

# Songs and Rhymes

FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Teacher's Book

Julian Dakin

**SONGS AND RHYMES  
FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH**

TEACHER'S BOOK

Julian Dakin



Longman

## PREFACE

Many people have helped me in preparing this book. My teachers at the Departments of Phonetics and Contemporary English in Leeds tried to show me the applications of phonetics and linguistics to language teaching. The children at Spring Grove County School, Huddersfield, gave me the encouragement to attempt such an application in the restricted area of teaching songs and rhymes. The teachers at Spring Grove gave me the benefit of their own experience and of their private anthologies of rhymes.

The treatment of rhythm in this book is based on the work of Professor David Abercrombie, and the treatment of intonation on that of Professor Michael Halliday. But I have deliberately simplified their handling of these complex problems, and this book should not be taken as an accurate presentation of their work.

Gill Brown, of the Department of Phonetics in Edinburgh, prepared the tables on rhythm and intonation and made many valuable suggestions for the Introduction. Annick Maurin assisted with the musical notation for the songs and composed three original tunes. I have also used suggestions for improving the text from John Laver, Department of Phonetics, University of Ibadan, from Pit Corder and Donald Macaulay, Department of Applied Linguistics, Edinburgh, from John Spencer, School of English, Leeds, from Hugh Fraser, Jordanhill Training College, Glasgow, from Bill O'Donnell, Moray House, and from my father. My sister, Mrs Anne Lee-French, helped me to organize the rhymes and to prepare the texts for publication.

If I may dedicate the collection, it is for Zarcena Akhtar, a little Pakistani immigrant aged nine, who liked rhymes and songs much, much better than anything else I ever taught her.

J.D.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the following for permission to reproduce copyright material:

Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd for 'What are you going to be' from *Songs and Marching Tunes for Children*; Methuen & Co. Ltd., for 'The King's Breakfast' from *When we were very Young* by A. A. Milne; Campbell Connelly & Co. Ltd., for 'The Hokey Cokey'; J. Curwen & Sons Ltd for 'Rio Grande', and 'The Animals went in Two by Two'; United Music Publishers Ltd on behalf of the publishers/proprietors, S.D.M. of Paris, for 'Brother Peter' from *48 Rondes Enfants*.

It has not proved possible to trace the copyright owners of some of the songs and rhymes but if the publishers are notified of any omissions, they will be glad to make acknowledgement in subsequent editions of this book.

## FOREWORD

This is a book for the teacher of English as a second language. It contains a selection of over 130 rhymes and songs. They are graded and grouped according to difficulty of content. The teacher is helped to decide when to introduce a particular rhyme, and is shown how to use it as practice or test material in teaching the sounds, structures and vocabulary of English.

The rhymes can be used with many different types of learner. They are suitable for immigrant children in their first year or so of learning English, and for children abroad learning English during their first two or three years. Many of these rhymes can be used with older learners, or adults, as light relief. They can be used in remedial work on pronunciation with learners of all ages.

Each rhyme or song has been selected as an enjoyable piece of verse in its own right. I have not included verse which has specially been composed for drilling structures or vocabulary. Such verse may well have its own value, but it seldom has any charm. The rhymes in this collection are intended to be enjoyed for their own sake. The learner's attention is spontaneously drawn to the use of language in them, to its expressiveness. His sustained interest in the rhymes derives from the pleasure of reciting familiar and meaningful material. The teacher may be using the rhymes to practice particular structures or sounds, but he need not make the learners aware of this. It is more important to get them to enjoy using language, and, in the long term, to awaken their appreciation of expressive writing, and perhaps their own creative talents.

The rhymes and songs in this collection have been used with non-English speaking children between the ages of five and thirteen at Spring Grove County School, Huddersfield. These children differ in one important respect from children learning English overseas. They are growing up in an English environment, and the teacher is very much concerned to make them familiar with that environment. Robins, snow and breakfast are all part of the immigrant child's new experience. They may be quite unknown to children in many overseas countries where English is taught. The teacher in such areas will have to exercise discretion in his use of the rhymes.

Some of the rhymes are more suitable for younger children, some for older children and adults. The teacher must decide himself which are most likely to appeal to his class. Songs like *The Cokey Cokey*, or *Ten Green Bottles*, can be taught to learners of all ages. Experimenting is to be encouraged. Sometimes children like rhymes which might be thought to be well above or below their age level. What an English child might consider beneath his dignity may still delight a foreign learner of the same age.

