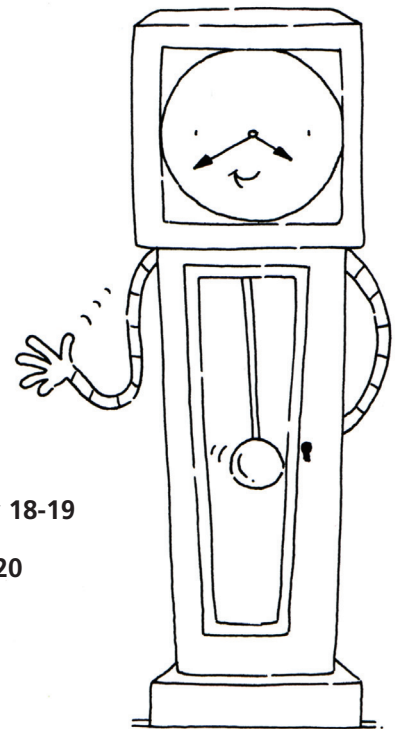


Planning for Learning through Nursery rhymes

by Rachel Sparks Linfield. Illustrated by Cathy Hughes

Contents

Making plans	2-3
Using the 'Early Learning Goals'	4-7
Theme 1: Humpty Dumpty	8-9
Theme 2: Little Miss Muffet	10-11
Theme 3: Jack and Jill	12-13
Theme 4: The Grand Old Duke of York	14-15
Theme 5: Hickory, Dickory, Dock	16-17
Theme 6: Little Bo Peep and the Nursery Rhyme Day	18-19
Bringing it all together – 'Nursery Rhyme Day'	20
Resources	21
Collecting evidence of children's learning	22
Activity overview	23
Home links	24
Family page	Inside back cover



Published by Practical Pre-School Books, A Division of MA Education Ltd,
St Jude's Church, Dulwich Road, Herne Hill, London, SE24 0PB Tel: 020 7738 5454
www.practicalpreschoolbooks.com

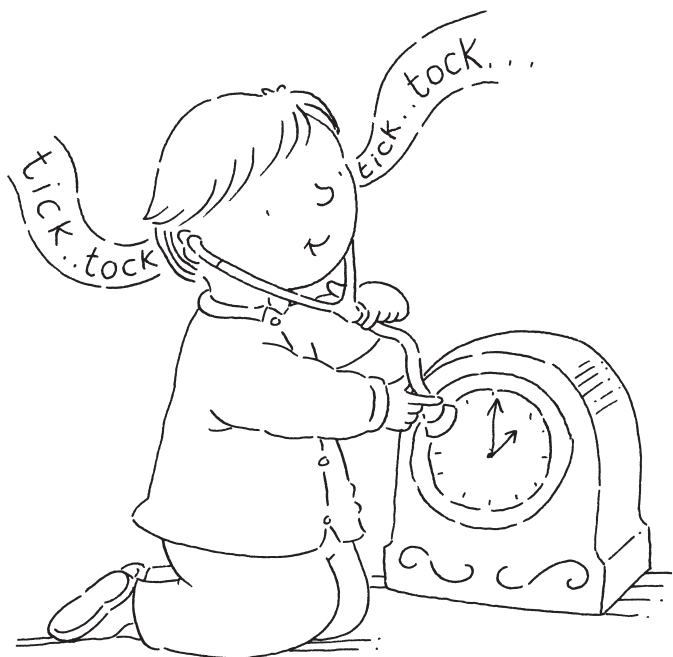
Revised (3rd edition) © MA Education Ltd 2013. Reprinted 2012. Revised edition © MA Education Ltd 2008.
First edition © Step Forward Publishing Limited 2001

Front cover and back cover images taken by Lucie Carlier © MA Education Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopied or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Planning for Learning through Nursery rhymes ISBN: 978-909280-35-9

Making plans



Child-friendly planning

The purpose of planning is to make sure that all children enjoy a broad and balanced experience of learning. Planning should be flexible, useful and child-friendly. It should reflect opportunities available both indoors and outside. Plans form part of a planning cycle in which practitioners make observations, assess and plan.

Children benefit from reflective planning that takes into account the children's current interests and abilities and also allows them to take the next steps in their learning. Plans should make provision for activity that promotes learning and a desire to imagine, observe, communicate, experiment, investigate and create.

Plans should include a variety of types of activity. Some will be adult-initiated or adult-led, that focus on key skills or concepts. These should be balanced with opportunities for child-initiated activity where the children take a key role in the planning. In addition there is a need to plan for the on-going continuous provision areas such as construction, sand and water, malleable materials, small world, listening area, role-play and mark-making. Thought also needs to be given to the enhanced provision whereby an extra resource or change may enable further exploration, development and learning.

