

Arkansas Imagination Library: Building the Reading Brain

Month: September

Book: Pudgy book of Mother Goose

Age Group: Birth – 12 Months

Arkansas Infant/Toddler Early Learning Standards

SE1.1 Develops secure relationships with caregivers.

LD1.1 Attends and responds to language.

EL1.1 Shows interest in books, pictures, and songs.

CD1.1 Demonstrates curiosity and exploration.

PD1.1 Uses developing motor skills to explore.

Science of Reading Foundations

- Serve-and-return interactions
- oral language exposure
- shared attention
- vocabulary development
- nursery rhymes, songs, repetition
- responsive communication

Learning Goals

- Strengthen attachment
- Build receptive language
- support sensory exploration
- Encourage attention to books
- communication.

Start with the book:

Reading to an infant group:

Create a cozy environment where non-mobile infants can lean against you, another adult, or a soft surface in the room, and where infants who can sit can do so securely. Position the book where it is at an infant's eye level. Read aloud in an animated voice, asking questions and discussing the images on the page as you go. Allow each child to touch the book or even help by lifting the flaps.

Reading to an individual infant:

Gather the infant in your lap and allow them to explore the book by grabbing, turning pages, and lifting the flaps. Position the book where it is at an infant's eye level. Read aloud in an animated voice, asking questions and discussing the images on the page as you go. Stay on the page as long as the infant is interested, turning the page when the baby gives you a cue that they want to move on to the next page.

Introducing *The Pudgy Book of Mother Goose*: Make eye contact with each child as you introduce the book. Name the pictures as you look at each page. Example: look at "The cat and the fiddle"; point out the cow and make the animal sound; repeat. Sing the Hello Song listed below to start the book. Let the babies touch the pages and turn them, talking about the pages as you do.

Activities to extend learning

Activity Title	Materials Needed	Instructions	Domains of Development/ Learning Standard	Why
Hello Mother Goose Song	Book: Pudgy Book of Mother Goose	Sing to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" Hello, hello, how do you do? Mother Goose is here with you! We will read and play today. Come and learn in every way!"	Language and Emergent Literacy Cognitive Development	This activity builds vocabulary and strengthens your connection through shared attention.
Object Rhyme Connection	Book: Pudgy Book of Mother Goose Toy cat, cow, dog, moon, dish, and spoon	Read The Cat and the Fiddle rhyme; point to each toy item as you read. Read again and let the children touch and grasp the items. Make the animal sounds as you touch the animals. Talk about what you do with a cup or spoon as the children reach for them	Language and Emergent Literacy Cognitive Development	Touching the items connects words to sensations and keeps your infant engaged through multiple senses. Supporting language development
Humpty Dumpty Bounce	Book: Pudgy Book of Mother Goose	Turn the book to Humpty Dumpty and bounce the child on each word, lowering the child off your lap on the word fall. Returning to the lap and being bounced again and hugged on together again	Language and Emergent Literacy Physical Development (gross)	Action supports building vocabulary through movement.
Scarves and Rhymes	Book: Pudgy Book of Mother Goose Scarves for baby to wave	Recite Little Boy Blue, pretend the scarf is a horn, look over it as if you are looking for the boy, and lastly cover up with the scarf as if it is a blanket for Little Boy Blue.	Cognitive Development Language and Emergent Literacy	Action supports building vocabulary through movement.
Water Play Rhymes	Book: Pudgy Book of Mother Goose Shallow container with water and cups	Recite "Jack and Jill," fill and empty the cup as you recite, allowing the babies to play in the water and pour water over their hands.	Physical Development (fine) Language and Emergent Literacy Cognitive Development	This action combines language, rhythm, and physical connection.

Teacher Reflection and Review

What captured infants' attention? Which interactions supported language development and attachment? How did infants respond to sensory experiences?

Differentiation

Follow infant cues and developmental levels. Provide visual, auditory, tactile, and movement-based supports. Adapt interactions to individual needs.

https://app.briskteaching.com/student_podcast/4ijfl6pfe

Sensory Supports for Different Infant Needs

For Infants Who Prefer Gentle, Quiet Sensory Input

Use soft, muted colors or pastels instead of bright colors. Speak in a calm, quiet voice. Move scarves and objects slowly and gently. Use light touch on skin rather than firm pressure. Offer one color or object at a time instead of many. Provide longer pauses between activities. Use soft music or quiet singing. Limit the number of people or sounds in the environment.

For Infants Who Prefer More Stimulation and Movement

Use bright, bold colors. Use a more animated, expressive voice with varied tone. Move scarves and objects quickly and playfully. Offer bouncing, rocking, or swaying movements. Introduce multiple colors and objects together. Use clapping, singing, or rhythmic music. Encourage reaching and grabbing. Offer more frequent changes between activities.

For Infants with Limited Mobility or Motor Skills

Position the infant comfortably where they can see and reach objects without strain. Bring colored objects closer to the infant's face or to the infant's hands. Use lightweight scarves and soft toys that are easy to hold. Offer hand-over-hand support for reaching or touching. Use mirrors positioned at eye level. Provide verbal descriptions of colors and movements. Celebrate small movements like eye tracking or finger movements.

For Infants Who Are Sensitive to Textures

Offer one texture at a time. Start with the softest materials (like silk scarves). Let the infant explore at their own pace without pressure to touch. Describe textures as you show them: "This is soft and smooth." Respect if the infant does not want to touch something. Offer visual exploration (looking) without requiring touch. Use gloves or your hand as a barrier if needed. Gradually introduce new textures over time.

For Infants Who Are Overstimulated Easily

Reduce background noise and visual clutter. Use one color at a time rather than a rainbow. Dim bright lights if possible. Offer shorter activity sessions (5–10 minutes). Provide quiet breaks between activities. Use a calm, soft voice. Minimize the number of people present. Offer a safe space to retreat if needed. Watch for signs of stress (crying, turning away) and pause activities when needed.

