

# Listening and Talking

Literacy begins with listening and talking.

- To begin to learn the letter sounds, a child needs to be able to hear the little differences between letter sounds like **m** and **n**, or **g** and **k**.
- We teach babies the joy of watching, waiting and listening when we play peek-a-boo.
- We teach toddlers new words when we describe the taste of food, the appearance of clouds and the meaning of street signs.
- We teach preschoolers that their ideas and words are important when we: model turn taking; answer all their questions; and listen to their stories.



Activities that are based on listening, talking and story telling, help children hear the differences in the sounds of language.

## How can you help?

- Collect things in your pockets when you are out for a walk with your child. As you and your child pull things out of your pockets, try to think of a rhyme to go along with each new treasure.
- A fun fingerplay to go with this activity is *In My Pockets* by Sue Schliecker from the book **1001 Rhymes and Fingerplays**.
- Go to the library to find this and other fingerplays and rhyming books.

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## Finger Puppets

Finger puppets encourage children to speak and listen. Finger puppets do not have to be costly or elaborate. Draw faces on the pads of Band-Aids™ and place over the fingerprint side of your fingers. If you put a Band-Aid™ finger puppet on both index fingers you're ready for this bedtime game.

### Bedtime Puppet Show

Right Finger: It's bedtime.  
Left Finger: Is it bedtime all over?

Right Finger: Yes.  
Left Finger: Is it bedtime on the farm?

Right Finger: It's bedtime on the farm.  
Left Finger: Are the sheep asleep?

Right Finger: The sheep are asleep.  
Left Finger: Are the cows asleep?

Right Finger: The cows are asleep.  
Left Finger: Are the pigs asleep?

Right Finger: The pigs are asleep.  
Left Finger: Is it bedtime in the city?

Right Finger: It's bedtime in the city.  
Left Finger: Are the children going to sleep?

Right Finger: Is it bedtime for Jane?  
(*Insert your child's name.*)  
Left Finger: It is bedtime for Jane.

Right Finger: Is Jane going to sleep?  
Left Finger: Jane will soon be asleep.

Right Finger: Good night, cows.  
Left finger: Good night, sheep.

Right Finger: Good night, pigs.  
Left Finger: Good night, city children.

Right Finger: Good night, Jane.  
Left Finger: Good night, Jane.

You (in your own voice): Good night Honey.

**M**ake different voices for the different finger puppets. Add new animals and animal sounds.

**F**inger puppets can be part of various routines throughout the day. Your child may like to take them in the car, or to help him tell his made-up story out loud.



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