The outdoor environment provides valuable opportunities for children's learning. It is vital that plans value the use of outdoor space.

The UK Frameworks

Within the UK a number of frameworks exist to outline the provision that children should be entitled to receive. Whilst a variety of terms and labels are used to describe the Areas of Learning there are key principles which are common to each document. For example they advocate that practitioners' planning should be personal based on observations and knowledge of the specific children within a setting. They acknowledge that young children learn best when there is scope for child-initiated activity. In addition it is accepted that young children's learning is holistic. Although within the documents Areas of Learning are presented separately to ensure that key areas are not over-looked, within settings, children's learning will combine areas. Thus the Areas of Learning are perhaps of most use for planning, assessment and recording.

Focused area plans

The plans you make for each day will outline areas of continuous provision and focused, adult-led activities. Plans for focused-area activities need to include aspects such as:

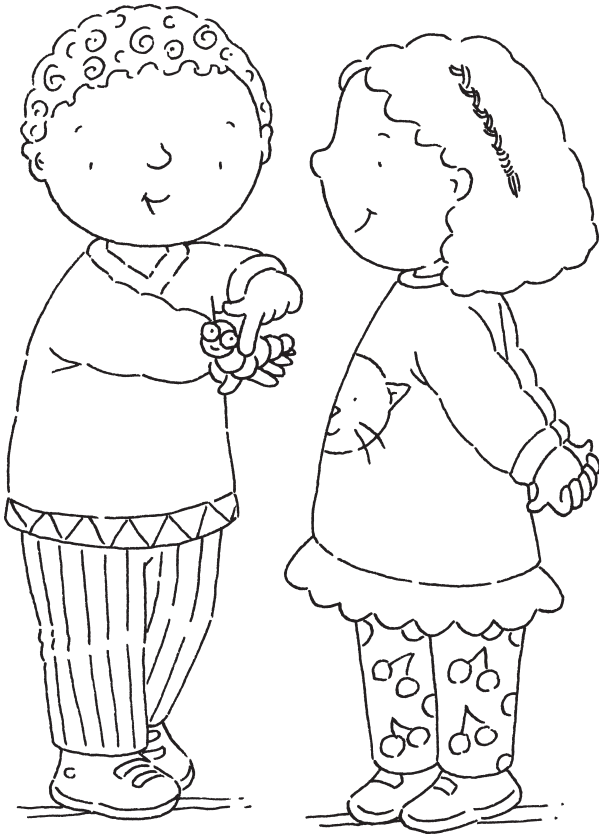
- resources needed;
- the way in which you might introduce activities;
- individual needs;
- the organisation of adult help;
- size of the group;
- timing;
- safety;
- key vocabulary.

Identify the learning and the Early Learning Goals that each activity is intended to promote. Make a note of any assessments or observations that you are likely to carry out. After carrying out the activities, make notes on your plans to say what was particularly successful, or any changes you would make another time.

A final note

Planning should be seen as flexible. Not all groups meet every day, and not all children attend every day. Any part of the plan can be used independently, stretched over a longer period or condensed to meet the needs of any group. You will almost certainly adapt the activities as children respond

Using the 'Early Learning Goals'



The principles that are common to each of the United Kingdom curriculum frameworks for the early years are described on page 2. It is vital that, when planning for children within a setting, practitioners are familiar with the relevant framework's content and organisation for areas of learning. Regardless however, of whether a child attends a setting in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales they have a right to provision for all areas of learning. The children should experience activities which encourage them to develop their communication and language; personal, social, emotional, physical, mathematical and creative skills. They should have opportunities within literacy and be encouraged to understand and explore their world.

Within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012), Communication and Language; Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development are described as Prime Areas of Learning that are 'particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive' (page 4, DfE 2012). The Specific Areas of Learning are Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

For each Area of Learning the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) describe what children are expected to be able to do by the time they enter Year 1. These goals, detailed on pages 4 to 7, have been used throughout this book to show how activities relating to 'Nursery rhymes' could link to these expectations. For example, for Personal, Social and Emotional Development one aim relates to the development of children's 'self-confidence and self-awareness'. Activities suggested which provide the opportunity for children to do this have the reference PSE1. This will enable you to see which parts of the Early Learning Goals are covered for a given theme and to plan for areas to be revisited and developed.

