

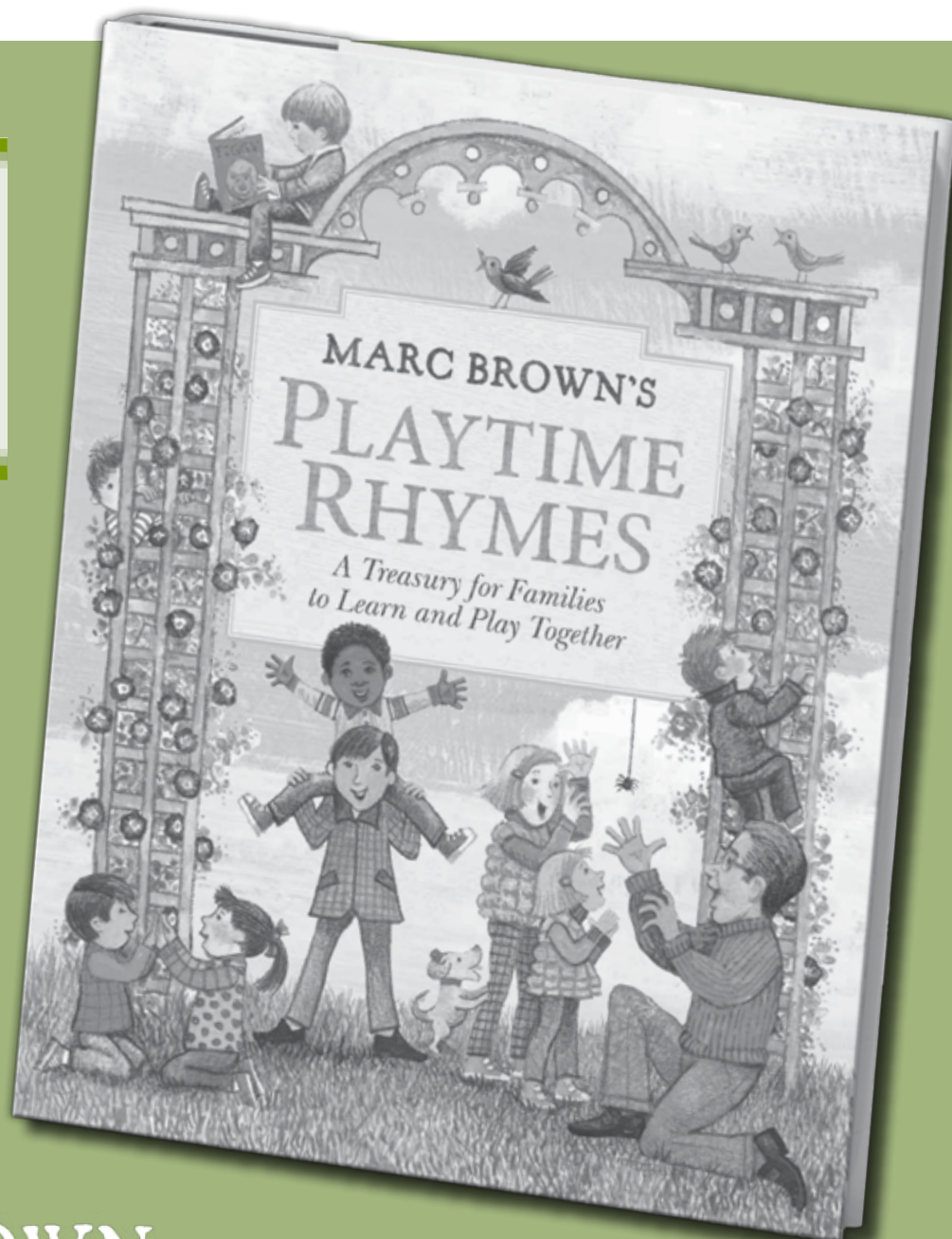
educator's guide

# MARC BROWN'S PLAYTIME RHYMES

## Curriculum connections

❖ Nursery Rhymes

Ages: 3 to 6



by

MARC BROWN

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### Hear the Rhymes

One component of phonological awareness is the ability to hear and produce rhymes. Many children innately have the ability to hear rhymes, but for students who struggle with this skill, explicit teaching using the selections from *Playtime Rhymes* can be helpful. Depending on students' developmental levels, the following onset-rime awareness tasks may be used. Begin with spoken word recognition. Choose two words from the selection and ask if they rhyme: *bed, head*. If they do, have students stand up or stomp their feet. As students master the ability to determine if two words rhyme, move on to rhyme oddity tasks: *Which word does not rhyme: (bed, head, monkey)?* As each word is said slowly, students can use a thumbs-down signal for the word that does not rhyme. Once students can recognize and identify rhymes, they will be well on their way to producing their own rhymes: *What are some words that rhyme with bed?* Keep a class chart of the rhyming words students make.

### Whoops! Johnny

Richly illustrated, the story of "Whoops! Johnny" is told through the colorful illustrations even more than the words on the page. Ask students to study the pictures and then say what they think this rhyme is about. Using evidence from the illustrations, have students tell about the things Johnny does that make him say, "Whoops!" Next, ask students to think about a time when they said, "Whoops!", or made a mistake. Is it a bad or good thing to make mistakes? Ask students to write about a mistake or "whoops" they have made. What did they learn from it? Students may write this themselves, or this could be a shared writing activity with the teacher scribing or sharing the pen with students.



### Vocabulary Hunt

Throughout the many rhymes in the collection are words or concepts that may not be familiar to students. Students might be familiar with the word itself (delve), or with the way it is used (cap). This is a great opportunity to help students explore the rich world of the English language. Make a classroom chart of new vocabulary and ask students to suggest words to add to the list as they read each rhyme. Then use this chart as an anchor for writing and discussion.

### Same and Different

Ask students to choose two rhymes from the collection and look for similarities and differences between them. This could be a whole-group, partner, or independent activity depending on the needs of the students. Students might compare rhyming patterns, themes, characters, or the setting. Some possible pairings are: "The Squirrel" and "Five Little Goblins," "Snowflakes" and "The Snowman," or "Little Bunny" and "The Squirrel." Ask students to compare and contrast two poems, using evidence from the poems to show how they are the same and how they are different.

