



For grades
K-1

The Bookworm

From your
local library
and Idaho's Read
to Me program

February 2011

Playing with Words

Some words rhyme, and some words begin with the same sound. Sentences are made up of words and words can be broken down into smaller parts. Children who begin to notice these things are developing *phonological awareness*, which means being able to hear and work with the sounds in a spoken language.

Research shows that how easily children learn to read can depend on how much phonological awareness they have. Here's what you can do:

- Ask whether two words rhyme: "Do 'cat' and 'hat' sound alike?" "Do 'cat' and 'dog' rhyme?"
- Sing songs with your child every day. Songs naturally break words into syllables and are a fun way to learn about word sounds.
- Point out sentences where all the words begin with the same letter (The fat frog fell on Friday).
- Put two words together to make a new word: "What word would we have if we put 'cow' and 'boy' together?"
- Take words apart. "What little words do you hear in 'hotdog'? (see 'Word Play' on page 2)
- Leave out the last rhyming word. For example: Twinkle, twinkle, little star, How I wonder what you _____, (are). Do this with other rhymes, poems and songs that your child knows by heart.
- Say rhymes and sing songs in the language that is most comfortable for you.

Book of the Month

Big Chickens Fly the Coop, by Leslie Helakoski

When four farmyard chickens begin to feel like they need to spread their wings a bit, they decide to go find the farmhouse to check things out. They must face pouncing dogs, roaring tractors, and wild horses along their journey... to find that the farmhouse was right next to the coop!



Other Big Chicken books:

Big Chickens, 2006

Big Chickens Go to Town, 2010



Some good books to help your child play with words...

Rhyming books

Dr. Seuss books

Books that illustrate a familiar song

Books with a rhythm or beat

Books with words that begin with the same sound (wokka-wokka; chicken cheeks)

Some favorites...

How Do You Wokka-Wokka? Elizabeth Bluemle

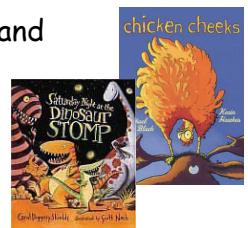
Chicken Cheeks, Michael Ian Black

Saturday Night at the Dinosaur Stomp, Carol Diggory Shields

Down by the Station, Will Hillenbrand

Tanka Tanka Skunk, Steve Webb

Mouse Mess, Linnea Asplind



More fun with *Big Chickens...*

Word play... There are lots of great compound words in this book- two little words that make a new word, such as "cowboy". Try this with your child: "Say farmhouse. Now say it without the 'farm'. Say farmyard. Now say it without the 'yard'." Other compound words: doghouse, heartbeat, partway, tiptoe, someone, anytime.

Rhyme time... Re-read one of the pages with rhymes. Ask your child, "What words rhyme with 'flounced'? How about 'crashed'?"

More great chicken books...

Chicken Little, Rebecca and Ed Emberley

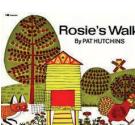
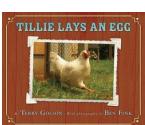
Rosie's Walk, Pat Hutchins

First the Egg, Laura Vaccaro Seeger

Little Red Hen, Paul Galdone

Tillie Lays an Egg, Terry Blonder Golson

Louise, the Adventures of a Chicken, Kate DiCamillo



Recognizing Reading Problems

By: *Reading Rockets* (2007)

Learning to read is a challenge for many kids, but most can become good readers if they get the right help. Parents have an important job in recognizing when a child is struggling and knowing how to find help.

What to look for:

- Difficulty rhyming
- Difficulty hearing individual sounds
- Difficulty following directions
- Difficulty re-telling a story
- Struggles to sound out most words
- Avoids reading aloud

If you think your school-age child is struggling with learning to read, talk to her teacher sooner rather than later. The school can provide free support if needed!

Word Play On-line

Here are some websites that can help your school-age child play with words and build phonological awareness:

PBS Kids

Between the Lions: <http://pbskids.org/lions/index.html>

Games: Chicken Stackers, Fuzzy Lion Ears, Blending Bowl, Dub Cubs, Monkey Match, Theo's Puzzles

The Electric Company: <http://pbskids.org/electriccompany/>

Games: Combotronic, Chain Game, Say What Scholastic

Learning Arcade: www.scholastic.com/parents/play/games/

Games: Sound Match, Make a Word, Rhyme Time



What your library can do for you...

Don't have access to a computer? Most libraries do not require a library card in order to use the computers. Some even offer free computer classes.

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