

Parenting Education Lesson Plan for *A Tree for Me*

Name of Activity: Discovering Rhythm and Rhyme

Students Participating; size of group: Family members in any size group. These activities can also be done individually during a home visit.

Lesson Goal: Participants will learn how to provide enjoyable [phonemic awareness](#) and conversation experiences for their children while reading and discussing the featured book.

Learning Objectives/Skills: The learners will be able to:

- a) Extend their expertise in reading varied books by fluently reading a children's book in a manner that emphasizes the rhythm and rhyme.
- b) Implement a turn-taking strategy that involves identifying places in the story where children will be most able to join in and read some words.
- c) Suggest re-reading strategies that involve children in meaningful, pleasant conversations about the storybook.

Environmental Adaptations, Time & Materials Needed: This activity can be conducted in a home or a group setting. Participants will need a space for reading and writing; otherwise no particular room arrangements are required. The leader should practice reading the book aloud so that the rhythm flows easily, and words are properly emphasized. Click here for specific [read aloud hints](#). Activities will take from 25 to 35 minutes depending on group size and amount of discussion and practice time. This lesson could be divided into two 20-minute sessions, emphasizing the first two objectives during the first session and the third objective during the second session.

The following materials are needed:

- Copies of *A Tree for Me* for leader and for each family.
- Pre-folded [bookmarks](#), for leader and for each family. Click [here](#) for bookmark folding directions.
- Pre-made [sample bookmark](#).
- Pencils or pens for note taking.

Procedure/Description of the Activity:

1. Introduction: Gather families and briefly discuss their memories of favorite childhood rhymes, such as jump rope and counting out rhymes. Point out that rhyme and rhythm help children learn important language skills. Distribute copies of the book, *A Tree for Me*. Tell parents that this book is a perfect choice for helping their children learn to listen for the rhythm of speech and to recognize words that rhyme. Research shows that these skills especially help children learn to read. Optional: You might want to note that these skills are part of [phonemic awareness](#).

2. Catch the rhythm. Read through the book as participants follow along. Invite them to enjoy and listen for the rhythm and the rhyming words. Tell participants that when their children catch the rhythm, they will want to join in and read. Explain that you can emphasize the rhythm by clapping, foot tapping, etc. as you read. Ask for other suggestions from participants, and decide on a way to mark the rhythm. Then, ask participants to read along and mark the rhythm (e.g., clap) while you reread the book. Choose a speed that suits your participants. It is easy to stumble over some of the lines, so plan on repeating and practicing sections where needed.

3. Find the rhymes. Ask participants if they noticed any rhyming words as they read the story. If necessary provide guidance in identifying words such as tree, me, free; tiptop, stop; mistaken, taken; etc. Optional: point out that words that end alike are called word families; and that children learn to read them by focusing on the first letters.

4. Demonstrate using the rhymes for turn taking during reading. Tell participants that when children have heard a rhyming story read a time or two, they can often guess and fill in the rhyming word at the end of a line. In that way, they are taking a turn to read. Demonstrate this technique by reading the page with the Owl in the tree. Point under the print as you read:

One owl nesting,
golly gee!

No room for **me**

in this ol' . . . (Stop reading but point under the word, *tree*, and wait for the listeners to fill it in. Show them how to prompt if their child doesn't say the word).

Remind parents to praise and affirm their children when they say the right word: "Wow! You read that word!" "Yes, what word did you read?" "Yes, **me** and **tree** rhyme."

5. Practice. Ask parents to find other places in the text where their children can fill in the rhyming words. Praise their efforts. Have participants practice this strategy with a partner, making sure that everyone gets an opportunity to be the reader. Circulate and give feedback.

6. Conversations During Rereading. Show the sample of the [folded-paper bookmark](#) and demonstrate two ways to use it.
- a. Like most bookmarks, it can be used to hold under the lines of print as you read to your child. If we do this now and then, it will help children learn to read from top to bottom, to pay attention to print, and to recognize phrases of print. Demonstrate this by reading a page from the book while using the side of the bookmark that has an arrow on it.
 - b. It will also remind us of ways to talk about the book after reading it—an important part of reading to our children. Distribute copies of the folded paper bookmark, and ask participants to open it and read over the list of conversation starters with you. Ask which ones they think would work with their children. Solicit their other suggestions. Encourage them to write their own ideas on the list.
7. Wrap-up. The leader should review the many good ideas participants had, and encourage them to try the various techniques with their children. Solicit questions and suggestions. Encourage participants to report on their successes at the next meeting.

Assessment:

For Informal Assessment

Objective	Participant's Names	Comments
a) Reads in a manner that emphasizes rhythm and rhyme.		
b) Implements turn-taking strategy and identifies places in the story where it can be use.		
c) Recognizes and suggests rereading strategies that involve children in meaningful, pleasant storybook conversations.		

Transfer Home/Extension Ideas: 1. Suggest that parents make [simple shakers](#) that their children can use for keeping rhythm as they read the book together.
 2. Encourage parents to emphasize rhythm and rhyme as they read other books to their children. Gather a selection of rhyming books for parents to borrow. Some examples are *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* By B. Martin, *Clap Your Hands* by L. Cauley, *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss, *Chicka-Chicka Boom Boom* by B. Martin, *Possum Come a Knockin'* by Nancy Van Laan.

Literacy Area(s)* Addressed (check all that apply):

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|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>The Power and Pleasure of Literacy</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>The Literate Environment</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Language Development</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Phonological Awareness</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Phonemic Awareness</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Types of Text</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Letters and Words</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Vocabulary</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Knowledge of Print</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Building Knowledge & Comprehension</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reading Comprehension</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Motivation</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Fluency</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Multiple Literacy</i> | |

* from National Center for Family Literacy's *Building Strong Readers and Learning to Read and Write*

phonemic awareness--This is an important skill that helps children learn to read. Phonemes are the sounds letters make in words. When children pay attention to the letter sounds within words, we say they have phonemic awareness. If your child can hear the separate sounds in words, it will help her learn to read and spell better.

Songs and poems are great ways to learn phonemic awareness. You can also help by playing with the sounds in words, as you and your child talk together. Try some of these activities:

- Make up silly rhymes with your child-- "hamburger, bamburger, slamburger."
- Show your child how to make words longer by adding an ending-- "We are *running*, and *talking*, and *laughing*. Soon we will be *eating*, *sleeping*, *snoring*."
- Try to say some words backwards-- "Daysun, Daymon, Daytues."