### "T" Party Activity

On chart paper, write out the words to "I'm a Little Teapot." Then, using highlighters or highlighter tape, work as a class to find all the words that contain the letter "t" (or another target letter). Reinforce the lesson with this fun partner activity using a play tea set. Fill a play teapot with letter tiles or magnetic letters and give each student a teacup and a spoon. Students take turns using the spoon to scoop letters from the teapot. If they correctly identify the letter, they get to put the letter in their cup. If they find a "t" and identify it correctly, they can get an extra turn. If students have already



mastered letter identification, then they can use this activity to identify letter sounds or words that begin with the letters instead.

### Monkey Business

Students may already be familiar with “Two Little Monkeys,” but this writing activity gives them an opportunity to refer to the illustration and then offer advice to the monkeys. After reading “Two Little Monkeys,” talk about why it was not a good choice to jump on the bed. Ask students to think of other things the monkeys could do instead. Tell students to look carefully at the illustration and then (using the picture as evidence) ask students to give the monkeys a suggestion. For example:

*Dear Monkey,  
You should not jump on the bed. You could get hurt. I think you should play with your toy train.*



This could also be a speaking and listening activity. Students can take turns being the monkey, with their partner giving them advice. Encourage students to refer back to the illustration for ideas.

### Task Cards

Hidden within the pages of *Playtime Rhymes* are many opportunities for students to identify sight words, rhyming words, or word chunks. Students can practice their skills while becoming more familiar with the rhymes in the collection by using task cards. On colorful paper or index cards, create a set of activities to complete. You might include: *Find a sight word. Read 5 times. Find a rhyming word. Find a chunk. Find a consonant cluster. Find a poem about your favorite season.* Students choose a task card and complete the activity (independently or with a partner) and then record their answers. Task cards can be laminated for use again and

again. If laminated, students can write their answers in dry-erase marker on the card and then wipe it clean once a teacher conferences with them.

