I hope you enjoy this booklet which is full of rhymes for families to enjoy together. Nursery rhymes and poems are an important part of childhood and are fun to share.

Young children learn best through play, and you’ll find that your child will love the rhyme, rhythm and repetition and will soon join in the actions with you.

Learning rhymes together, especially when all the family get involved, helps children to feel confident with words and to become good listeners. It will also help them as they begin to learn to read.

Above all, sharing rhymes with your child, wherever and whenever, is a pleasurable way to build a loving relationship and help your child develop a lifelong love of poems, songs and stories.

Julia Donaldson
Julia Donaldson
Waterstones Children’s Laureate 2011–13
Let’s get this rocket started
The engine runs on rhyme
Poems are its fuel
They get us there on time

Stand to attention – yes
Do your final checks – check
Go to the toilet – flush
Then we’re ready on the deck

Don’t forget your seat belt
It’s going to be fast
Switch, click, push, twist
It’s going to be a blast

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Blast off!
Oh the grand old Duke of York
He had ten thousand men
He marched them up to the top of the hill
And he marched them down again
And when they were up, they were up
And when they were down, they were down
And when they were only half way up
They were neither up nor down
By Paul Cookson

Hubble bubble double lubble
Aliens from Planet Trouble

Watch us wriggle, bounce and play
We love making mess all day
See us giggle – see us laugh
Pouring custard in the bath

Hubble bubble double lubble
Aliens from Planet Trouble

Pots and pans on our heads
Jumping high on our beds
We like to chomp on lots of chocolates
Jelly, ice cream, sweaty socks!

Hubble bubble double lubble
Aliens from Planet Trouble
Twinkle, twinkle, little star
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle, twinkle, little star
How I wonder what you are

When the blazing sun is gone
When he nothing shines upon
Then you show your little light
Twinkle twinkle all the night
Twinkle twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are

Twinkle, twinkle, little star
How I wonder what you are
Steam train trip

By Michael Rosen

We’re on a steam train trip
We’re on a steam train trip
Listen to the whistle blow
Pip! Pip! Pip!

Listen to our steam train
Chuff chuff chuff
Listen to our steam train
Puff puff puff

We wave out the window
We wave to the cars
And when it starts getting dark
We wave to the stars

Chuff chuff chuff chuff
Puff puff puff puff
Pip-pip, pip-pip, pip-pip
Wheeeeeeeeee
Pat a cake, pat a cake baker’s man
Bake me a cake as fast as you can
Prick it and pat it and mark it with ‘B’
And put it in the oven for baby and me
For baby and me, for baby and me
Put it in the oven for baby and me
Four jolly pirates
By Coral Rumble

Four jolly pirates
Splashing in a puddle,
Under big umbrellas
In a pirate huddle.

Four jolly pirates
Wobbling their bellies,
Singing a sea shanty
In their pirate wellies.

Four jolly pirates
Going splish and splat,
Catching tiny raindrops
In their crossbones hats.

Four jolly pirates
Dancing on a plank,
Shivering their timbers
And getting very damp.

Four jolly pirates
See the sun break through,
Then sail into the distance
To do what pirates do.
When walking in my jungle...

By Stewart Henderson

When walking in my jungle
The strangest things you’ll see –
Like a health and safety helmet
On a swinging chimpanzee

Where the python’s somehow managed
To tie itself in knots
And the butterfingers leopard…
Who went and dropped its spots

Where the nervous alligator
Is wearing water wings
Where the wasp is so much nicer now
Because… it no longer stings

But one animal is still the same
With its terrible aroma –
One whiff of skunk, one sniff of skunk…
...And you’ll end up in a coma...
Top tips

Your child loves the sound of your voice, so don’t worry if you don’t think you can sing, relax and have fun together.

Nursery rhymes are a great way of soothing a tired or upset child and for settling your child down at bedtime.

Why not visit the library to borrow rhyming books or CDs?

Share rhymes and poems every day and help your child to develop their speaking and listening skills.

Give your child plenty of time to join in and learn the actions to the rhymes.

When your child does join in, give them lots of encouragement, cuddles and smiles.

Visit the CBeebies and Bookstart websites to have more fun with rhymes and poems.

bbc.co.uk/cbeebies
bookstart.org.uk/have-some-fun
The Rhyme Rocket blasts back onto CBeebies in the summer, for more information visit: bbc.co.uk/cbeebies

Published by BBC Learning
Bridge House
MediaCityUK
Salford Quays M50 2BH
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Song words for Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, Pat A Cake and The Grand Old Duke Of York reproduced from the album “Traditional Nursery Rhymes” by permission of CYP Music Limited, The Fairway, Harlow CM18 6LY.

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Rhyme Rocket graphics: Liquid TV
Rhyme illustrations: Andy Walker
Photography: Chris Capstick
Design: red-stone.com