

Word Wonders Activity 6: Pattern Play¹

CHILDREN ARE LEARNING TO...

- Show familiarity with songs or rhymes; possibly repeating a word or sound (18 to 24 months)
- Sing or chant phrases from songs or familiar rhymes (24 to 36 months)
- Repeat or sing a familiar song or rhyme (36 to 48 months)

ACTIVITY SUMMARY:

In this activity, children will participate in several different rhythmic patterns, using both a story and a rhyme. The book suggested here gives children exposure to patterns in a text. They will also compare and order animals by size (an early math skill). The rhyme activity is a simple pattern that children can chant as they act it out.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Book: *The Napping House* by Audrey West

For Activity 1 (Engage):

Handout 1: Story Images

- Optional: manila folders, glue/stapler (if you want to make images sturdier for reuse)

For Activity 2 (Expand):

Handout 2: Rhyme Images

- Optional: manila folders, glue/stapler (if you want to make images sturdier for reuse)

PREPARATION:

For Activity 1 (Engage):

- Print **Handout 1**. Cut out the bed and animals. If you'd like to make these images a bit sturdier, glue them to cardboard or a manila folder. Keep the set together; set aside until needed.
- Note: If you want children to work in pairs, you will need additional copies/sets of images.

For Activity 2 (Expand):

- Print **Handout 2**. Cut out the images for the rhyming activity, keeping them in order. If you'd like to make these images a bit sturdier, glue them to cardboard or a manila folder. Set aside until needed.

¹ This activity was inspired by one in: Hart Paulson, L., Attridge Noble, L., Jepson, S., & van den Pol, R. (2001). *Building early literacy and language skills*. Sopris West Educational Services.

- **Note:** If you are using just the first rhyme (as suggested for the youngest children), you will only need the candlestick, baby chick, and popsicle stick images.
- Choose a corner of the room for Activity 2 that will offer enough space for children to jump/step over the images as they chant the final line of the rhyme.

Activity Instructions

EXPLORE

Share the following book and extension activity with children as an opportunity to practice noticing, naming, and repeating patterns in stories.

Book: *The Napping House* by Audrey West

As You Read:

- **Introduce the book and its key ideas.** The cover and opening page of the book shows a house in the rain. Ask children if they like the rain. Do rainy days ever make them feel sleepy? Explain: In this story, a grandma, a boy, and many animals try to crowd into a bed for naptime. Ask children to predict: *Do you think they will be able to sleep?*
- **Define new words and phrases.** Ask children if they know what a *flea* is. It is a little bug that sometimes lives in a cat's or dog's fur. The flea in the story is *wakeful*. What do the children think that word means? (*It's another word for awake.*)
- **Encourage prediction.** As each new character climbs onto the bed, pause to ask children what they notice. Who just joined the bed? Do they think everyone will stay asleep? Why or why not? What do the children think will happen with the flea, who's wide awake in the napping house?
- **Prompt children to repeat key phrases and pause for children to fill-in-the-blank.** In subsequent readings of the book, encourage children to join in and say the refrain: *On a cozy bed, in a napping house, where everyone is sleeping.* If that phrase is too long, prompt children to join in with the word "sleeping."
- **Identify and explore emotions.** Have children look at the cat's expression when the flea wakes him. How do they think the cat feels? (Surprised, fearful/scared, startled, etc.) Can the children make these faces?
- **Support early math learning.** Show children the cat's fur. Do children see the *pattern* in the cat's stripes: brown, yellow, brown, yellow, brown, yellow? Are any of the children wearing a shirt or pants with a pattern? As the story progresses, practice counting. Prompt the children to count aloud how many characters are on the bed. Compare when there are more or less on the bed than on other pages.
- **Make connections to children's lives.** When the dog climbs into bed, ask children if they have a pet at home. Where does their pet sleep? Do they ever take a nap with their pet? Does it feel cozy (safe and comfortable)? The book ends when "no one now is sleeping," and they are all playing outside in the sunshine. What do the children like to do when they play outside?