### Question Sticks

Helping students develop questioning and discussion techniques is not an easy process, especially for young learners. One way to help scaffold this process and move children toward more independent discussion is to use question sticks. Take craft sticks and write a discussion starter on each stick. Some ideas include: *What was your favorite poem? Which activity did you like the most? What did this make you think of? Have you heard any of these before?* Students take turns pulling sticks and asking a partner the questions. Each partner should have a stick with the word “why” on it, and they should use that question stick if their partner forgets to give a reason to support their answer.

### Fluency Experts

Reading fluently is a goal for every reader. This activity gives emergent readers the opportunity to practice one rhyme over and over until they can read or recite it fluently. Begin by having students choose one poem from the collection to learn. Offer numerous opportunities to memorize it and learn the actions. After students have practiced many times, ask them to teach it to the class. This could be extended over time: one student could teach the class a finger rhyme each day, for example. Or it could be a small-group activity, with each student teaching the members of their group. There are many ways to accomplish the goal of creating fluent readers.

### Who am I? (Close Reading)

The poem “The Squirrel” contains many clues to the animal it is about, and “The Snowman” also has descriptions that can lead students to deduce the subject of the poem. Introduce



students to making inferences by sharing one of the rhymes without revealing the title. Write the words to the rhyme on chart paper or project them. First, read the poem all the way through. Ask students to guess what they think the poem could be about. Record their guesses. Then go through line-by-line and talk about any words that might be unfamiliar. In “The Squirrel,” this could be “unfurled” or the phrase “broad as a sail.” As students think about each line, ask them to summarize their thinking. Then ask them to think about the guesses they made. They can try to decide if the information in that line helps support their idea or not. If not, they will need to make a new guess. This whole group activity helps even very young students begin to see how reading closely and discussing can help them comprehend at a deeper level.

### Class-Created Treasury

Marc Brown collected some of his favorite nursery rhymes and poems and paired them with picture directions for finger plays. Discuss the selections made by Marc Brown. Ask students to think about why he might have chosen those particular pieces. What do they notice about the length? How about rhyming patterns? Do they all have rhymes? What is it about these nursery rhymes that make them fun to read? Create a class book of poems and rhymes by working together to develop a list of “criteria” or guidelines. Once this is established, ask students to bring in or suggest possible nursery rhymes to be included in the class book. Then illustrate them and create a finger rhyme for each one.

## MATH

### One, Two, Buckle My Shoe

Developing one-to-one correspondence is an important math skill. Help students develop this foundation by using beans, buttons, or other counters while reciting “The Counting Game.” Begin by giving each student a pile of 12 counters. As they read or say each number

word, have them move one counter from the pile into a line in front of them. After the whole rhyme is recited, have students count to 12, pointing to each bean or button in the line in front of them as they do so. For students who have already mastered counting one-to-one, differentiate by having students count by 2’s, 5’s, or even 3’s. Students may want to rewrite the rhyme to match the new counting pattern.

### Teddy Bear Sort

Teddy bears come in all shapes and sizes. After students read “Teddy Bear,” or maybe even while they are reading it, ask students to bring in a teddy bear. Students can act out the rhyme with their bears. Next, ask students to think of ways to group the bears. They might group them by color, size, type, texture, or other attributes. Encourage students to work together to come up with ideas for grouping. Then have them place their bear in the category where their bear “fits.” Challenge students to group them in many different ways. If students do not have a bear of their own (or in case someone forgets) try to arrange to have a few extra bears on hand.



## SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES

### Snowflake Facts

The poem “Snowflakes” helps children picture a snowy day. Even if students have seen snow before, they might not know how snowflakes are formed or why they are so special. Help build their background knowledge by learning more about snowflakes. Read informational text about snowflakes. Then ask students to share facts they learned. They can display their knowledge by making snowflakes out of paper, writing their favorite facts on them, and then hanging them around the room. To make paper snowflakes, they can try folding white



paper many times and cutting their own designs with scissors or they might try sketching a snowflake. Students can use a magnified picture of a real snowflake (<http://snowflakebentley.com/WBsnowflakes.htm>) as a guide. These pictures are in the public domain and are free to use. They can draw their designs using white chalk or white colored pencil and use silver glitter glue to accent it.

