

A-Rhyme-A-Week: Classroom Instruction

Flour of England, Fruit of Spain

Monday

1. Place "Old Mother Twitchett" poster on the chalkboard, and review with the children. Remind them that "Old Mother Twitchett" is a riddle, and explain that we are learning another nursery rhyme riddle today.
2. Introduce "Four of England" poster and vocabulary to children. As we have been doing, focus first on the pictures. Focus first on the canister of flour, and ask the children if they have ever watched someone in their families bake a pie or cake. They may have seen flour in canisters or in bags, so you can explain that in our picture the flour is stored in a canister. Next, ask the children if they can name any fruits. If they can't, remind them of fruits such as strawberries or pears or apples. Then, pointing to the picture, explain that plums are a fruit, like grapes, which people often eat in a dried form. (If you'd like, you may bring some prunes for children to taste). Then, show children the picture found at the end of this file that shows children gathered around the table where something is wrapped in a bag. Tell children that a special kind of cake is made in England called a Christmas or plum pudding. Cooks wrap the dough in a bag that they tie closed and then steam the bag (the shower of rain) to cook the pudding. Point to the plum pudding and ask children if they might like to taste such a cake. Remind children of our rhyming riddles and explain that this nursery rhyme, like "Old Mother Twitchett" is a riddle. Then, read "Flour of England" to the children, and, pointing to the plum pudding picture, ask if they can guess what the flour of England and fruit of Spain turned into. **Be sure to run your fingers under the words as you read them.**
3. Next, chant "Flour of England", running your fingers under the words as you sing or chant. Work with the children to teach them the rhyme, encouraging them to join in.
4. We are continuing our listening game's attention to the *word*. Remind the children of the listening games that we have been playing the last number of weeks, and of how last week we listened to hear whether words were the same or not the same. Tell them that this week, we are going to do the same thing today. As the children to listen carefully. Hold up one finger, and then say, "Spain." Pause. Then, hold up two fingers, and say "Spain". Tell children that the two words you've just said are the same. Tell them to listen again. Again, hold up one finger, to indicate that you are saying the first word, and say, "Spain." Pause. Hold up two fingers to indicate that you are saying the second word and say, "England". With the children facing you, repeat this with the following pairs of words: rain/rain, rain/fruit, shower/shower, shower/England. Remember that this may be difficult for the children, so be sure to give them plenty of support.
5. Finish your lesson by returning to "Flour of England". Distribute the hole-punched copies of the rhyming card for "Flour of England" to be placed in children's **My Very Own Nursery Rhyme Collection** folders at home.

Tuesday

1. Begin by putting the "Flour of England" poster back on the blackboard. Ask children if they can remember what the answer to the riddle was.
2. Remind the children that Tuesday is "acting" day. To act out this week's rhyme, you will need a large cast (six children)! You need 1 child to be the flour, 1 child to be a plum. You need 3 children to be the steam around the plum pudding, and 1 child to untie the string, fold away the bag, and "taste" the pudding. Begin by having the plum and the flour join hands and snuggle into their imaginary bag as the children chant the first two lines. As the children chant "met together ... rain", the 3 children who are the steam should kneel next to the flour and plum, rising slowly to their feet to show the steaming of the pudding batter. As the children chant "put in a bag ... ring", the child who is the "taster" can untie the imaginary string, fold back the bag, and take a pretend taste of the pudding. When the children finish the end of their chant, ask them what was the answer to the riddle. When they answer, "plum pudding," pantomime giving each of them a ring to put on their fingers.
3. For the chanting, arrange the children on two sides of the performance area. After the children seem comfortable chanting the lines, you can try having the two groups alternate which group says each line of the rhyme.
4. As you did last week, tape record the children's choral performances of the nursery rhyme for use in your classroom listening center. Be sure that you have a copy of the nursery rhyme to keep with the tape.
5. Finish this lesson with your cloze activity. Use the following lines in particular:
Flour of England
Fruit of Spain _____
Met together
In a shower of _____.