ENGAGE – ACTIVITY 1

Explain the game: *I have some pictures of the people and animals in the story. Let's act out the story together!*

Play the game: Place the bed image on the floor with children sitting in a semicircle in front. Distribute a napping character to each of five children (granny, child, dog, cat, and mouse). Keep the flea for yourself.

Re-read the story, prompting children to join in the refrain: *On a cozy bed, in a napping house, where everyone is sleeping.*

When you get to each character, look or point to the child holding that image and encourage them to say the name of who they are holding (Granny, child, dog, cat, mouse). Prompt children to add the picture they're holding to the line of characters on the bed.

When you get to the end, encourage children to pretend to sleep just like their characters: Can they lie down? Can they pretend to snore? Then tell them to watch and wait until the flea lands on the mouse. When it's their turn, they will wake up and jump up, just like in the story.

Slowly, place the flea on top of the mouse image and cue the first child (mouse) to "wake up" by jumping up. As the child "mouse" wakes up, you can pick up the paper mouse and set it aside. Continue prompting children to "wake up" as you move through the rest of the story (waking the cat, dog, child, and Granny).

INSTRUCTIONAL IDEA

This activity can also be fun and effective as a feltboard experience. Glue the bed and character images to cardboard and then affix hook-and-loop fasteners (like Velcro™) to the back of each. Proceed with the activity as outlined here.

For children aged 36 to 48 months

Complete the re-telling activity outlined above.

Introduce and practice comparison vocabulary using the *Making Math Connections* activity provided here.

Summarize: *This story is all about naptime, on a cozy bed (prompt children to join in), in a napping house, where everyone is sleeping! Does anyone remember who was the first to take a nap? (Granny.) Who was the last to take a nap? (The mouse) Everyone had a chance to take a nap in this story, except the flea!*

MAKING MATH CONNECTIONS

Place the character pictures (Granny, child, dog, cat, mouse, flea) out in the floor in a random order.

Say: *Some of the people and animals napping in our story are big and some are small. Who is the BIGGEST napper? (Granny)*

Continue sequencing the pictures by asking: *Who is just a little SMALLER than Granny? Do you see any SMALL nappers?* Continue until all the pictures have been sequenced by size.

When you are done sequencing, encourage children to compare nappers: *The boy is smaller than Granny, but bigger than the dog.*

Ask children to help you make groups of characters that show: big/bigger/biggest (like the dog, boy, and Granny) and small/smaller/smallest (like the cat, mouse, and flea). *Note that a mix of characters would be acceptable—the ones listed here are just examples.

Focus on using vocabulary like *big, bigger, biggest, or small, smaller, smallest*. Most children in this age range are familiar with big/small but more specific comparisons (–er and –est adjectives) may be new to them.

Ask: *Who sees the BIGGEST napper? Who sees the SMALLEST napper?*

EXPAND – ACTIVITY 2

Introduce: *In our story, everyone was sleeping. But in our next game, we will ALL be awake and moving and I'll need your help!*

For children 18 to 36 months old:

Explain: *I'm going to share a rhyme. Your job is to listen to the rhyme to hear what we have to do. Let's try it!*

Place the candlestick image on the floor. Ask children if they know what this is; be sure to label it a *candlestick*. Have children repeat this new vocabulary. (For each subsequent picture you introduce, begin with this step: naming the object and having children repeat it.)

Say the rhyme, substituting your name below:

*[Teacher Name], get ready,
[Teacher Name], be quick,
[Teacher Name] jump over the candlestick*

Repeat rhyme 1-2 more times. Use a gesture to indicate "over" the candlestick.

