

Bookbug Session: Friendship

Sharing familiar songs, rhymes and stories together can help children forge and sustain friendships, support them to participate in groups and help with turn-taking. They can also help them name, understand and regulate their emotions.

Click each song / rhyme to visit the Bookbug [Song and Rhyme Library](#) where you will find a video, tips and lyrics.

1. Introduction song

Hello

Benefits

Makes everyone feel welcome – children can participate in any way they can e.g. tap, clap, jump or even hum along.

Tips

If you have a small group, personalise the song by including the children's names. If you know [Makaton](#) you can support this song with signs. Use this song at circle time or when children arrive at nursery / class.

2. Action Rhyme

Two Little Dicky Birds

Benefits

The simple story of the birds flying away and coming back helps children understand feelings of missing someone and the joy of their return, fostering emotional understanding and a sense of security. Finger play can also improve fine motor skills, dexterity and hand eye coordination.

Tips

Children love to giggle so have fun changing the words! Make up your own verses like: 'Two little caterpillars sitting on a leaf. One called Brian, one called Keith' or 'Two little Dicky Birds sitting on a cloud, one called Quiet, and one called Loud!' To boost finger dexterity, try using different fingers.

3. Action Rhyme

Ickle Ockle Blue Bottle

Benefits

This is a great rhyme for encouraging bonding and attachment between children by smiling, clapping and making funny faces. Games involving rhythm and keeping a

steady beat by clapping, marching etc. can benefit children's language and future literacy skills.

Tips

Children face each other. They say the rhyme and alternate clapping their hands together and clapping their friend's hands on the beat. They could end with a silly or funny face. Try different emotions e.g. sad, angry, surprised etc.

4. Action Song

Here We Go On Our Ponies

Benefits

This active song is great for getting wee people chatting to one another. 'Who shall we say hello to today?' It can be sung in pairs or as part of a larger group, where everyone travels around the room on their ponies, saying hello.

Tips

Why not swap 'ponies' for 'diggers'? What sounds and actions might diggers make as their drivers stop to say hello to one another? Repeat a few times – what kind of day is it? Sunny? Rainy? Happy? At the stop section, can they stand really still?

5. Transition song

I wonder what's in my bag today?

Benefits

The picture book is in the bag and as you sing the song, can they guess what story it will be today? This song can build anticipation, focus and attention of the children. You can use the bag for other props e.g. teddies, puppets etc.

Sing the song to the tune of '*Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*'

I wonder what's in my bag today, bag today, bag today

I wonder what's in my bag today, come and look,

At our favourite book.

Tips

You can use **Makaton** to support different communication needs. Use the bag and song for other props e.g. teddies, puppets, objects etc. perhaps linked to the picture book you've chosen to share.

6. Book

Runaway Cone by Morag Hood

Benefits

Runaway Cone is a brilliantly funny book to read together. It's about friendship and going above and beyond to get the gang together again. Encourage wee ones to predict where Gary the traffic cone might be, and talk about what the characters' facial expressions tell us about how they feel. Enjoy discussing their friendships, too.

Tips

Practise beforehand and think about what you can do with your voice to bring the story to life. Engage wee people by telling them it's an exciting story all about a traffic cone that goes walkabout, and all the adventures his friends go on to find him. Encourage participation by asking questions, making sounds like the helicopter in the sky or repeating fun phrases together.

7. Calm Song

What do you see?

Benefits

This is a great one to sing when you're out and about. Sing this song as you both look at the world around you, drawing your wee one's attention to all the different things they can see.

Tips

Encourage your wee one to join in with the song, giving them time and space to share what or who they can see around them. This could be on the way to the shops or nursery or just looking out a window. Can they spot any of the things from the story?

8. Soothing Song

Sleep Tight

Benefits

Lullabies help children develop language skills through rhythm, repetition, and soothing melodies while strengthening emotional bonds with others. They promote relaxation and reducing stress, which supports healthy brain development. Lullabies also enhance listening skills, memory, and emotional regulation, creating a comforting routine that fosters security and well-being.

Tips

Sing this some a few times, encouraging wee ones to have a cuddle with their grown-up or with a teddy, or even a friend. Hum it for an extra calming impact.

11. Final Song

Goodbye Song

Benefits

Tells everyone the session is coming to an end.

Tips

Wave, smile and use names. If you know [Makaton](#) you can support

this song with signs. You could also sing this song at the end of the nursery / school day.