

Boa Constrictors, Candlesticks, and Jumping Elephants: Having Fun With Rhymes

Primary Objectives

15a. Notices and discriminates rhyme

Why It's Important

Children enjoy hearing and playing with the sounds of language. Rhyming words in stories, poems, songs, and fingerplays will help your child build an awareness of the sound structure of spoken language.

Materials

Poems with predictable rhymes, such as “The Boa Constrictor” from *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein

What You Do

1. Ask your child if he has ever heard of a boa constrictor. Tell him it is a very big snake. If you can find a picture of one, show him so that he can better understand what it looks like. If you are using a different poem, discuss with your child any unfamiliar words that may be in the poem.
2. Read the poem to your child, emphasizing the rhyming words.
3. Read the poem again. Leave out the rhyming words, giving your child time to fill them in.
Oh gee, it's up to my _____.
4. Continue reading the poem and leaving out rhyming words for as long as your child is interested. Encourage him to think of other rhyming words that would fit in the poem.