

# Poetry Power— Nursery Rhymes

*A collection of nursery rhymes  
by various authors*



Nursery rhymes selected  
and learning activities  
written by Mindi Eldredge

Illustrated by Lisa Dzierzon

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The following nursery rhymes were written by

“Hi! Hi! Who will buy” (page 6) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Peter, popper, dopper Dan” (page 7) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Mary had a little lamb” (page 12) by Sarah Josepha Hale

“Put down your pillow under the willow” (page 14) by Leroy F. Jackson

“We have a little garden” (page 15) by Beatrix Potter

“Wee Willy Winkie runs through the town” (page 21) by William Miller

“There are plenty feathers on a hen” (page 25) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Some one told Maria Ann” (pages 34–35) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Catch a floater, catch an eel” (page 38) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Jolly Jinks, the sailor man” (page 39) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Through fog and rain” (page 49) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Where monkeys and seals” (page 53) by Leroy F. Jackson

“What does little birdie say” (pages 56–57) by Alfred Tennyson

“Oh, where do you come from” (page 58) by Ann Hawkshaw

“Where are you going, you little pig?” (page 60) by Thomas Hood

“A candle, a candle” (page 63) by Leroy F. Jackson

“Twinkle, twinkle, little star” (pages 64–65) by Jane Taylor

The remaining nursery rhymes were written by unknown authors.

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# Reading this Book with Your Child



Nursery rhymes can be a powerful tool used to develop prereading skills in children. When learning to read, children who have a strong phonological awareness are far more likely to do so with ease. Phonological awareness is a cognizance of the sounds associated with spoken language. A child with a strong phonological awareness is able to easily identify and produce rhyming words and words that start with the same sound. They are also able to identify individual words in a sentence, as well as syllables and individual sounds within a word.

Through listening to rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, and other word patterns common in nursery rhymes, children begin to develop phonological awareness in a fun and engaging way. This beautifully illustrated book provides not only many fun nursery rhymes but also additional activities that will build and strengthen your child's phonological awareness even more. For best use, follow these guidelines when reading this book to your child:

1. Your child's first few exposures to this book should be to the nursery rhymes and illustrations only. If your child is especially young (three years old or younger), you may wish to read this book many times over the course of months or even years before introducing the additional activities.
2. Once your child is very familiar with the nursery rhymes in this book, you may begin to introduce the activities included throughout. Pay close attention to the cue's your child gives you in order to gauge whether to continue an activity and when to introduce additional activities. For example, if your child resists or acts uninterested, now may not be the right time to continue the activity. Wait several months before trying again. In contrast, if your child is engaged, having fun, and picks up on the activity quickly, you may wish to introduce an additional activity in one day. In general, though, an activity will take returning to over and over and with different nursery rhymes throughout the book for the child to fully develop the skill. Oftentimes the child will need a lot of assistance and example-giving the first couple times an activity is played.

The following activities are found throughout the book:

**Hear with Your Ear:** Follow the prompts to help your child identify beginning sounds and rhyming words.

**I Spy:** Look for items shown in the pictures that start with a certain sound or that rhyme with a certain word.

**Rhyme Time:** Use the rhymes in the poems to demonstrate rhyming words. Then come up with additional words that rhyme.

**Rhythm Rider:** With the child, clap, tap, or even gallop to the rhythm of the poem.

**Say It Slowly—Say It Fast:** Say the word slowly, accentuating each individual sound. Then have the child say the word back to you quickly with the sounds all together.

**Wandering Words:** See if your child can use the rhyming clues to come up with the word in the rhyme that you don't say.

*Mindi Eldredge*

Donkey, donkey, old and gray,  
Open your mouth and gently bray;  
Lift your ears and blow your horn  
To wake the world this sleepy morn.



### Rhythm Rider

Clap or tap out the rhythm of “Baa, baa, black sheep” with the child. The child may also enjoy galloping to the rhythm.

Once the child is very familiar with feeling the rhythm of poetry, you may try the same activity with the poem “Donkey, Donkey.”





Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?  
Yes, sir, yes, sir, three bags full:  
One for my master, one for my dame,  
And one for the little boy who lives in our lane.  
Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?  
Yes, sir, yes, sir, three bags full.

Sing a song of sixpence,  
Pockets full of rye;  
Four and twenty blackbirds  
Baked in a pie.  
When the pie  
was opened,  
The birds began  
to sing;  
Was not that a  
dainty dish  
To set before the king?



The king was in his countinghouse,  
Counting out his money;  
The queen was in the parlour,  
Eating bread and honey;




The maid was in the garden,  
Hanging out the clothes.  
Down came a blackbird  
And snapped off her nose.

## Hear with Your Ear

Can you hear with your ear what sound “sing,” “song,” and “sixpence” start with?

Can you think of any other words that start with the /s/ sound? Let’s read the nursery rhyme again to see if we can find any others.



A young boy with dark hair, wearing a white shirt and tan shorts, is climbing a large, brown tree. He is reaching up with his right hand towards a bright yellow crescent moon. In the dark blue night sky, there are several planets: a red planet with white clouds, a blue planet with a ring, and a green planet. The background is filled with white stars and falling leaves.

Peter, popper, dopper, Dan,  
Catch a moonbeam if you can;  
Climb a cedar ten feet high  
And pick the planets from the sky.  
You're a wonder, little man—  
Peter, popper, dopper, Dan.

### Rhyme Time

“Hi,” “buy,” and “sky” all rhyme.  
What else rhymes with “hi”?

“Dan,” “can,” and “man” all rhyme.  
What else rhymes with “Dan”?



Put down your pillow under the willow,  
Hang up your hat in the sun,  
And lie down to snooze as long as you choose,  
For the plowing and sowing are done.



Pick up your pillow from under the willow,  
And clamber out into the sun.  
Get a fork and a rake for goodness' sake,  
For the harvest time has begun.



Old King Cole  
Was a merry old soul,  
And a merry old soul was he;  
He called for his cup,  
And he called for his bowl,  
And he called for his fiddlers three.



Every fiddler, he had a fiddle,  
And a very fine fiddle had he;  
“Twee tweedle dee, tweedle dee,” went the fiddlers.  
Oh, there’s none so rare,  
As can compare  
With King Cole and his fiddlers three!



### Rhyme Time

“Cole,” “soul,” and “bowl” all rhyme.  
What else rhymes with “Cole”?

“He,” “dee,” and “three” all rhyme.  
What else rhymes with “he”?

Tom, Tom, was a piper's son,  
He learn'd to play when he was young;  
But the only tune that he could play,  
Was "Over the hills and far away."

Tom with his pipe made such a noise,  
That he pleased both the girls and boys;  
They'd dance and skip while he did play,  
"Over the hills and far away."



### I Spy

I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with "dig." Can you find it?

I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with "tower." Can you find it?

I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with "now." Can you find it?

Tom with his pipe did play with such skill,  
That those who heard him could never keep still;  
As soon as he play'd they began for to dance,  
Even pigs on their hind-legs would after him prance.

And as Dolly was milking her cow one day,  
Tom took out his pipe and began to play;  
So Dolly and the cow, they danc'd a lilt,  
Till the pail fell down and the milk was all spilt.

