

Ideas and Inspiration for Phase 1 Phonics

Rhythm and Rhyme Phase 1 Kit (LT47636)



Why are rhythm and rhyme important in the Early Years?

Rhythm and rhyme are important building blocks for children in Early Years as they support them with skills to become confident, successful communicators, and eventually, readers.

The Rhythm and Rhyme Phase 1 Kit has been created to support Phase 1 Phonics, focussing on early listening and speaking, before moving on to developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

Activities that include elements of rhythm and rhyme help children tune into everyday sounds which lead on to the patterns and sounds of spoken language. By joining in with songs/nursery rhymes, clapping out beats, or spotting rhyming words, children begin to notice how language works – an important part of phonological awareness. These early experiences lay the foundations for future phonics and reading by helping children to hear and discriminate between sounds, identify syllables, and enjoy the playful nature of words.

Phase 1 Phonics covers seven aspects of sound:

- Environmental
- Instrumental
- Body sounds
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting



Rhythm and Rhyme Phase 1 Kit – Contents Checklist

Here is a list of the contents contained in your Rhythm and Rhyme Phase 1 Kit (please be aware that on rare occasions, contents may vary)

1 x Wooden Guiro



3 Pairs of Red Claves



1 Pair of Maracas



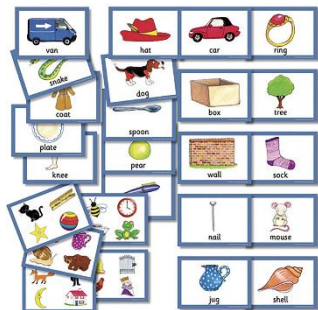
1 Rainstick



1 Set of Rhyming Bingo

Includes: 5 x A5 Playing Boards

20 Matching Cards



1 small wooden floor drum

(colour may vary)



1 set of Lower Case

Sea Grass Weaving Letters



Lowercase Alphabet

Paint Stampers



ACTIVITY 1: Rain Stick Rhythm

Time to explore and discuss

- Invite the children to explore the rain stick and listen carefully to the sound it makes.
- Encourage them to describe it using their own words – Is it a soft noise? Does it make a rattling noise? Is it a gentle sound?
- What does the sound remind the children of? Does it sound like rain or something else?

We're going on a sound hunt

- Take the children on a 'sound hunt' around your setting.
- Have they got their 'listening ears' on ready to find the sounds?
- Prompt children to listen for other similar soft, calming, or 'shhh' like sounds in the environment, both indoors and out.
- Can the children use their voices to mimic what they hear?

Extension

- Create a sound jar – Children can draw or find pictures of things that make a soft, similar sound.
- Add the ideas to the jar for future sound walks or listening game
- Although for this activity we have used the rain stick, why not repeat with other musical instruments that have different sounds.

Adapt

- For younger children, or those with limited language skills, start by using simple words like 'loud' or 'quiet' to describe sounds and pair with visual cue cards (rain, wind, someone whispering). To add a challenge, encourage the children to explore descriptive language, e.g., whispering or whooshing.

ACTIVITY 2: Drum and Move

Time to explore and discuss

- Explore different ways of playing the drum – fast, slow, loud, quiet.
- Play a beat on the drum and ask the children to listen to it carefully.
- Can the children copy the beat on another instrument such as claves or by using body percussion e.g. clapping their hands or stamping their feet?

Moving to the beat

- Ask children to move in time to the beat: stomp slowly to a slow beat, tiptoe to a quiet one, or march to a strong, steady rhythm.
- Get the children to take turns being the leader, making the beats and rhythms for other children to follow.

Extension

- Add a 'sound and move' storytelling element to the activity. Tell a simple action story (made up or from a book) e.g. 'We're going on a jungle adventure'. Use the drum or other instruments in the kit to represent changes in movement – fast beats for running, slow beats for tiptoeing, loud beats for stomping over a bridge. As you tell the story, prompt children to listen carefully and respond physically to the drum's rhythm. Add alliterative or onomatopoeic phrases for the children to repeat e.g. 'Tiptoe through the tall trees' or 'Stomp, stomp, splash!'

Adapt

- Use a range of instruments from the kit to represent different sounds. Can the children guess which instrument made the sound?
- For children who are less confident to move around in the group, offer puppets or handheld props to help them act out the movement. For more confident movers, add scarves or streamers for expressive play.