In addition, an activity may be carried out to develop a range of different Early Learning Goals. For example, when thinking about Little Bo Peep children might make Lost Sheep Posters and use writing skills to develop their literacy. In addition, through using a pencil they will develop their pincer grip and, as a result develop physically. Thus, whilst adult-focused activities may have clearly defined goals at the planning stage, it must be remembered that as children take on ideas and initiate their own learning and activities, goals may change.

The Prime Areas of Learning

Communication and Language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity. (CL1)

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events. (CL2)

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events. (CL3)

'Nursery rhymes' provide many opportunities for children to enjoy listening, understanding and speaking. When

the children use rhymes that feature spiders, or listen to a book being read, they will develop skills for CL1. Games such as ‘From the top of the hill I can see...’, and making Humpty Dumpty stick puppets, encourage both speaking and listening as well as require the children to follow instructions. Times spent speaking about sounds which frighten people, or feelings when something is broken, will allow children to develop their understanding and provide occasions for children to ask and answer questions.

Physical Development

Moving and handling: children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing. (PD1)

Health and self-care: children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently. (PD2)

‘Nursery rhymes’ offer many opportunities for children to enjoy movement activities and to handle tools and equipment. When children climb like Humpty Dumpty, or move like Miss Muffet’s spider, they can develop and demonstrate control and co-ordination. Activities such as using pencils to draw spiders’ webs, making mice and sheep with dough or throwing beanbags into Jack and Jill’s bucket will help to develop children’s ability to use equipment and fine motor skills. Areas such as basic hygiene and going to the toilet independently, however, will be part of on-going, daily activity and, as a result, PD2 is not used within the described activities for Physical Development.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-confidence and self-awareness: children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don’t need help. (PSE1)

Managing feelings and behaviour: children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others’ behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride. (PSE2)

Making relationships: children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another’s ideas

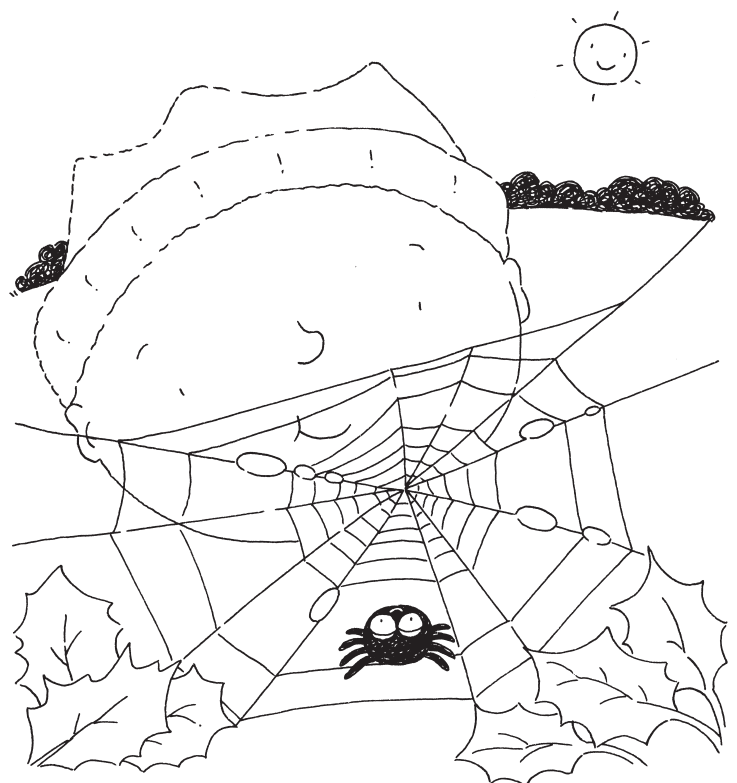
about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others’ needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children. (PSE3)

‘Nursery rhymes’ offer many opportunities, both for child-initiated and adult-led activities, which will develop children personally, socially and emotionally. When discussing how to mend Humpty Dumpty, or views that the Grand Old Duke of York might have seen, children can develop self-confidence and self-awareness. Times spent considering how to carry water safely, or feelings when something is lost or broken, will give children the opportunity to manage feelings and behaviour. Role-play as Jack and Jill, or being a nursery rhyme character in a doctor’s surgery, will develop relationships. Many of the areas described within the ELGs for Personal, Social and Emotional Development though, will be covered on an almost incidental basis. Any activity that involves collaboration will help children to build relationships whilst self-confidence can be promoted through activities that allow children to show initiative and follow their own trains of thought.