Ask children: *What did my rhyme say? What do I need to do?*

- Wait to see if children can tell you. If they do, jump over the candlestick image.
- If children do *not* know how to answer or are not speaking/gesturing yet, then repeat the rhyme again, but before the last line, point to your ears and whisper: *Listen—here comes the clue! I have to JUMP over the candlestick.*

Repeat the game:

- Repeat the rhyme, this time substituting the name of a child in your group. Give them a chance to jump/step over the candlestick. (Note that jumping as a skill doesn't emerge until between 24 and 36 months. Younger children can step over the candlestick.)
- Switch the image to the baby chick and share the rhyme again with a different child's name. The final line should say: *[Child Name], jump over the baby chick.*
- Switch the image to the popsicle stick and share the rhyme again with a different child's name. The final line should say: *[Child Name], jump over the popsicle stick.*
- Collect the three images and give the next child a choice of which picture they'd like for their turn.
- Each time you play, encourage children to join in and chant along with the rhyme. Continue until all children have had a turn or until they are no longer engaged.

For children 36 to 48 months old:

Implement the activity as outlined above.

Then rotate through slightly different rhymes:

*[Child Name] can stretch
[Child Name] can clap
[Child Name] jump over the treasure map / baseball cap*

*[Child Name] looks up
[Child Name] looks down
[Child Name] jump over the golden crown / silly clown*

Repeat: Each time you introduce a new rhyme, share it with children 1-2 times so they can begin to remember it and chant along with you. Name the objects in each picture and have children repeat this vocabulary.

As You Play: Prompt the group to repeat the rhyming refrain ([Child Name] *jump over the...*) and point to the image to help them fill in the blank. As above, continue until all children have had a turn.

REFLECT:

Return to a gathering area with the children. To close the activity, show children the candlestick image and place it on the floor in front of you.

Lead children in a line to step/jump over the candlestick.

Say: *Let's try our rhyme one last time. This time, our whole class will jump over the candlestick. Are you ready? Everyone, get ready; Everyone, be quick; Everyone jump over the candlestick!*

SUMMARIZE: *Today, we learned how to listen for patterns and rhymes. We played a pattern game with our Napping House story, and we shared jumping rhymes. We made lots of patterns in our games today!*

INDIVIDUALIZING THE ACTIVITY

Make it more challenging:

- In Activity 1, you can have children work in pairs. As you re-read the book, they can take turns placing the characters on the bed. When you have re-read it once, have children remove the characters and then re-tell the story to one another using the images as a prompt to remember the narrative. Note that you will need to make additional copies of the images.
- In Activity 1, have children work in pairs to put the characters in order by size.
- In Activity 2, ask children to tell you which words rhyme in the game. (Remind children that rhyming words are ones that sound the same at the end.) You can also use the images from this activity to create sets of 2 words that rhyme and one that doesn't (candlestick, baby chick, and crown) and ask children to pick out the word that doesn't rhyme.
- In Activity 2, use different rhymes. Consider creating your own rhymes using the existing format—such as *[Child Name] can wiggle, [Child Name] can dance, [Child Name] can jump over the underpants / little ants. [Child Name] can laugh, [Child Name] can cry, [Child Name] can jump over the cherry pie / daddy's tie.*

Make it less challenging:

- In Activity 1, omit the sequencing activity (where children order images by size). Focus on the sequence in the story only. You can model vocabulary here to indicate the order of the napping characters, such as: *first, next, then, after and finally.*
- In Activity 1, ask questions that help children make sense of the plot, such as: *Who went to sleep first? What were some of the animals in the bed? What animal woke everyone up?*
- Ask children to point to the new person/animal when they join the nap.
- In Activity 2, use only one image (candlestick) to make it easier for children to remember and join in.