### All Through the Town—What do you see?

Learning about the community and our connection to it is an important part of childhood. As a class, talk about what students might see out the window if they rode a bus through the community. Create a class list of ideas. Then have each student imagine they are riding a bus and draw a picture of something they might see. They can draw a picture and then write: *The bus goes all through the town. I see \_\_\_\_\_*. As an extension, students can display their drawings around the room, and then the class can form a line, pretending they are on a bus. As the “bus” travels around, students can pretend they are looking out the window at their community as they chant or sing “The Wheels on the Bus.”

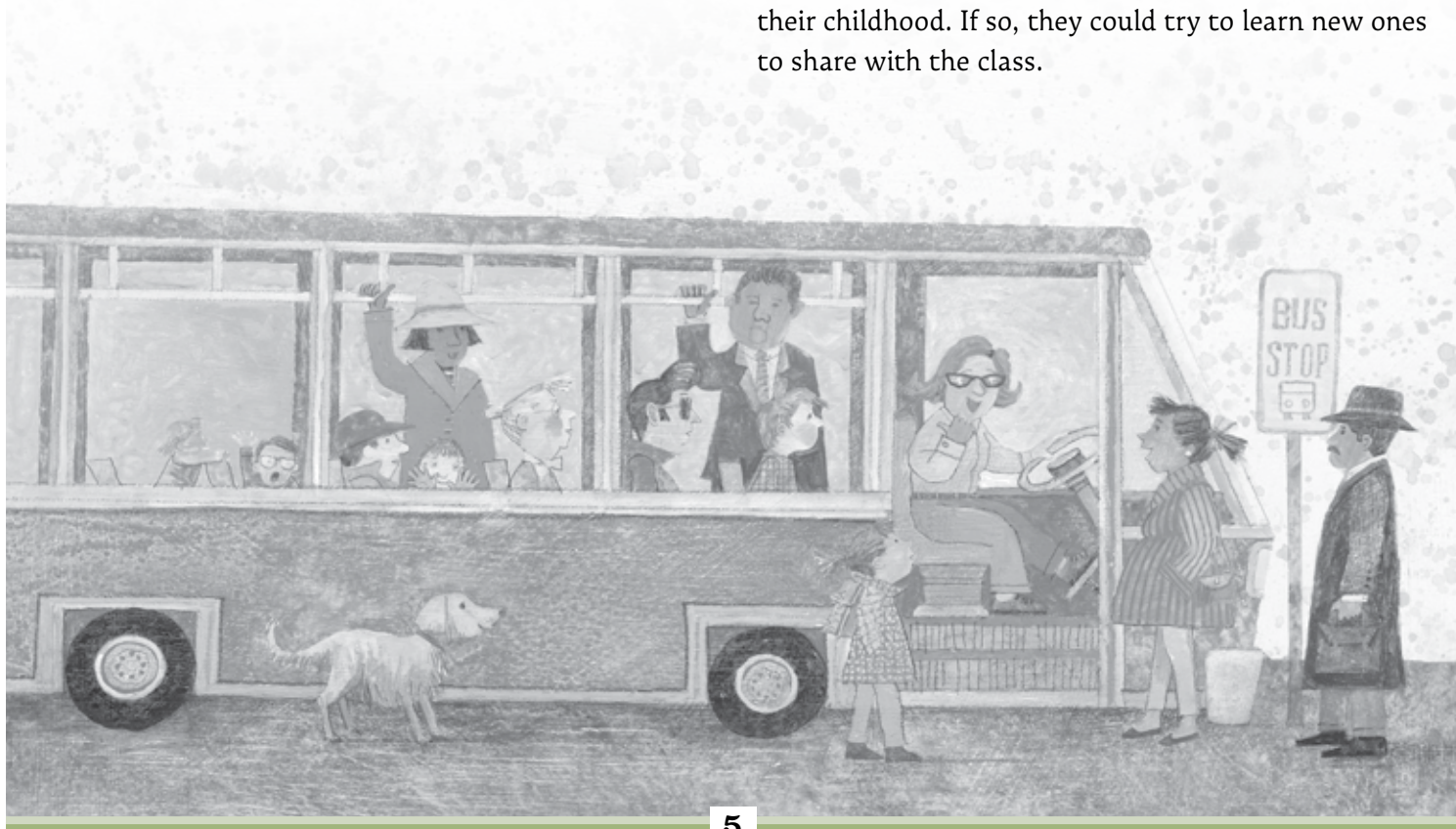
### Transportation Hunt

Airplanes, trucks, trains, buses, boats, and even horses are forms of transportation. Talk about the different ways people get from place to place, and then ask students to go on a scavenger hunt within the pages of *Playtime Rhymes* to find as many examples of transportation as they can. Remind students to look carefully at the pictures; even toy vehicles count in this hunt! After the hunt, have students compare their results. Did everyone find the same number of each form of transportation? Did anyone come up with a unique form of transportation?