ACTIVITY 3: Maracas Sound Hunt

Time to explore and discuss

- Shake the maracas and explore the sound with the children.
- What sound do they make? Do they remind them of anything? Have they seen or heard maracas before?
- Can the children recreate the sound of maracas?

Hide and seek

- Explain to the children that today they are going to play a 'Hide and Seek' game but with a slight difference. Today, they will have to use their listening ears to find the sound.
- When children close their eyes, hide the maracas somewhere in the room (or outdoor area).
- Gently shake them as a clue.
- Can children listen carefully and pay attention to where the sound is coming from? Can they move towards where they heard the sound and find the maracas?

Extension

- Create a simple story or make some cards with images of sounds on such as a car beeping its horn, falling rain, creeping animals, rustling leaves or thunder and lightning. Can the children identify the sounds? Can they choose the ones that sound the most like the maracas and then add the sound effects to the story?

Adapt

- After incorporating one sound/instrument, add others. Challenge the children to match the instruments to the different images, finding the closest match.
- For quieter spaces or children sensitive to noise, wrap the maracas in soft material. For younger children, model the hand movements needed.

ACTIVITY 4: Guiro Echo

Time to explore and discuss

- Show the children and explain that it is an instrument called a guiro.
- Demonstrate how to play the instrument by scraping it in different ways - slowly and quickly, short and long strokes.
- Does the sound remind them of anything?

Guiro echo

- Invite the children to listen carefully, then copy the rhythm, pattern and sound using their voices – for example, ‘scritch-scratch!’ or ‘zzz-zip!’. Encourage them to take turns being the leader and creating the sound on the guiro for the other children to echo back.

Extension

- Challenge the children to invent a rhyme or short chant that matches their guiro pattern (e.g. ‘scritch-scratch, zip and zap, finish off with a tap!’)

Adapt

- For children needing more support, offer choices between two rhythms to copy. For those more confident, extend to include voice and movement echoes.

ACTIVITY 5: Claves Sound Patterns

Time to explore and discuss

- Demonstrate to the children how we can break up words into syllables. Say a word (exaggerating the syllables) and tap out the beats. How many beats did they hear? Repeat with words that include a different number of syllables.
- What happens when we say longer words?
- Can they think of words with just one beat? (Could have picture cards from Bingo game to choose from).

How many syllables in my name?

- Go to each child say their name out loud.
- Can the children clap or tap out the syllables in the names using the claves?
- To begin with the practitioner may need to model this before asking the children to guess and repeat.

Extension

- Add alliteration to the activity by adding an adjective in front of the children's name – Amazing Amy, Marvellous Mohammed. What happens to the number of the beats? Can build this into a counting activity.
- Add movement – clap, jump, or stomp in time with the syllables.

Adapt

- For some children, clapping out the syllables really doesn't help so ask them to put the top of their hand under the chin as they speak. This allows them to feel the movement of each syllable.
- Begin with one syllable words and gradually increase as confidence grows.

ACTIVITY 6: Weave the Sound

Time to explore and discuss

- Explain to the children the sounds they are weaving today. Can they copy the sounds?
- Ask if they can hear that sound at the beginning of any words they know?
- Say a few sounds together e.g. C-a-t. Can any of the children blend them together?

Weave the sound

- Once the children are familiar with the sound they are weaving e.g. 'b', can they go on a hunt for objects beginning with this sound? Each time they find an object, encourage them to say what they have found, 'b for ball', before weaving a piece of ribbon on their letter weaving frame. How many can they find?

Extension

- If some of the children are at the stage of orally blending words, try weaving those sounds together to make the word.
- When the children find the object, model playing with language by adding alliterative phrases – 'A big, bouncy, blue ball', or 'A friendly frog found in the forest'.
- Create a woven sound wall with matching pictures and objects.

Adapt

- Take lead from the children. At phase 1, some children will start to orally blend whilst others may need more repetition and practice before developing this skill.
- Use chunky ribbons for children who are developing fine motor skills.
- Use a variety of materials for those who are more confident, e.g. pipe cleaners, coloured string, different materials.

ACTIVITY 7: Stamp and Sound

Time to explore and discuss

- As you give stampers to the children, say the sound they have got. Can they say this sound?
- Can the children think of different words beginning with that sound?
- Say a silly sentence using the sound on the stamper - Silly sausages sizzle in slime! What do the children notice? Can they have a go?