# CONTENTS

Page

## Preface

iii

## Acknowledgements

iii

## Foreword

iv

1. THE NUMBERING OF THE RHYMES	1
2. THE TABLES	2
3. THE ROLE OF SONGS AND RHYMES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING	3
4. PRESENTING THE SONGS AND RHYMES	6

## How to use the Tables

1. INDIVIDUAL SOUNDS	8
2. STRESS AND RHYTHMIC PATTERNS	9
3. INTONATION	12
4. VOCABULARY	14
5. GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES	15
6. CONVERSATIONAL EXCHANGES	16

## The Tables

1. LIST OF PHONETIC SYMBOLS AND TABLE OF INDIVIDUAL SOUNDS	19
2. LIST OF WEAK FORMS AND TABLE OF STRESS AND RHYTHMIC PATTERNS	23
3. INTONATION	27
4. VOCABULARY	31
5. GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES	34
6. CONVERSATIONAL EXCHANGES	40

## Notes on Presenting the Rhymes

43

---

LONGMAN GROUP LIMITED

London

Associated companies, branches and representatives throughout the world

© Longman Group Ltd (formerly, Longmans, Green & Co Ltd) 1968

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Copyright owner.

*This edition first published 1968*

*Eighth impression 1977*

ISBN 0 582 52130 0

*Printed in Great Britain by Lowe & Brydone Printers Limited, Thetford*

# INTRODUCTION

## I THE NUMBERING OF THE RHYMES

The rhymes have been numbered for reference. I have tried to put the simpler ones at the beginning and the more difficult ones at the end, but it has not always been easy to decide which rhymes are simpler than others. The difficulty of a rhyme seems to lie in three areas.

- (i) its theme, or subject matter
- (ii) its vocabulary
- (iii) its grammatical structure.

The rhymes vary in the length and complexity of their themes, and in the range of their vocabulary and structural content. They also vary in the *familiarity* of their content. Certain themes, certain vocabulary items, and certain structures are more likely to be familiar to learners in the early stages than others. The *theme* of *If all the world were paper* is both more complex and more unusual than that of *This is the way we wash our face*. The *vocabulary* of *The animals went in two by two* contains a much greater variety of items, and on the whole less familiar ones, than *What does the cat say?* The *structure* of *Ten Green Bottles* is both more varied and more complex than that of *One Man went to mow*.

But *Ten Green Bottles* is quite often taught very early. This is because the meaning of the song as a whole can very easily be demonstrated. The difficulty of a rhyme seems to depend more on how easily its meaning can be demonstrated than on any other single feature, such as its grammatical structure. The twelfth rhyme in this collection, to take an example, is *I've got ten little fingers*. It uses the perfect tense, which in many books is not taught until after the present tenses. But from every other point of view this rhyme is slightly simpler than the fifteenth rhyme, *X is wearing a bright blue dress*, which uses only the present continuous tense.

The first twenty or so rhymes in this collection are on the whole short and easy to learn. They contain only one or two short 'themes', which are often repeated with minor variations. They are about animals, parts of the body or familiar daily activities. They do not use more than one or two different grammatical structures each.

From the twenty-fourth rhyme onwards, simple stories are introduced. These contain a sequence of themes, or a number of themes in contrast. The complexity of the themes, and the variety of structure and vocabulary in each rhyme, begin to grow. This ordering may not suit every teacher's requirements. It does not have to be followed. It is only intended as a rough guide to simplicity of content. Any rhyme can be taught at any time, provided:

1. The structures contained in it have already been presented in the classroom.
2. The vocabulary is also largely familiar to the learners.

The teacher can waive these principles as long as he is sure that the meaning of unfamiliar structures and vocabulary will be clearly demonstrated in his presentation. Some phrases ('Diddle, diddle, dumpling'), some names ('Georgie Porgie') and a few structures ('Blue is the sea') are in any case unusual and unlikely to occur elsewhere. But they can readily be absorbed by the learner, and enjoyed by him, provided the general context is clear. The rhymes, it must be remembered, are being learnt for the learner's enjoyment. He will not enjoy them fully unless he can understand the greater part of each at first hearing.

## 2 THE TABLES

The rhymes are ordered to give some indication of the simplicity of their content. The teacher can work through the book with his class using the rhymes primarily as light relief and only incidentally for practising the different language skills. Or he may use the rhymes specifically for practising certain points. At any stage he may find that his class is having difficulty with particular sounds or structures. He may want to give extra practice on particular vocabulary items or conversational exchanges (formulae). Or he may want material for remedial work in all aspects of pronunciation. For each of these needs there are reference tables which show the teacher which rhymes will help him.

