Hickory Dickory Dock

**Originating Idea**
Children have been listing words that have the same beginning sound as their names (e.g., “Henry” and “heart”). The teachers wanted a fun way to capitalize on the children’s interest in identifying the initial sounds of words.

**Opener**
Tell the children that you know a rhyme about a mouse. Ask them to pretend their hands are mice, and have them demonstrate how that would look. Read the rhyme “Hickory Dickory Dock” to the children. Have the children tap a steady beat on their knees as you recite the rhyme. When you say the line “The mouse ran up the clock,” have the children wiggle their fingers toward the ceiling. When you say the line “The clock struck one,” have children hold up one finger or make a chiming sound. When you say the line “The mouse ran down,” have the children wiggle their fingers back down to their laps. Finish the last line of the rhyme while patting the beat.

**Activity**
After saying the rhyme and doing the fingerplays a few times, tell the children that you are going to change the title of “Hickory Dickory Dock” so the words all start with the /b/ sound. (Children can identify “B” as the letter that makes the /b/ sound.) Recite the new version of the rhyme, “Bickory Bickory Bock.” You (or the children) can then suggest other letters and letter sounds. If you say, “The next sound we are going to use is the sound the letter ‘L’ makes,” the rhyme would become “Lickory Lickory Lock.” If you say, “Let’s try the first sound in the word ‘pumpkin,’” the rhyme would become “Pickory Pickory Pock.”

**Transition**
As you direct the group to the next activity, change the initial sound in the key words of your instructions and have children “correct” you. If you say, for example, “Now we are going to pick a gong from the gong gook,” the children would reply, “Pick a song from the song book.” You could also dismiss children from large-group time by saying their name using a different initial sound (e.g., “Benny” for “Henry”).

**Variations**
- When you say, “The clock struck one,” have the children play musical instruments like triangles or bells to represent the clock sound.
- Create a new rhyme for the line “The clock struck one” (e.g., “The clock struck three, he climbed a tree”).

**Follow-up**
- Post the words to “Hickory Dickory Dock” in the classroom along with pictures of the children participating in this experience.
- Add “Hickory Dickory Dock” to the class song book.
- Put a clock or timer in the classroom.

**Accommodations for Children With Special Needs**
- Provide hands-on guidance during the fingerplay for children with motor skill difficulties.
- Provide picture cards illustrating each line of the rhyme for children who need support following verbal instructions.
- Hold up letter cards to help visual learners attend to and process the information.
- Gently tap the steady beat of the rhyme on the back of a child who is distractable or needs extra sensory input.

At the line “The clock struck one,” children hold up one finger or make a chiming sound.
Itsy Bitsy Spider Revisited

Originating Idea
The children enjoy listening to “Itsy Bitsy Spider” at greeting time. The teachers have also been helping children identify feelings when conflicts occur. They decided to use a familiar song character to help children label and reenact a range of emotions.

Opener
Sing “Itsy Bitsy Spider” as the children perform the fingerplay. Show one of the drawings (e.g., sad face) to the children and ask them how the spider might be feeling. Then show the other drawings (e.g., happy face, frightened face, angry face) and ask the children to identify each emotion.

Activity
Show one of the drawings a second time and ask children how they would move if they were feeling that emotion (e.g., if the drawing showed a sad face, the children could hang their heads and walk slowly). Then ask the children how their voices would sound if they were to talk while feeling that same emotion. Have the children sing “Itsy Bitsy Spider” using that tone of voice.

Transition
Have the children sing “Itsy Bitsy Spider” while creeping and crawling like a spider to the next part of the daily routine.

Variations
- Ask children to suggest emotions that aren’t displayed on the drawings.
- Use other songs and rhymes that contain familiar characters (e.g., “Little Bo Peep,” “Mary Had a Little Lamb”).
- Have children pretend to move and speak like another animal or creature (e.g., monster, mouse, sheep, fairy).

Follow-up
- Add “Itsy Bitsy Spider” to the class song book.
- Place rubber spiders in the toy area.
- At planning time, give each child a picture of a spider. The teacher has a duplicate set of pictures and holds them up, one at a time. When a child’s picture matches a picture that the teacher displays, it is the child’s turn to plan.
- For recall, have the children walk with a large, stuffed spider to the area where this activity took place.

Accommodations for Children With Special Needs
- Show a picture of a spider creeping off to the planning table for children who have difficulty following verbal instructions.
- Prepare a picture card for each line of the song to support visual learners. Display the cards while you are singing.

This activity builds on the classic song and fingerplay, a favorite of children and adults.
Take Me for a Ride in a Car, Car

Originating Idea
A few children consistently plan to play with the cars and tracks in the toy area. Often the children spend time looking at, describing, and naming the vehicles. This activity builds on those interests and provides opportunities for creative language.

Opener
Tell the children what type of vehicle you used to arrive at school and encourage them to describe how they travel to school. Your conversation might go something like this:

Teacher: I came to school today, and I was riding in a type of car called a jeep. How do you get to school?
Liam: My mom takes us to school in our red van.
Brandon: Sometimes I ride on my dad’s shoulders.
Teacher: You get rides on your dad’s shoulders? How does that feel?
Brandon: At first when I was little, I was scared. Now I want him to do it all the time!
Teacher: You really enjoy riding like that. Today we are going to sing a song about all sorts of cars or things we can ride in or ride on.

Sing the song “Take Me for a Ride in a Car, Car”:

Take me for a ride in a car, car.
Take me for a ride in a car, car.
Take me for a ride, take me for a ride,
Take me for a ride in a car, car.

Activity
Repeat the song, changing the lyrics to reflect one of the children’s ideas. You might say, “Let’s sing again, but this time we’ll sing about the car that belongs to Liam’s mom — the red van.” Begin to keep a steady beat by tapping on your knees or another part of your body and then sing:

Take me for a ride in a red van.
Take me for a ride in a red van.
Take me for a ride, take me for a ride,
Take me for a ride in a red van.

Encourage children to suggest ideas for other types of cars. Often their ideas will contain lengthy descriptions, such as “a purple polka dot kitty car” or “a rainbow doll and toy car.” Accept all suggestions, repeating them to the children before starting the song. (You may have to slow the song’s tempo to allow for the more complex descriptions. This can be beneficial, however, because it encourages wordplay and vocabulary growth. It also sounds unusual to the children, and they enjoy the novelty.)

Transition
Ask children to think of a final idea for a vehicle. Have them move to the next part of the daily routine while pretending to be that vehicle. If a child suggests a “monster truck,” for instance, you might say, “This time while we sing the song, let’s drive our monster trucks to our planning table.” The children then devise ways to depict a monster truck as you sing the song.

Variations
• Instead of a car, sing about other vehicles (e.g., boat, plane, helicopter, tricycle, bicycle).
• Discuss with children how it would look and feel to walk on different surfaces. You might sing, “Take me for a walk on an ice rink,” “Take me for a walk on a rocky road,” or “Take me for a walk on a hot, sandy beach.” Have the children walk around the large-group area as you sing the song.

Follow-up
• Place various types of toy vehicles in the toy and/or block area of the classroom.
• Have children paint with a toy vehicle by dabbing paint on its wheels and then rolling the vehicle across a piece of paper. You can sing the song as the children paint.
• Place books and pictures about cars and other vehicles in the classroom environment.
• Take a field trip to a car, train, or transportation museum.

Accommodations for Children With Special Needs
• For children who need support with verbal instructions, display pictures of cars and trucks. Have them choose a vehicle to sing about by selecting a picture.
• To help children who are easily distracted, gently pat the steady beat of the song on their backs or shoulders.