

Tap Tap Box. Created by Hayley Williams May 2020



The Nursery Rhymes Box is an activity developed to encourage and promote oral language development in young children. It is a box filled with a number of props that will trigger a nursery rhyme song, such as a stuffed toy cow may trigger the nursery rhyme 'Hey Diddle Diddle' or 'Old Mac Donald had a Farm' because these nursery rhymes have a cow in their lyrics.

The idea behind the nursery rhyme box is to pick one item out of the box at a time and think of a nursery rhyme (or song) that has that character or object in it. Then you sing the nursery rhyme together with all the actions included.

You will need a large box (a shoe box is a good one) and number of props or



characters that are found in nursery rhymes.

- Star –Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
- Spider – Incy wincy spider.
- Tea Pot – I'm a little tea pot

- Teddy Bear – Round and round the garden.
- Doll – Miss Polly had a Dolly
- Toy Cow – Hey Diddle or Old Mac Donald
- Mouse / clock – Hickory Dickory Dock
- Frog – 5 Little Speckled Frogs
- Toy bus - The wheels on the bus.
- Egg - Humpty Dumpty.
- Boat- Row Row Row the boat
- Bus - The wheels on the bus.

The above are just examples. Try and choose songs that are familiar to your child to begin with.

Tap Tap Box,

What's in the box ?

Child's name, child's name what's in the box ?

OR

Tap Tap Tap 123,

What is in the box for Child's name

Everybody puts their hands on the box and taps in time to the rhyme.

If your child is reluctant to join in, just play by yourself saying Mummy or Daddy instead of your child's name. Open the box to reveal the contents when the rhyme has finished.

There should be no pressure for your child to join in the singing, just hearing you singing and beginning to build up an understanding of the activity is all we want to begin with.

When you have finished the song. Look expectantly at your child and say "More?" if you know the Makaton sign use this too.
Then repeat letting him /her choose another song.

I wouldn't recommend any more than 4 objects at a time in the box to begin with.

You may have to offer some physical prompts to help your child choose a song and the songs must motivate them for them to want to engage in the activity.

If your child chooses 2 objects, hold both objects at their eye level by your face and encourage them to choose between the two you are holding. Say the name of each as you bring it forward slightly.

Your child may then show you which object they want by telling you, or they may gaze with their eyes, gesture, point or reach towards the object they desire. Ensure that whatever object is chosen the same song is sung or played every time to help your child understand what each object relates to.

If your child tries to open the box before the rhyme has finished, encourage them to wait, by saying "Wait" and holding your hands up with palms open facing your child.

Other ideas

Everyday objects Tap Tap Box

This works in a similar way, but you put everyday objects in the box.

Eg, Spoon, hairbrush, cup, sock etc.

You then name what your child has chosen and pretend to eat/brush your/their hair, to encourage understanding of word and object.

Animals

Put a variety of animals in the box. When each animal is chosen, name the animal, Make the sound and if you know the Makaton sign you can use this too.



You could choose the item yourself from the box by gradually bringing the object into view.

This works well with animals. You make the animal sound and gradually bring it into sight, naming it when it is completely out of the box.

Other ideas are :

- Christmas items.
- Objects beginning with the same letter.
- Nature things E.G. leaves, fir cones, shells.
- Shiny things.
- Sensory.

Whatever takes your fancy and will interest your child.

The Tap Tap Box is great for the following reasons.

- Develop and extend vocabulary.
- Rhyme – understanding rhyme in our spoken language helps children learn to read.
- Rhythm- helps children to remember words and develop auditory memory skills.
- Phonemic awareness – hearing and understanding that words are made up of individual sounds and other word patterns.
- Fine motor skills and coordination – Encourages actions and movement.
- This activity is also great for teaching social skills – taking turns.

The most important thing is for you and your child to have fun. If your child will only sit for a brief time then put less in the box and gradually add more.

As your child becomes familiar with the activity you could take turns to choose the item or bring another child into the activity.

The activity will have to be done on a regularly for your child to understand.