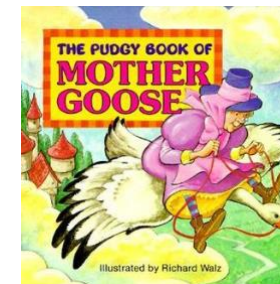
For Infants with Visual Differences or Preferences

Use high-contrast colors (like black and white) if bright colors are hard to see. Position objects within the infant's visual field. Move objects slowly and deliberately. Use sound cues along with visual cues: "Listen to the rattle! Now look at the red rattle!" Describe colors and objects in detail. Use tactile exploration (touch and texture) as the main way to explore. Offer objects at different distances to find the infant's preferred viewing distance.



Family Connection

September 2026



Reading to your Child: Birth -12 months:

Reading is a "serve and return" interaction. This back-and-forth process is fundamental to brain wiring, especially in the earliest years. Serve-and-return interactions help parents create a safe, secure environment for infants and help infants recognize they're being cared for and understood.

- Help your baby explore the book. Let your baby turn the pages, grab, or even chew on it.
- Read with joy and excitement. Use different voices for different characters.
- Stay on a page for as long as your baby is interested. Turn the page or stop reading when your baby looks away, seems tired, or seems bored.
- Ask questions your child can answer by pointing. You can say, "Where's the doggie?" or "Where's the happy baby?" or "Who says meow?"

Extend the book by trying these activities:			
Play-Based Activity Title	Materials Needed	Instructions	Why?
Nursery Rhyme search and find	Grab toy animals and animal images.	Place the items in front of your child, and allow them to move towards an item and recite the rhyme that connects to it. Example: small bucket Jack and Jill, lamb stuffie Mary had a little lamb	Touching the items connects words to sensations and keeps your infant engaged through multiple senses. Supporting language development
Build a wall, let it fall.	Boxes: empty food boxes, or toy boxes	Sing "Humpty Dumpty" as you build a wall in front of you, infant, and let them knock it down, or you can knock it down in front of them.	Action supports building vocabulary through movement. Building and knocking down the wall bring the story to life through different actions.
Bounce with a rhyme, any rhyme.	No items	Bounce your child to the rhythm of the rhyme.	This combines language, rhythm, and physical connection.
Add the following activities to your daily routine:			
Daily Routine Activity	Instruction	Helpful Tips	
Tummy Time	Place the book in front of your child and talk about the images on the page.	Pay careful attention to your infant's behavior and stop the activity when the infant becomes tired or bored.	

Bedtime Time	When you are getting your child ready for bedtime, recite "Wee Willie Winkie." Move legs while saying running through the town. Touch their head on "upstairs" feet "downstairs. Knocking on the wall on "rapping". Swipe hands down baby's arms gently on "in their beds." Pick up now; it's 8 o'clock.	Add actions or change actions as needed. Repeat this idea with a different rhyme.	Adding actions to recitation allows the infant to experience language through multiple senses.
--------------	--	---	--

Assessment for Parents

Observe eye contact, visual tracking, engagement, vocalizations, reaching, smiling, and responses to shared reading.

Use this checklist to observe and record your infant's responses during sensory, music, and literacy activities. Mark what you notice during play-based activities at home.

Language and Vocalization

- ☐ Makes sounds in response to your voice or singing
- ☐ Babbles or coos during activities
- ☐ Attempts to imitate sounds you make
- ☐ Responds to their name
- ☐ Makes new sounds or babbles not heard before

Eye Contact and Visual Tracking

- ☐ Makes eye contact with you during activities
- ☐ Follows colorful objects with their eyes
- ☐ Looks at pictures when you point
- ☐ Tracks movement across their visual field
- ☐ Focuses on your face during singing or talking

Engagement and Attention

- ☐ Stays interested in the activity for 5+ minutes
- ☐ Looks at you for encouragement or response
- ☐ Smiles or shows joy during activities
- ☐ Reaches toward objects or materials
- ☐ Shows excitement through body movements

Sensory Responses

- ☐ Touches or grasps offered textures
- ☐ Reacts to different colors (looks longer, reaches)
- ☐ Responds to music or rhythmic sounds
- ☐ Explores objects by mouthing (if age-appropriate)
- ☐ Shows preference for certain textures or colors

Motor Skills and Movement

- ☐ Reaches for objects or scarves
- ☐ Grasps items placed in their hand
- ☐ Moves arms or legs to music
- ☐ Bounces or sways when held during songs
- ☐ Rolls or shifts position to see better

Attachment and Responsiveness

- ☐ Seeks comfort from you during activities
- ☐ Responds positively to your voice
- ☐ Shows distress when you leave and happiness when you return
- ☐ Calms down when you hold or comfort them
- ☐ Initiates interaction by reaching or vocalizing

Family Connection Activity:

Build a wall, let it fall	Boxes: empty food boxes, or toy boxes	Sing "Humpty Dumpty" as you build a wall in front of you, infant, and let them knock it down, or you can knock it down in front of them.	Action supports building vocabulary through movement. Building and knocking down the wall bring the story to life through different actions.
---------------------------	---------------------------------------	--	--

Prepare by collecting 5 boxes for each family expected to attend. If possible, purchase the amount of blocks that you will need for the program. The boxes used for this activity can also be acquired by collecting empty food boxes. Model the actions listed in the family connection activity. Show parents that they may need to knock down the boxes first to show the infant how to participate. Encourage the parent to take turns placing boxes on top of one another with their infant. Celebrate with animated voices when the child or parent places boxes on top of one another, and again when the "wall" is knocked down. Repeat the activity as the infant's attention span allows.