Stamp a sound

- As children stamp the letter, can they say the sound out loud? At phase 1, children are still exploring sounds so the sound may have to be given to them.
- Can the children think of different objects beginning with that sound and draw them around their stamping patterns?

Extension

- Build a silly sentence together using alliteration e.g. Sammy snake slithered silently.

Adapt

- On the back of the stamper, where the letter sticker is visible, you could add a sticker so that the children can hear the word and initial letter e.g. on the 's' stamper a picture of a snake. These can be removed as the children start to recognise their individual graphemes in stage 2.
- Offer a set of picture prompts to sort by initial sound. Can the children place these next to the correct stamps they have created.
- Reduce visual load by limiting the number of stampers used.

ACTIVITY 8: Rhyming Bingo

Time to explore and discuss

- Say a few words that rhyme e.g. cat, hat, mat, rat – What do the children notice?
- Explain that these words sound similar and rhyme. Give another example – pin. Can the children work together to think of different words that rhyme with pin? These can be real or nonsense words.
- Can the children think of any words that don't rhyme with pin?

Rhyming bingo

- Explain the rules of bingo to the children.
- Choose a card and say the word out loud.
- Ask the children to see if they have a rhyming match on their bingo card.
- Say the pairs together to model if it rhymes or not and celebrate when they find a rhyming pair. Children can then cover up that image on their board.
- The first one to cover all their pictures wins the game.

Extension

- Can the children think of another rhyming word to go with the pair they already have? Can they make a rhyming string?

Adapt

- Use fewer options and start by exploring the rhyming words before playing the game.
- Add real objects or tactile cues to reinforce matching.
- For all the rhyming pairs used in Rhyming Bingo, see the resource card in this download.

ACTIVITY 9: Instrument Rhyme Time

Time to explore and discuss

- Explore rhyming words with the children. This might be through a story or rhyme or by making silly strings of rhyming words.
- What do the children notice about rhyming words?

Instrument rhyme time

- Explain to the children that they are going to play a rhyming game on so to get ready by putting their listening ears on.
- Ask the children to choose two different instruments from the kit e.g. drum and maracas.
- Choose two children to be the rhyme spotters – each one with either the drum or maracas.
- Explain that they are going to hear two different words. If the words rhyme, they beat the drum, if they don't rhyme, they shake the maracas.
- Choose different children to be responsible for the instruments for each pair of words.
- To ensure no-one is left out, the other children could have a card to show their friends what they think – e.g. a thumbs up and thumbs down card.

Extension

- Let children choose the instruments and take turns leading.
- Choose longer and more complex rhyming words.

Adapt

- Use visual cards for extra support.

ACTIVITY 10: Guess the Instrument

Time to explore and discuss

- Pass round the different instruments (claves, guiro, drum and rain stick) for the children to explore.
- How are the sounds similar or different?
- Do the sounds remind them of anything?
- Can they recreate the sounds using their bodies or mouths?

Guess the instrument

- Once the children are familiar with the instruments and the sounds they make, ask them to put on their listening ears ready to listen for the sound.
- Place the instruments inside a box, under a blanket or behind a screen so that the children can't see them.
- Choose a child to carefully make a sound of one of the instruments.
- Can the children guess which instrument made the sound?

Extension

- Add a wider range of instruments so that there are more choices to guess from.

Adapt

- Have fewer or more instruments.
- Give children picture cards of the instruments so they can choose the one they think is being played.
- Mix it up by having recordings on a recordable device of environmental sounds.
- Play more than one instrument so that children have to use their memory skills.

Resource Card for Rhyming Bingo

On bingo playing board 1 are pictures of a bee, clock, boat and a frog – Matching bingo rhyming images are a tree, sock, coat and dog.

On bingo playing board 2 are pictures of a bell, gate, hen and a king – Matching bingo rhyming images are a shell, plate, pen and ring.

On bingo playing board 3 are pictures of a fox, man, moon and a house – Matching bingo rhyming images are a box, van, spoon and mouse.

On bingo playing board 4 are pictures of a cat, peg, star and a ball – Matching bingo rhyming images are a hat, leg, car and a wall.

On bingo playing board 5 are pictures of a cake, mug, snail and bear – Matching bingo rhyming images are a snake, jug, nail and a pear.