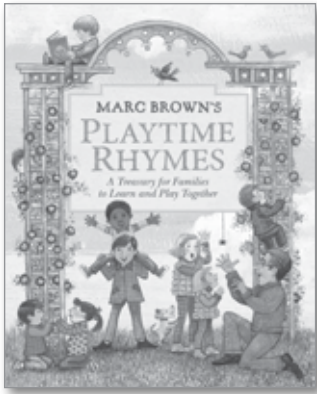
## CHARACTER EDUCATION

### Friendship Rhymes

Finger rhymes and poems remind many people of their childhood. Arrange a class visit to a nursing home or retirement home, and have students perform several of the rhymes in the collection. If it is not possible to visit as a class, record the students performing and share the video with their grandparents or other senior friends. As an extension, students might ask their senior friends or grandparents if they remember any finger rhymes from their childhood. If so, they could try to learn new ones to share with the class.



## about the book



**MARC BROWN'S  
PLAYTIME RHYMES**  
by Marc Brown  
HC 978-0-316-20735-5  
Also available as an eBook

*Fingers ready?*

*Fingers set?*

*Fingers play!*

It's time for *Playtime Rhymes*—a treasury of 20 favorite finger rhymes compiled and illustrated by the bestselling and beloved artist Marc Brown for the enjoyment of young and old.

From the clever “Whoops! Johnny” and funny “Do Your Ears Hang Low?” to the irrepressible “Itsy-Bitsy Spider” and rousing “Wheels on the Bus”, these are rhymes to recite and sing aloud, each with pictorial instructions for the correlating finger movements.

An interactive experience at its very best, *Playtime Rhymes* will get little hands wiggling, jiggling, pointing, pounding, bending, stretching, and dancing as children animate the rhymes, pore over the vibrant pictures, and share the fun with family and friends.

## about the author

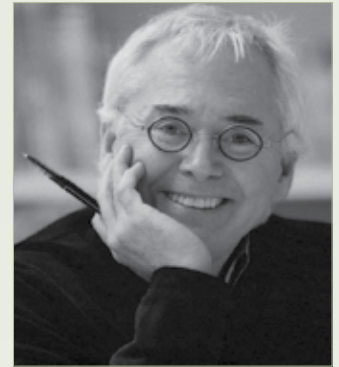
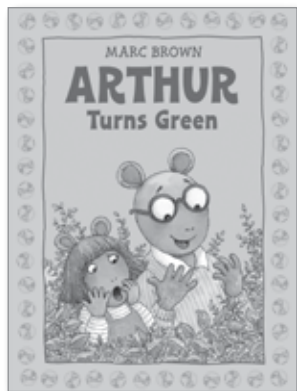


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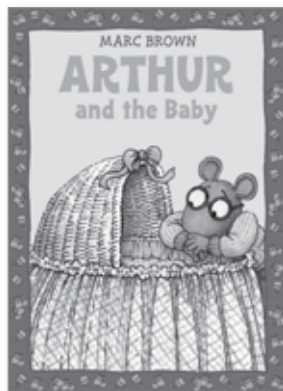
Marc Brown is the creator of the bestselling Arthur Adventure series and creative producer of the #1 children's PBS television series, Arthur. He has also illustrated many other books for children, including *Ten Tiny Toes*, *If All the Animals Came Inside*, and *Wild About Books*. Marc lives with his family in Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard. You can visit him online at [MarcBrownStudios.com](http://MarcBrownStudios.com).



## also by Marc Brown



HC 978-0-316-12924-4  
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PB 978-0-316-12905-3



PB 978-0-316-13362-3



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