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Using Nursery Rhymes Across the Curriculum

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Nursery Rhymes are wonderful tools to promote literacy. The following ideas will show how easy it is to take one specific nursery rhyme (we chose Hey Diddle, Diddle) and teach across the curriculum. The areas we will be covering are: Reading Readiness, Math Readiness, Drama, Science, Music, PE, and Art. Introduce the nursery rhyme using a felt board set, book, flip chart or poster.

Reading Readiness

Provide pictures of the characters in Hey Diddle, Diddle. Have the children match the pictures into pairs, such as cat with the fiddle, cow with the moon, etc. Next give the children long strips of construction paper and have them glue the pictures in the same order as they appear in the rhyme. Ask the children which character does not have a partner? The pocket chart is very useful in matching the oral language with the written word. Write the nursery rhyme on sentence strips to be placed in the pocket chart. Make picture cards for the main characters. Children can match or place the picture card over the word, example: place the picture card of the cat over the word cat. You can also have children use pointers to point to specific letters on the sentence strips or you can point to a letter and have children make that letter sound. The appeal of nursery rhymes lies in their rhyme and rhythm. You can discuss what words rhyme in Hey Diddle, Diddle such as moon and spoon. Encourage the children to come up with other words that rhyme. You can make a list or a word family chart.

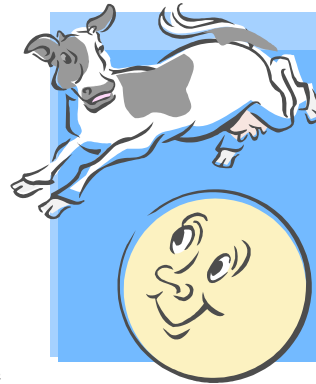
Math Readiness

In asking the children which character comes first, second, third, etc. in the nursery rhyme, you can teach ordinal numbers. Reinforce children's patterning skills by providing stickers and a tag board strip. Have children use their stickers to make an AB, ABB or an AAB pattern on their strip. Another fun thing to do is to provide pictures of the animals in Hey Diddle,

Diddle. Have each child chose their favorite animal and make a large class graph.

Drama

Stage the story of Hey Diddle, Diddle. Assign roles and give each child their appropriate prop (make poster board cutouts and attach yarn or string so the actors can wear them around their neck). After teaching several nursery rhymes to your children, invite the parents in for a performance night. Mother Goose Day is May 1st! You can also use picture cards or die cut characters and have the children mount them on craft sticks. Allow each child to make their own set of puppets. Use the puppets to act out the nursery rhymes in class and then send them home with a copy of the nursery rhyme to be shared with family and friends.



Science

Hey Diddle, Diddle lends itself to a study of the moon and our solar system. You can teach basic facts about the earth, moon and sun such as their size and their orbits. The study of pets and pet care are also a natural extension. Discuss what types of food different pets eat, how they are cared for and what a responsibility it is to have a pet.

Music

Try singing Hey Diddle, Diddle to the tune of "Skip To My Lou". Children can also incorporate a stomp, clap, stomp, clap pattern to the beat of Hey Diddle, Diddle. Ask the children for suggestions on ways to vary the pattern. Use instruments such as a tambourine, jingle stick or maracas to enhance the rhythm or keep the beat.

P.E.

Make 12 moon cutouts out of tag board and laminate them. Tape the moons to the floor in a circle. Play

some fiddle music for background music. Working with a small group, give directions for jumping and counting practice. Example: jump over two moons at the same time.



Art

Make a Hey Diddle, Diddle mobile.

Materials: poster board, scissors, hole punch, crayons or markers, yarn, and plastic hanger. Prep: Cut out shapes for all the characters in the nursery rhymes (we used die cuts). Punch hole in the top of each cut out. Cut the yarn into different lengths.

Activity: Children color on both sides of each cutout. Tie yarn to each piece and then tie other end to hanger. Hang the mobiles throughout your room.

We hope some of these ideas will be useful in promoting oral language in your day care center, classroom, or home.

New Items

- **Lively Times With Nursery Rhymes Book**
- **Old MacDonald's Farm and Other Classic Rhymes Book**
- **Water Cycle Felt Set**
- **Foam Backed Frog Finger Puppets**
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- **Brer Bear Puppet**

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