Wednesday

We have included quite a few pictures in this week's rhyming cards set because there are two different spellings for the rime *ain* (also *anel*). If you have children who are recognizing letters, you may want to limit your pictures to those that go with one spelling or the other. For most children, we are simply working with drawing their attention to the **sound** of the rime.

1. Put the "Flour of England" poster on the blackboard, then run your fingers under the words as you chant the rhyme. Repeat the cloze activity from Tuesday, having children fill in the missing words.
2. Remind the children that **rain** and **Spain** rhyme, and that we are going to learn some other words that rhyme. Introduce these pictures from the picture card set: **cane, chain, drain, lane, pain, plane, rain, Spain, and train**. (There are other pictures you may include as well.) Be sure to explain to the children what the word and picture mean. Especially spend time with the picture of grain, explaining to the children that the flour for the pudding has been made from the grain of the wheat plant. Take the time to talk about the pictures, relating them to what your children have seen and know. Always remember, **if there is a picture that you feel is unsuitable for your particular classroom**, you can eliminate this picture from the set.
3. Many of these words can be pantomimed or acted out. For instance, you can ask the children to lick their candy "cane" or to watch water go down the "drain".
4. Remind children we have been sorting by rhyming sounds. This week, we'll be contrasting *ain* with *ing*. Use the following pictures: **rain, Spain, train, and chain** and **string, ring, king, swing**. Call children's attention to the words "rain" and "Spain" and "string" and "ring" in the nursery rhyme poster. Then, tape the picture for **rain** at the top of one column and the picture for **string** at the top of the other. Place all other pictures in the chalk tray, saying each one's name.
5. Remind the children that we've been talking about things that are the **same**. When words end the same, we say that they **rhyme**.
6. Call children one at a time to take a picture and decide if it ends the **same** as **rain** or **string**. Keep in mind that many children are working to hear and understand "rhyming" and "same-ness". If a child is hesitant, go ahead and support him or her with the task.
7. Finish today's lesson by chanting or singing "Simple Simon Went A-Fishing".

Thursday

1. Select 5 or 6 of the downloadable riddle cards that you think are best suited for your students.
2. Begin by putting the "Flour of England" poster back on the blackboard. Ask children to chant the rhyme, allowing 2 or 3 at a time to chant or sing the rhyme for the class.
3. Set the pictures from the picture card set on the chalk tray. Tell the children that today we will be guessing the answers to some riddles. The answer to the riddle will be one of the pictures we looked at yesterday.
4. Put the riddle cards on the board one at a time. Read the riddle, then help your students decide which picture best answers the riddle. Tape the picture at the bottom of the riddle card. You read the riddle, letting the children fill in the missing word, completing the rhyme by saying the name of the picture.
5. Finish the lesson with the cloze activity you did on Tuesday, having the children supply the missing word at the end of each line of the rhyme.

Friday

1. Remind the children of the various activities you've done this week, and tell them that this is **Children's Choice** day. Display 3 different rhyme posters -- **Flour of England**, **Sing, Sing**, and **Simple Simon Went A-Fishing**.
2. We are continuing with our additional new option on **Children's Choice** day, and that is *individual* or *small group* performances. Here, children who are ready to recite a rhyme alone or with a friend can add their name(s) to the Choice list. Because being able to recite the rhymes will ultimately help children with their understandings of "text", we hope that, by the end of the year, all children will be able to successfully recite four to five of the rhymes we are learning. Let the children decide which rhymes they would like to act out, to chant, to sort pictures for, or to do the riddle rhymes for.
3. Record the children's choices on the board using the written list as the order to follow. Then complete the activities.
4. Finish by chanting "Flour of England." Have all the children pretend they the puddings cooking in the bags as they chant the rhyme. This is a good time to tell the children that plum pudding is considered a traditional Christmas dessert in England.
5. Remind children to look at their **My Very Own Nursery Rhyme Collections** with their families over the weekend.

If you're curious about plum pudding's history, check out this web site
<http://www.geocities.com/NapaValley/4079/Q-A/plumpudding.htm>

Or, take a look at this site! It includes an English recipe.
<http://www.hwatson.force9.co.uk/cookbook/recipes/desserts/christmaspudd.htm>

Looking at the Plum Pudding

