Encouraging nonsense rhymes is a good way for children to begin to generate and produce rhyme. While a child is developing speech sounds the normal immaturities in their speech may mean their version of a word is different from that of the adults in the setting (e.g. the adult prompts with *You shall have a fish on a little...* and the child joins in with *dit*). The adult then repeats back the correct articulation, '*dish*'.
- When children experiment with nonsense rhymes they are not confined by their own learned versions of words and so can tune into and produce rhyming patterns.
- Keep the songs slow so you can emphasise the rhyming patterns.
- Collecting a set of objects or producing pictures of objects with rhyming names can be time-consuming but this resource is essential to build experience of rhyme into children's play. A set of cards from a commercially available rhyming lotto set can prove to be a versatile resource for many different activities.
- Generating rhymes is a difficult skill to master. Accept all the children's suggestions. Where the children do manage to fill in with the target rhyming word, congratulate them on having done so and draw attention to the rhyming pattern.
- Children learning EAL often internalise chunks of language and may not hear where one word starts and another ends. They may continue to use many of these chunks of language for some time before they begin to segment the speech stream in order to use the constituent words in new contexts.
- When children can supply a list of rhyming words and non-words, after being given a start, they can be considered to be well on the way to grasping rhyme (e.g. adult says *cat, mat, sat...* and the child continues *fat, pat, mat, rat*). However, children may well be at a later phase of this programme before they can do this. **There is no need to delay starting Phase Two until children have mastered rhyming.**