

## Perfect poems and rhymes for 3-7 year olds to read aloud

All the old favourite nursery rhymes are excellent choices for learning to recite or sing by heart, such as:

Mary Had a Little Lamb  
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star  
Humpty Dumpty  
Jack and Jill  
Baa Baa Black Sheep  
Ring a Ring of Roses  
Hey Diddle Diddle  
Bobby Shaftoe  
Hush Little Baby  
Oranges and Lemons  
I Had a Little Nut Tree  
Hickory Dickory Dock  
London Bridge is Falling Down  
The Grand Old Duke of York  
The Wheels on the Bus  
Three Blind Mice  
Incy Wincy Spider  
Sing a Song of Sixpence  
I'm a Little Teapot

Several have strong counting themes:

One, Two, Three, Four, Five – Once I Caught  
A Fish Alive  
Five Little Speckled Frogs  
This Old Man  
Ten Green Bottles  
Five Little Ducks  
Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer  
Five Currant Buns in The Baker's Shop



Some traditional rhymes are spoken:

### **Little Jack Horner**

Little Jack Horner sat in a corner,  
Eating a Christmas pie;  
He put in his thumb, and pulled out a plum,  
And said, 'What a good boy am I!'

### **Little Miss Muffet**

Little Miss Muffet,  
Sat on a tuffet,  
Eating her curds and whey.  
Along came a spider, who sat down beside  
her,  
And frightened Miss Muffet away.

### **Two Little Dicky Birds**

Two little dicky birds  
Sat on a wall,  
One called Peter,  
One called Paul.  
Fly away, Peter,  
Fly away, Paul!  
Come back, Peter,  
Come back, Paul.

### **Wee Willie Winkie**

Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town,  
Upstairs and downstairs, in his night-gown,  
Rapping at the window, crying through the  
lock:



## The Wise Old Owl

There was an old owl who lived in an oak;  
The more he heard, the less he spoke.  
The less he spoke, the more he heard,  
Why aren't we like that wise old bird?

## Doctor Foster

Doctor Foster went to Gloucester,  
In a shower of rain;  
He stepped in a puddle right up to his  
middle,  
And never went there again.

## The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe

There was an old woman who lived in a  
shoe,  
She had so many children she didn't know  
what to do;  
She gave them some broth without any  
bread,  
Kissed them all soundly and sent them to  
bed.

'Are the children in their beds, for it's past  
eight o'clock.'

## Peter Piper

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper,  
A peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper  
picked;  
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled  
pepper,  
Where's the peck of pickled pepper Peter  
Piper picked?

## This Little Piggy

This little piggy went to market,  
This little piggy stayed home,  
This little piggy had roast beef,  
This little piggy had none,  
And this little piggy cried "wee wee wee" all  
the way home

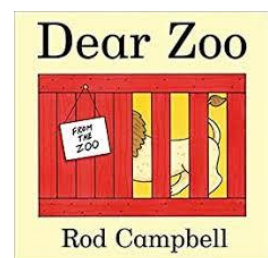
Some more poetry for Year 1 and 2:

Cats Sleep Anywhere – by Eleanor Farjeon  
The Ning, Nang, Nong by Spike Milligan

This is the House that Jack Built  
The Engine Driver by Clive Sansom

There are many favourite story picture books that feature poetry and rhyme, or have strong repetitive elements, for children in this age range. Here are just a few:

Sharing a Shell – Julia Donaldson  
There's a Mouse in My House – Ross Collins  
Jellicle Cats: The Song of the Jellicles – T.S. Eliot  
Each Peach Pear Plum – Janet and Allan Ahlberg  
A Squash and A Squeeze – Julia Donaldson  
Dear Zoo – Rod Campbell  
Barnyard Dance! Sandra Boynton  
I Love You, Goodnight – Jon Buller & Susan Schade



A few ideas for how to liven up learning poems and rhymes:

- make up actions or act out parts of the poem or story
  - giving voices to different characters
- play missing word: adult recites and misses out words for child to fill in
  - draw a sequence of picture clues to help memory
- recite a line each with another person: take turns and swap