MAKING CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE DAY:

- Use -er and -est adjectives across the day. For example, today may be *cooler* than yesterday. Or Alexandra's hair may be the *longest* in the class today. Model how to use these types of adjectives.
- Adapt the simple refrain from the book as part of your naptime routine: *"And in that house (classroom) there is a bed (cot), a cozy bed (cot) in a napping house (school), where everyone is sleeping."*

- Offer the candlestick, baby chick, and popsicle stick images as an option for free play. Laminate these images and let children take this game outside too.
- Children's everyday routines occur in a pattern. Creating simple visual schedules can help children anticipate how their day will unfold. For many children, this practice makes them feel safe and secure. You can use the visual schedule to tell children the "story" of their day: in the morning, it will help them anticipate their day; as the routines are unfolding, the schedule helps them transition; and in the late afternoon, the schedule helps children remember what they did that day.
- Share stories with strong patterns and repetitive refrains. Consider books like: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* (Bill Martin, Jr.); *I Went Walking* (Sue Williams), *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Michael Hunt), *The Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly* (many authors, including Lucille Colandro), and more.
- Share songs and nursery rhymes with simple and repetitive patterns with children. Use these regularly across the week, for example, repeating a simple rhyme like *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* as part of the naptime routine. Over time, encourage children to chime in with key words and then full phrases.
- Use rhymes with patterns as a part of other routines—for example, the "Open, Shut Them" song/rhyme is a great one to try at meal and snack times as children are waiting for food. Many versions of the lyrics are available free online.
- While children are waiting in line (for example, to go outside or come back in), create a fun physical pattern for them to act out while they wait: Clap, Wiggle, Clap, Wiggle. Take suggestions from the children for new actions you can add to the pattern.

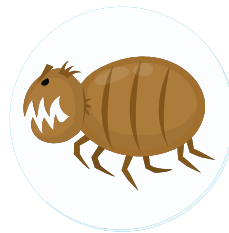
Song: *The Napping House Song*

- Share the following song with children: <https://bit.ly/4sbbD8h>
- Give children shakers to shake along with the tune. Model how to stand, shake, and dance along to the song.
- Use the images from this activity. Let children hold each of the characters and step forward when the musician is singing about "their" character. Alternatively, you can add hook-and-loop fasteners to the back of the images from this unit and turn this song into a feltboard activity, where children add characters to the feltboard as they come up in the song.