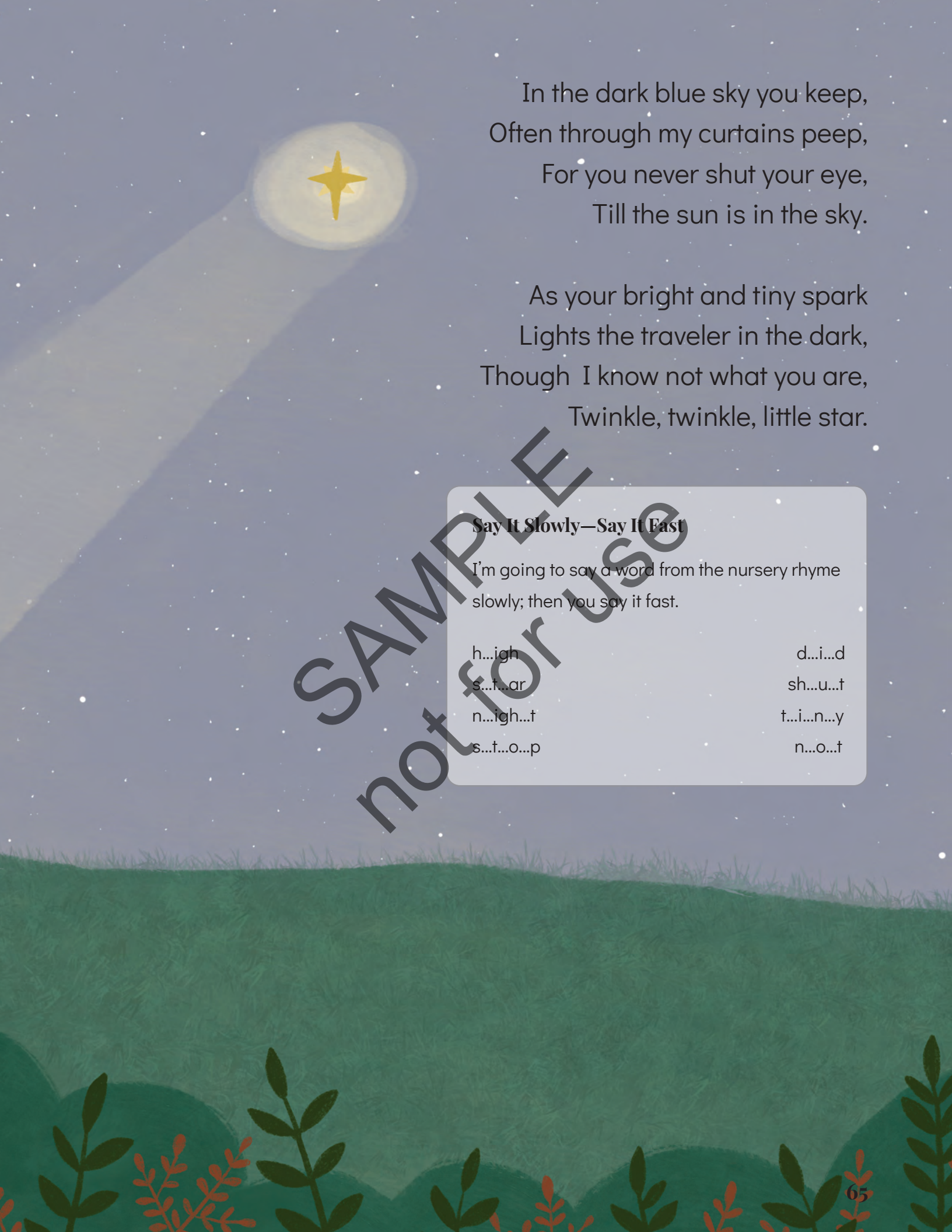


Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are!  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is gone,  
When he nothing shines upon,  
Then you show your little light,  
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

Then the traveler in the dark  
Thanks you for your tiny spark:  
How could he see where to go,  
If you did not twinkle so?





In the dark blue sky you keep,  
Often through my curtains peep,  
For you never shut your eye,  
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark  
Lights the traveler in the dark,  
Though I know not what you are,  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

**Say It Slowly—Say It Fast**

I'm going to say a word from the nursery rhyme  
slowly; then you say it fast.

h...igh

d...i...d

s...t...ar

sh...u...t

n...igh...t

t...i...n...y

s...t...o...p

n...o...t



prereading skills



beginning reading skills



strengthening reading skills



analyzing reading skills



analyzing and critiquing literature

Sharing nursery rhymes with your child can be such an enjoyable experience for both parent and child. But is enjoyment the only thing that comes from nursery rhymes? No! Nursery rhymes are built through rhyme, rhythm, and alliteration, which are some of the key building blocks in preparing your child to begin reading. So enjoy these nursery rhymes again and again with your child and know that you are preparing him or her for future success in reading!

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