

I hear thunder

Traditional

P
130

Background

This is a popular song with a very familiar tune – it can be sung as a round to the tune of 'Frere Jacques'. The text can also be sung or read with accompanying actions. The repeated lines support prediction and encourage word-for-word matching.

Shared reading and discussing the text

- Read or sing the rhyme, following the words with a pointer.
- Ask the children if they notice a pattern to the song. Draw attention to the repeated lines.
- Teach actions for the song, for example:

I hear thunder (put hand to ear)
Oh! don't you? (point to other children)
Pitter, patter raindrops (make rain falling action with fingers)
I'm wet through (hug self)
I see blue skies (put hand to eyes)
Way up high (point or reach to sky)
Hurry up the sunshine (make a circle with hands to indicate sunshine)
I'll soon dry (shake arms as if shaking water from them).

Alternatively, ask the children for suggestions for new actions.

- Instead of miming actions, clap the rhythm as you sing or chant. Then ask the children to clap without singing – hearing the song in their heads. Some children will find this challenging; it is more demanding than clapping and singing at the same time.
- Ask the children to suggest other songs and rhymes that they know about the weather, for example 'Dr Foster Went to Gloucester', 'The North Wind Doth Blow', 'Rain Rain Go Away'. Recite the rhymes together.

Activities

- Ask the children to draw a stormy or a sunny day. Display the stormy pictures with the first verse of the poem and the sunny pictures with the second verse.

- As you sing the song again, ask the children in groups to mime a day at the seaside. Tell them to imagine that it is a nice sunny day at the beach. What sorts of things might they be doing? (Making sandcastles, playing in the sea, eating ice cream.) Then they hear thunder – a storm is coming – what will they do now? (Quickly pack everything away, head for shelter.) They feel the first raindrops. (Perhaps they put their hands out to feel the rain or put umbrellas up as they head for shelter.) The rain eases and they see sunshine. (They return to the beach.) Freeze the action at key points and encourage the children to look at each other's poses.

- Write lines of the song on strips of card (that can be attached to a magnetic board or with Blu-Tack). Seat the children in a circle and distribute one set of the lines, retaining one set. Explain that you only have half of the song and they must help you find the other half so you can sing it together. Show and read the first line. Ask who has the matching line. Draw attention to features of the language as you go through the song: the number of words in a line, question marks, initial letters and so on. When the song is completed, sing it together and thank the children for helping you put it back together again.

- Tell the children that sometimes words hide within other words. Write the word *raindrop* and ask if anyone can see a word hiding inside it. Ask them to show you where the word is (*rain* or *drop*). Repeat this with *sunshine*.

- Make a book of favourite weather rhymes and ask the children to illustrate them or make collages of pictures from magazines.

Extension/further reading

Make a video recording of the children singing the song with actions. Play it back and encourage the children to identify what they liked about their performance.

A good collection of poems is *Poems About Weather* compiled by Amanda Earl (Hodder Children's Books).