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[« Previous](#) | [Main](#) | [Next »](#)

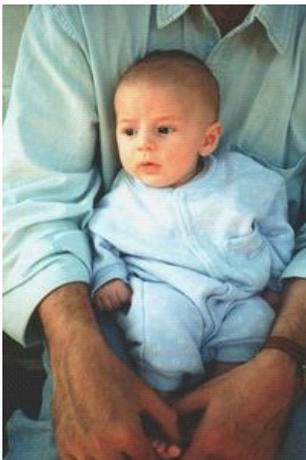
Who Cares if the Pig Goes Dicky Dare? Five Reasons Why Nursery Rhymes Matter

February 3, 2013 | [Not Quite Miss Rumphius](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)



I'm **Not Quite Miss Rumphius** and this is the blog for the Children's Department at North York Central Library. Welcome back.

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Becoming a new parent means entering the fantastical world of teeny, tiny things. There's your baby, of course, a darling little handful and much nicer, much *better* than any other baby around.

And there's everything that comes with a baby -- diapers the size of a potholder, clothing fit for a doll, and chunky little board books that babies devour as much with their mouths as they do with their eyes.

It's a charming and rather dear world, this world of babies and tiny things. But one of the ironies every parent soon faces is that taking all that tiny stuff with you -- which you *must* do when you step outside, even for the briefest of errands -- sometimes requires a bag so big it looks like you're lugging around a toaster oven or (in the case of longer trips) hockey equipment.

This is the bag that holds the extra diapers, the change pad, the wipes, the hand sanitizer, the booties, the blanket ...

The same bag also has room for toys and rattles to entertain your pint-size traveller when they get restless. These are the things you rummage around for, then pull out of your bag with a flourish -- ta da! -- like a magician



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[North York Central Library Book Club to discuss Fahrenheit 451](#)

[Sew Inspired...](#)

[Swinging into Spring](#)

[Art Talk at NYCL: Florentine Altarpieces in the Early Renaissance](#)

[Awards & Prizes \(6\)](#)

[Books \(97\)](#)

[children \(12\)](#)

[Computer Learning \(14\)](#)

[Events \(66\)](#)

[Hours \(2\)](#)

[How To \(27\)](#)

[Newcomers \(17\)](#)

[North York Central Library \(173\)](#)

[North York Central Library News \(34\)](#)

[Services \(19\)](#)

[Technology \(30\)](#)

[Teens \(20\)](#)

[Toronto Public Library News \(12\)](#)

[What's New \(29\)](#)

[Your Feedback \(9\)](#)

Archives

[April 2013 \(8\)](#)

[March 2013 \(8\)](#)

[February 2013 \(10\)](#)



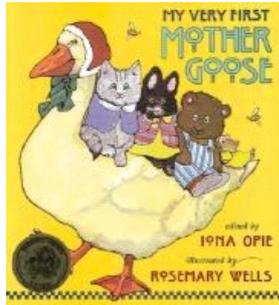
But along with everything in your bag of tricks, from the essential to the entertaining, there are other things you ought to always have with you, ready to use at a moment's notice.

Fortunately, these things take up no space. They weigh nothing at all. They're nursery rhymes, those frothy bits of wordplay that are sometimes spoken and sometimes sung.

Here are five reasons why nursery rhymes -- from any culture, in any language -- are perfect for your baby:

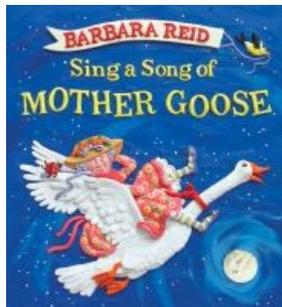
Reason One: Nursery rhymes are a baby's first stories.

Think of a nursery rhyme as the tiniest of tales, with the same basic features of any story -- characters, action, and often even a storyline. Like any good tale, a nursery rhyme might have something surprising and / or satisfying at its conclusion (a tickle, a cuddle, or a lift in the air) that makes the "tale" and its telling worthwhile.



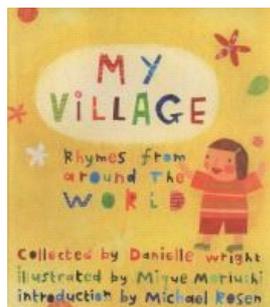
Reason Two: Nursery rhymes break down language into baby-size bits.

Through the use of repetition and a rhythmic beat, nursery rhymes help babies break up the streaming flow of language around them into smaller, bite-size pieces, including vowel sounds and consonants.



Reason Three: Nursery rhymes help babies build up their word banks.

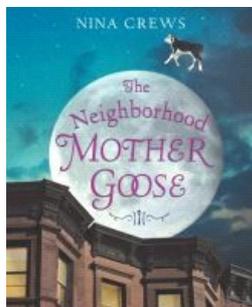
Nursery rhymes expose very young children to the richness and playfulness of language. Babies hear new, interesting words and phrases that they might not encounter in everyday situations.



Reason Four: Nursery rhymes bring the world to your baby.

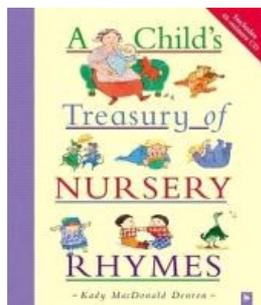
Nursery rhymes help expand your little one's understanding of the world around them by introducing concepts such as fast / slow, high / low, and big / little. Many nursery rhymes also involve numbers and counting.

January 2013 (6)
December 2012 (10)
November 2012 (11)
October 2012 (10)
September 2012 (6)
August 2012 (6)
July 2012 (10)
June 2012 (7)
May 2012 (9)
April 2012 (10)
March 2012 (5)
February 2012 (7)
January 2012 (9)
December 2011 (9)
November 2011 (11)
October 2011 (6)
September 2011 (14)
August 2011 (13)
July 2011 (11)
June 2011 (17)
May 2011 (15)



Reason Five: Nursery rhymes are soothing, distracting, entertaining ...

And they're just plain *fun* for grownups and little ones to experience together. Nursery rhymes provide wonderful opportunities for cuddling, sharing a silly moment, and simply enjoying one another's company.



And what about that "dickery dare" mentioned above, in the title of this blog post?

Dickery Dickery Dare: A Nursery Rhyme

Dickery dickery dare (Start off with your little one on your lap and bounce gently)

The pig flew up in the air (Lift your baby up in the air and hold them there)

The man in brown brought him down (Lower your baby down to your lap)

Dickery dickery dare! (Bounce gently and finish with cuddle or a tickle)

(So there!)

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