Handout 1: Story Images



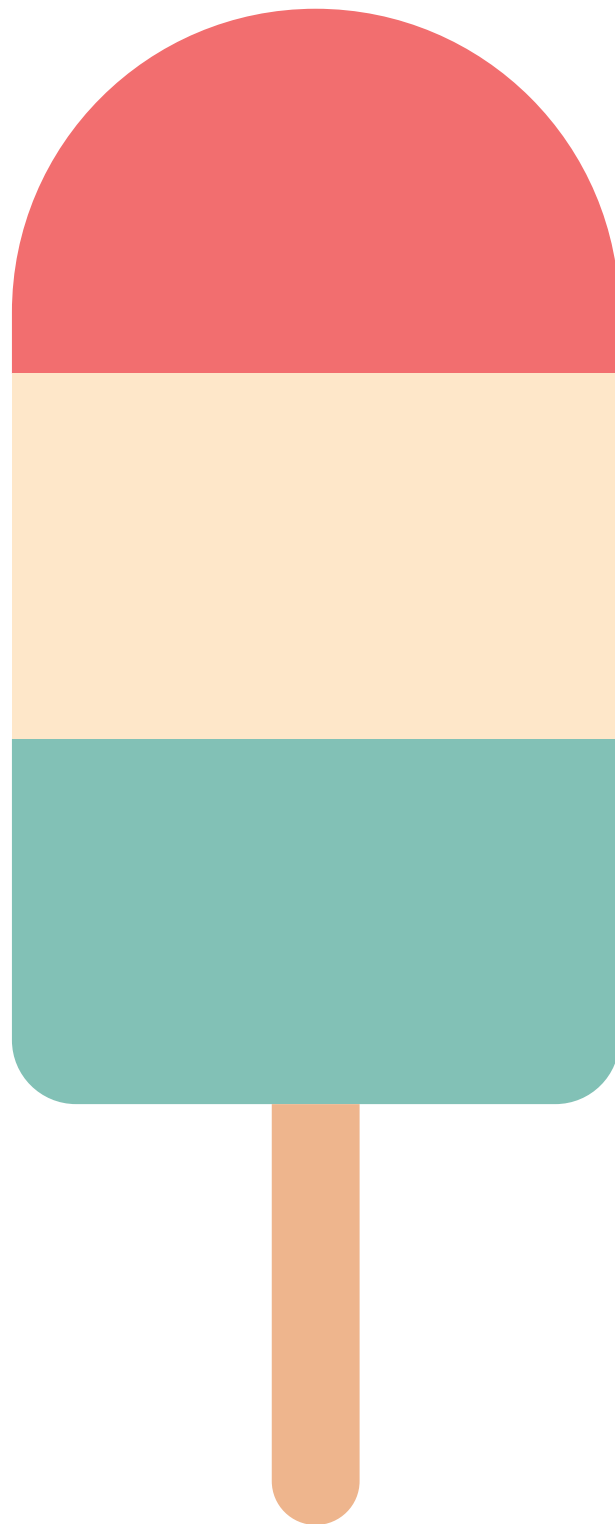


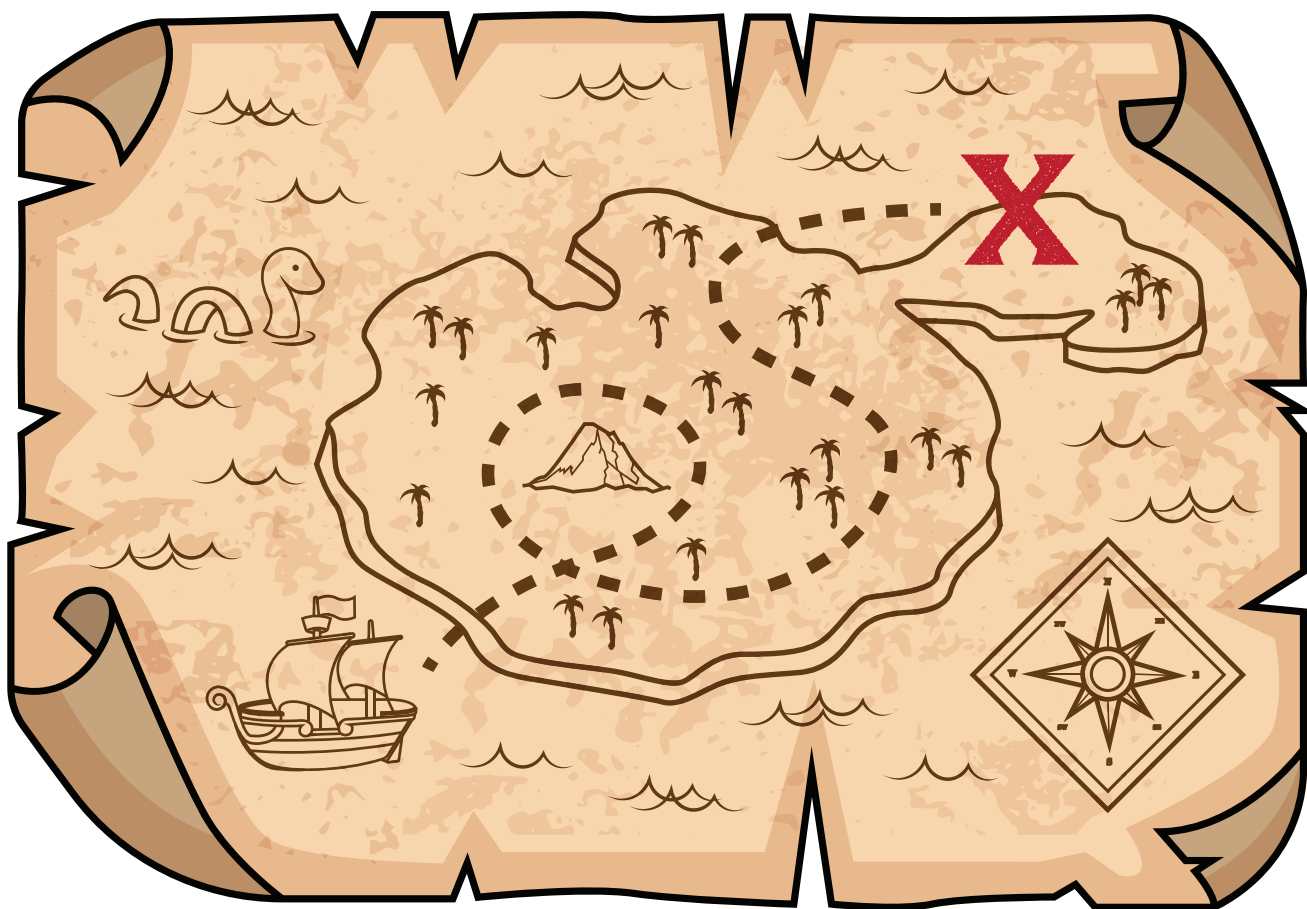


Handout 2: Rhyme Images



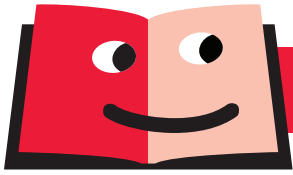












Playing with Patterns

This week, children repeated the patterns they heard in stories and rhymes. You can help them practice noticing and saying word patterns in everyday routines.

At bath-time, you can say the rhyme:

*Scrub-a-dub-dub,
It's time for the tub!*

Use this rhyme at every bath-time so your child can hear and remember it. Then, after you say the first line, you can pause and let your child fill in the last part!

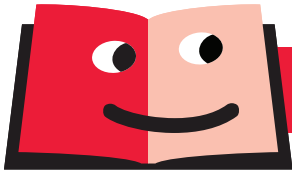
You can also share songs like *Wheels on the Bus*, which has a very predictable pattern. Over time, your child will become so familiar with this song that they will join in with sound effects or sing other parts of the song.

Think about adapting familiar songs to go along with daily routines like bedtime or tooth-brushing. The song *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* can be easily switched to:

*Brush, Brush, Brush Your Teeth,
It's really lots of fun,
Up and down, and all around,
Brush every single one!*



Rhymes and patterns make it fun for children to participate in daily routines! Using these rhyming patterns also teaches them new words and helps them learn important early literacy skills



