

Hearing rhyme

Lesson 1 of 81 (ages 3-6) · Getting Ready · Ages 3-6 · about 10 min

GOAL

Your child can tell whether two spoken words rhyme.

WHY IT MATTERS

Hearing rhyme trains your child to notice the END of words. It is the same listening skill they will use later to spot word families (cat, hat, mat) when they start reading. It is all spoken: no letters yet.

YOU'LL NEED

- Nothing is required.
- Optional: 6-8 toys or pictures (a cat, a hat, a dog, a sun...).
- The lesson page on a phone or tablet, for the listening game.

LESSON FLOW about 10 minutes

1 min

Warm up

Say a nursery rhyme your child knows and pause before the rhyming word so they fill it in.

SAY | *"Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you... (are)!"*

2 min

Listen

Play cat, hat, pin, win on the lesson page. Stretch the end of each word when you repeat it.

SAY | *"Listen to the ends: c-AT, h-AT. They sound the same at the end. They rhyme!"*

2 min

Show how

Think out loud for the first two pairs so your child hears how you decide.

SAY | *"I'll say two words. If they rhyme, thumbs up. If not, thumbs down."
"Cat... hat. Both end in -at. Thumbs up!"
"Dog... sun. Dog ends in -og, sun ends in -un. Thumbs down."*

2 min

Do it together

Say the pairs in the answer key below. Your child shows thumbs up or down. Mix yes and no pairs so they can't just guess.

2 min

Play

Play the listening game on the lesson page. Your child hears two words and taps thumbs up or thumbs down.

1 min

Wrap up

Ask for one rhyme to take to dinner.

SAY | *"Can you tell Dad two words that rhyme at dinner tonight?"*

USE WITH THIS LESSON

- **This lesson online (listening + games)**
phonicsacademy.com/plan/session/awareness-hearing-rhyme
- **Printable: 5-Minute Daily Routine Card (PDF)**
phonicsacademy.com/printables/abc-phonics-5min-routine
- **Read: Phonological Awareness: 8-Level Progression with Ready Activities**
phonicsacademy.com/blog/phonological-awareness-activities
- **Read: Is My Child Ready to Read? 10 Signs of Reading Readiness**
phonicsacademy.com/blog/reading-readiness-checklist

ANSWER KEY

The same rounds as the online game, to play out loud with no screen. Tick each one your child gets on the first try.

#	SAY / SHOW	CHOICES	ANSWER	
1	"cat" ... "hat"	thumbs up / thumbs down	Rhymes (up)	☐
2	"dog" ... "sun"	thumbs up / thumbs down	No rhyme (down)	☐
3	"pin" ... "win"	thumbs up / thumbs down	Rhymes (up)	☐
4	"bed" ... "red"	thumbs up / thumbs down	Rhymes (up)	☐
5	"bus" ... "cup"	thumbs up / thumbs down	No rhyme (down)	☐
6	"fan" ... "van"	thumbs up / thumbs down	Rhymes (up)	☐

WATCH FOR common mix-ups and what to do

Says yes to words that START the same (sun / sock).	-> That's alliteration, not rhyme. Say both words slowly and lean hard on the ending: su-UN, so-OCK.
Says thumbs up to every pair.	-> Give 2-3 very different 'no' pairs in a row (cat / banana) so guessing stops working.
Loses interest after a few pairs.	-> Use toys: hold up two, say their names, and let your child decide by jumping (rhyme) or sitting (no rhyme).

TOO HARD? MAKE IT EASIER

Only use 'yes' pairs plus 'no' pairs that sound very different (cat / elephant). Say each pair twice.

TOO EASY? MAKE IT HARDER

Ask your child to invent a pair that rhymes, or use silly words: cat / zat, dog / mog.

HOW DID IT GO?

MY CHILD CAN...

- ☐ Says whether two words rhyme, at least 4 out of 6 times.
- ☐ Can explain 'they sound the same at the end'.

Date: _____

Colour in the stars:



Notes: _____