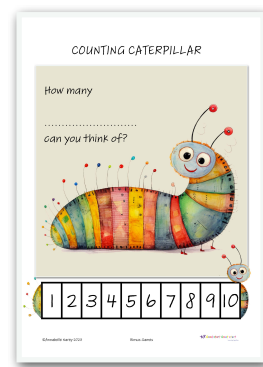




## BONUS GAMES



These bonus games are both available free to download from [www.goodstartgreatstart.com](http://www.goodstartgreatstart.com)

Children in the early years benefit from hands-on experiences that help them organise and make sense of information. Through the simple and playful activities of **Counting Caterpillar** and **Funky Monkey Rhyme Time** children can strengthen a number of skills which are essential for future learning.

Both games are designed to be played with the support of an adult. This is a key educational strategy of encouraging learning through guided play and interaction which helps children strengthen skills just beyond their independent capabilities..

### Bonus game 1: COUNTING CATERPILLAR

Counting Caterpillar focuses on categorisation, memory and recall along with some simple mathematical processes of quantity, number recognition and numerical order. Counting Caterpillar also supports WORKING MEMORY - the ability to hold and manipulate information in the mind - which is crucial for reasoning, comprehension, and problem-solving, along with RECOGNITION MEMORY, where children identify patterns and familiar objects, and RECALL MEMORY, where they retrieve information to complete tasks. Additionally, the game encourages children to categorise objects, fostering critical thinking and sorting skills that lay the foundation for later concepts in science and math. By helping young learners to develop numeracy skills through counting and recognising numbers up to 10, "Counting Caterpillar" also consolidates core skills for more formal learning.

### Bonus game 2: FUNKY MONKEY RHYME TIME



This game focuses on recognising rhyme and collecting rhyming pairs.

More information about the importance rhyme plays in children's learning and development can be found on the following page.



## WHY RHYMING IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

Rhyming is more than just fun—it's an important step in your child's language and literacy development. When children play with rhyming words, they learn to hear patterns in sounds, which helps them recognise words when they start reading. Research shows that children who understand rhyming tend to become stronger readers because they develop "PHONEMIC AWARENESS"—this is the ability to hear and break words into sounds. This skill makes it easier to sound out new words, build vocabulary, and improve spelling.

### Top Tips for Encouraging Rhyming at Home



Here are some simple and fun ways to help your child develop rhyming skills:

- ★ **Read Rhyming Books** – Books with rhymes help children hear and predict patterns in language. Encourage them to join in on the rhymes as you read!
- ★ **Sing Songs and Say Nursery Rhymes** – Classic songs like "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" or "The Wheels on the Bus" have rhyming words that make learning fun and interactive.
- ★ **Play Rhyming Games** – Try simple games like "What rhymes with cat?" and encourage your child to come up with as many rhyming words as they can.
- ★ **Make up Silly Rhymes** – Have fun creating nonsense rhymes together, like "The cat in the hat sat on a mat with a bat!" Playing with words in a playful way helps children develop confidence in language.
- ★ **Use Everyday Moments** – Turn everyday situations into rhyming fun! For example, while getting dressed, you could say, "Let's find something that rhymes with sock—rock!"
- ★ **Clap It Out** – Help your child hear the rhythm of words by clapping along to rhyming pairs, making it a fun, hands-on experience.

### Making Rhyming a Daily Habit



The best way to help your child develop rhyming skills is through regular, playful exposure. Whether through bedtime stories, car ride sing-alongs, or silly word games, these small moments add up to big learning gains. The more your child hears and plays with rhymes, the stronger their early reading skills will become.

So, have fun times with rhymes and watch your child's language skills grow!



# FUNKY MONKEY RHYME TIME

The aim is for your child to become super confident, find the game easy and eventually to be able to take the lead themselves.



bee / tree  
sock / rock  
pan / man  
fish / dish  
car / star  
dog / frog  
bun / sun  
pen / hen  
pig / dig

house / mouse  
coat / goat  
cake / snake  
cat / hat  
spoon / moon  
jug / bug  
bear / pear  
fox / box  
pig / dig



## HOW TO PLAY

- Cut out the rhyming cards and familiarise yourselves with the spoken words for each picture by just looking through the cards and naming the object or action:
- Choose two rhyming cards. (For example: **pear** and **bear**).
- Hold up a card, (for example: the **bear**) - and place the **pear** card face up in the blue cloud.
- Say to your child: "I am a **bear**" place the card in the first box and say: "and I rhyme with...?"
- Pause to let your child look at the picture card in the cloud and get them to put it into the box to complete the rhyme. "I am a **bear** and I rhyme with **pear**"
- Say the rhyme if your child seems uncertain. Repeat the rhyme together.
- Give the rhyming pictures to your child to look after on their play board and introduce another set of cards.
- Keep the game interesting and just play for a short time.
- Allow your child to put the rhyme cards away when you are finished.
- Over time complete matching all the rhyme cards at least once.
- When you feel your child is ready the game can be made a little more challenging by putting a selection of two or more picture cards into the cloud. When you can see that they understand the rhymes with growing confidence let your child take more of a lead and play with the cards on their own.
- Another way to play is just to place all the rhyming pictures face up on the table and take turns to find a rhyming pair.

## WALKING AND TALKING

- Play this game when you are out on a walk. See how many rhyming words you can remember.
- Always say the rhyme for your child if they seem at all uncertain.
- Say the words in a rhythm as you walk along.
- The aim is to build up confidence and physical movement can help with new learning.

## TOP TIP:

Say or make up other words that rhyme too.

Making up nonsense rhyming words is an extremely useful skill which helps to build literacy skills

## WHY PLAY?

- Rhyme is an important element in the foundation for literacy.
- Being able to identify and generate rhyme helps to strengthen an essential linguistic knowledge and understanding which underpins future skills in communication, vocabulary, reading and spelling.







THE CHATTER - BOX



FUNKY MONKEY  
RHYME TIME



# Funky Monkey Rhyme Time



I am a....

and I rhyme with....



# Funky Monkey Rhyme Time

I am a...

and I rhyme with....