Solo para familias

Jugar con patrones

Esta semana, los niños han repetido los patrones que han oído en cuentos y rimas. Usted puede ayudarlos a practicar si destaca y repite algunos patrones de palabras que se encuentran en las actividades cotidianas.

A la hora del baño, puede decir la rima:

*¡Bur- bu-burbujas,
Es hora de la diversión,
Con burbujas y jabón!*

¡Utilice esta rima a la hora del baño para que su hijo la oiga y la recuerde. Después de decir la primera línea, puede hacer una pausa y dejar que el niño complete la última parte!

También puede presentar canciones como *Las ruedas del autobús* [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsJpe6xK7Mo>], que tienen un patrón de palabras que se repiten y es muy fácil de predecir. Con el tiempo, su niño se familiarizará tanto con esta canción que acompañará su voz con efectos sonoros o cantará otras partes de la misma.

Piense en adaptar canciones conocidas para acompañar las rutinas diarias, como la hora de acostarse o de cepillarse los dientes. La canción *Rema, rema tu bote* [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ub7ihFrglY>]

Puede cambiarse fácilmente a:

*¡Cepilla, cepilla bien tus dientes,
Verás que es divertido,
Primero hacia arriba,
Luego hacia abajo y todo alrededor,
Cepíllalos todos muy bien!*