The Specific Areas of Learning

Literacy

Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read. (L1)



Theme 1: Humpty Dumpty

Communication and Language

- Talk about feelings children have when something is broken (see activity opposite). (CL3)
- Encourage children to follow instructions to make Humpty Dumpty stick puppets from egg shaped card stuck to lolly sticks. Use the puppets to tell stories about Humpty Dumpty. (CL2, 3)

Physical Development

- Humpty Dumpty hurt himself when he fell from the wall. Talk about the need to bend knees when jumping and how to land safely. Enjoy practising jumping. Encourage children to make short and long jumps, high and low ones, quick and slow jumps. (PD1, 2)
- Use malleable materials to make models of Humpty Dumpty. (PD1)
- Use climbing equipment to enjoy pretending to climb walls. (PD1)
- Provide each child with a picture of Humpty Dumpty sitting on a large brick wall. Encourage children to use the wall to practise down strokes as they fill the bricks with brightly coloured vertical lines. (PD1)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 'All the king's horses and all the king's men, Couldn't put Humpty together again'. As a group, brainstorm ideas for how the king's men could mend Humpty Dumpty. (PSE1)
- Set up the role-play area as a doctor's surgery for nursery rhyme characters. In the waiting area, put out a range of nursery rhyme books. Ask children to suggest ideas for which characters might need to make a visit. Encourage them to visit the surgery in role as a nursery rhyme character. (PSE3)

Literacy

- Enjoy making new names for Humpty Dumpty by changing the initial letters (see activity opposite). (L2)
- Begin a word bank of words which rhyme with 'wall'. Help children to realise that by changing the initial sound the word changes. Ask the children to write the words on pairs of cards and use them to play pelmanism and other matching games. (L1, 2)

Mathematics

- Use egg cupfuls of water to estimate, to measure and to compare the capacity of a variety of plastic containers. (M2)

- Use a range of construction toys, multi-link cubes, empty boxes, and so on, to make walls for Humpty Dumpty to sit on. Count the number of bricks in each wall. Compare the heights of the walls and arrange them in order of height. (M1, 2)
- Provide each child with a wall drawn on A4 sized card where a number has been written on each brick. In turn, children shake a die and cover up the brick which matches the number thrown. If no brick shows the thrown number, the turn is missed. The winner is the first player to cover all their bricks. (M1)

Understanding the World

- Grow cress in washed, half egg-shells on soaked kitchen towel. Observe the cress each day and make sure that the kitchen towel is always kept damp. Once the cress has grown, decorate the egg shells with felt-pens to turn them into Humpty Dumpty egg heads. (UW2)
- Humpty Dumpty broke when he fell. Ask children to suggest what sorts of materials break when they are dropped. Make a collection of objects which do not break when dropped such as a ball, a teddy bear and a plastic cup. Ask children to examine the objects and to think of reasons why they can be dropped safely. (UW2)
- Humpty Dumpty was shaped like an egg. Use the Internet and picture books to find out information about animals which hatch from eggs. (UW2, 3)

Expressive Arts and Design

- Provide each child with a Humpty Dumpty shape cut from a piece of A3 sized card. Encourage the children to use a variety of fabrics and papers to turn the shape into a Humpty Dumpty. (EAD2)
- Invite children to make a wall from cereal boxes which have been turned inside out and painted. Display the Humpty Dumpty collages on the wall. (EAD1)

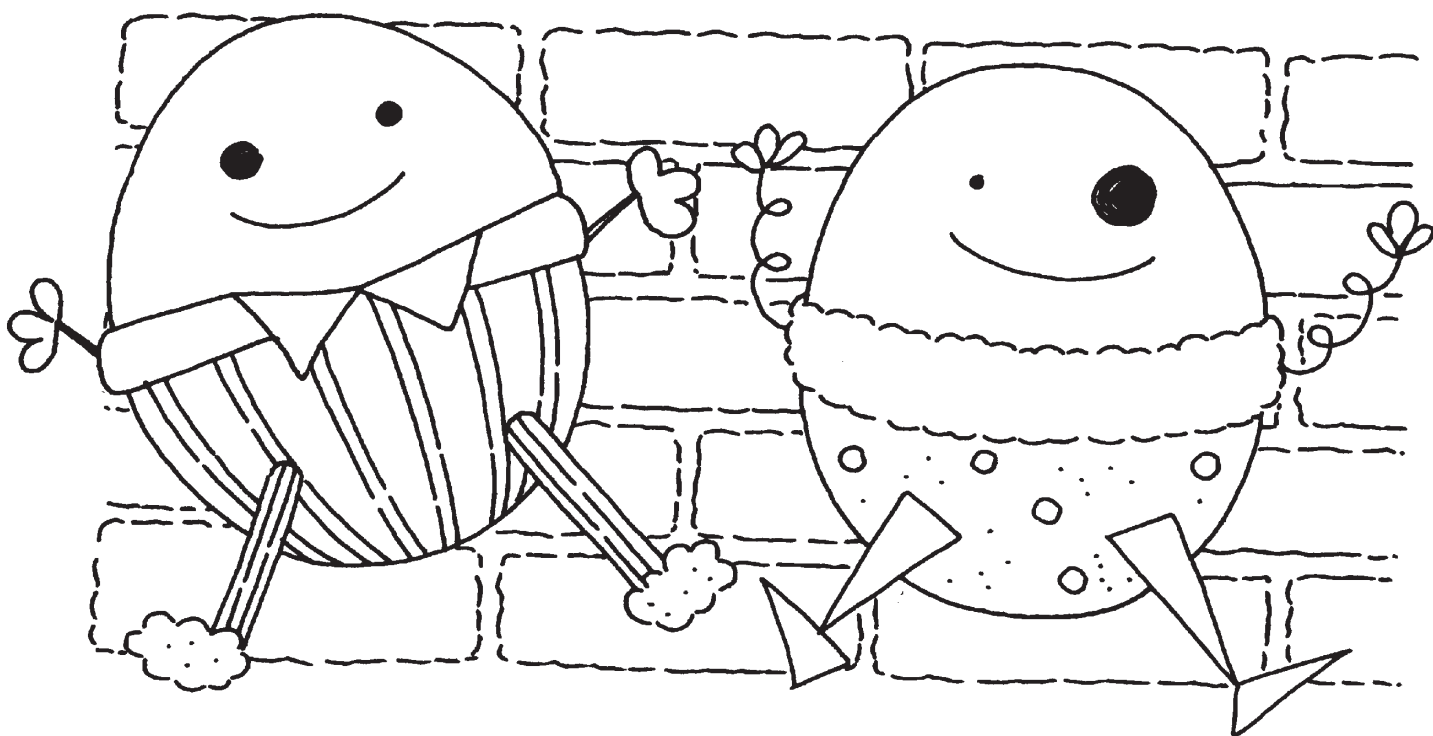
Activity: Talking about breaking something

Learning opportunity: Talking with confidence about feelings.

Early Learning Goal: Communication and Language. Speaking

Resources: A broken toy in a box.

Key vocabulary: Broken, break, mend, feel.



Organisation: Whole group sitting comfortably on the floor.

What to do: Show children the box which contains the broken toy. Shake the box and ask children to listen to the sounds they hear. Can they guess what is in the box? Remove one piece of the broken toy and show it to the group. What is it? What has it come from? Show the group all the pieces. Explain that they used to be a toy but now it is broken. How do children think that the toy was broken? Could it be mended? Finish by inviting children to talk about their feelings when they break something and also, what they should do if they find something broken.

What to do: Begin by looking at a big book version of 'Humpty Dumpty' and enjoy reciting the nursery rhyme, as a group, at a variety of speeds. Explain to the group that they are going to make a new rhyme by changing Humpty Dumpty's name. Show children the B alphabet card. Ask them what Humpty Dumpty's name would be if it began with the 'b' sound. Fill in the letters on a name strip to show Bumpty Dumpty. Encourage children to suggest other rhyming names and scribe these on name strips. Break into smaller groups and provide each child with an A4 piece of paper on which '_umpty _umpty' is written. Invite children to make their own new name and to draw a picture of their new nursery rhyme character. Make up stories about the new characters.

Activity: Making new names for Humpty Dumpty

Learning opportunity: Experimenting with rhyming words.

Early Learning Goal: Literacy. Writing.

Resources: Large strips of card with the words 'umpty umpty' written on them; thick-tipped felt-pen; area for displaying the name cards; large poster of the alphabet or cards with the letters written on; A4 paper; a big book version of Humpty Dumpty.

Key vocabulary: Humpty Dumpty, beginning, start.

Organisation: Whole group sitting comfortably on the floor for the introduction. Small groups at tables for the written activity.

Display

Display the Humpty Dumpty collages on the cereal packet brick wall. Invite children to choose a name which rhymes with Humpty Dumpty to be placed near their collage. On a large piece of paper, write out the nursery rhyme and mount it near the display. Encourage children to read the name labels and to count the number of bricks in the wall and the Humpty Dumpty's.