To take an example: the pupils may be having trouble in distinguishing between the vowels in words like '*ship*' and '*sheep*', '*fill*' and '*feel*'. The teacher can look up these sounds in the reference tables. He will find a list of rhymes which practice these two vowels, and those which contrast them. He can then teach any of the rhymes which are within the understanding of his class. Appropriate rhymes can also be used as test material, if he wishes to see how successfully the learners have mastered specific sound, stress and intonation patterns.

The reference tables list the rhymes that can be used to practice:

- (1) individual sounds
- (2) stress and rhythmic patterns
- (3) intonation
- (4) vocabulary
- (5) grammatical structures
- (6) conversational exchanges.

### 3 THE ROLE OF SONGS AND RHYMES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

The reference tables attempt to show the teacher how he can make best use of the rhymes and songs. In the classroom the teacher has to:

- (1) present new material
- (2) practise it and get the pupils to learn it
- (3) develop it and get the pupils to use it
- (4) test that it has been learnt.

What kind of material the teacher presents depends on whether he is concerned with teaching all the language skills, or only certain of them—say only those skills involved in good pronunciation. If the teacher is teaching all the language skills his approach may be either '*structural*' or '*contextual*'. The structural approach sees the learner's most difficult task as the mastery of the grammatical structures of the new language. To make this easier for him, he is presented with only one structure at a time. This is thoroughly drilled before the next structure is introduced. For instance, the present continuous is often taught before the simple past tense, and the positive form of each tense before the negative. By teaching only one structure at a time, it is hoped that the learner will avoid confusing the structures of the new language with each other and with those of his mother tongue. The structures are graded according to notions of 'simplicity', 'usefulness', and 'teachability', the more difficult structures being developed from simpler ones. In this way the learner progresses through a list of structures, gradually acquiring mastery over an increasing range.

This approach has certain limitations, particularly in the early stages. It makes it difficult to get the learner to use the language for his own needs. At the beginning, for instance, he may be taught only the present continuous tense. But there are few situations in which we use only the present continuous. The *contextual* approach teaches the natural use of language in particular situations. Adults might be taught, in the early stages, the language we use for greeting people, shopping, travel, exchange of news, etc. Children would be taught to draw pictures and talk about them, to make a model house, to play simple games, etc. The learner progresses through a variety of situations, learning the language appropriate to each, and gradually developing the skill to express his own needs and reactions in any new situation. This approach resembles in some respects the way in which a child learns his mother tongue. Of course most structural courses try to '*contextualise*' the structures—to make them meaningful—while contextual courses try to make sure that there is a constant development of control over structure and vocabulary.



Good accounts of the structural approach can be found in F. L. Billows *The Techniques of Language Teaching* (Longmans, 1961) and H. E. and Dorothy Palmer *English through Actions* (Longmans, 1954). An account of the contextual approach can be found in S. P. Corder *The Visual Element in Language Teaching* (Longmans, 1966).

Both approaches have been designed for adult learners. Children do not learn in the same way as adults. Their interest has to be kept alive by different techniques and they appear to have a facility for learning language which adults do not retain. A strictly structural approach would seem to be contrary to accepted primary school methods and to the aptitudes of the children. The emphasis in a primary school is on the child learning to express himself. One consequence of this is that skills taught mechanically are as quickly as possible introduced into the child's expressive range, as games or part of other meaningful activities. *The Peak Course* (Oxford University Press, 1963) and *The Philippines Course* (Manila 1961) are excellent examples of attempts to bring language to life for primary school children.

Whatever approach the teacher is using—whether structural, contextual, or the more traditional 'grammar-translation' approach—he needs means of practising and developing what he is teaching. It is here that songs and rhymes can be used.

New material can be presented by *demonstration* or through *involvement*. When a teacher demonstrates a new point, he is consciously drawing the learner's attention to some contrast between sounds, or to some use of a vocabulary item or a structure. When a teacher does not draw the learners' attention to what he is trying to teach, but slips in new vocabulary or structures as part of an activity, a story, or an explanation about something else, he is teaching by involvement. The contrast is between demonstrating the new material as an end in itself, and using it as a means to an end. The end might very well be a song or a rhyme containing unfamiliar items, say the use of the past tense in *This little piggy*. The teacher could introduce the past tense forms of *go*, *stay* and *have* in a story about five little pigs. He can tell the children where the pigs lived, what each pig was like (making them as different from each other as possible) and finally about the day they went shopping, and what happened, and why. The rhyme is then introduced as a kind of memorable summary of the days events.

Songs and rhymes can also be used as practice material. All the systems of a language, the sounds, structures and vocabulary, can be practised in three ways.

(1) *Drills*. They can be drilled overtly and mechanically by repetition, or by some more complex drill where the learner is required to match a cue from the teacher with an appropriate response.

(2) *Rhymes and songs.* Here the practising is done covertly. The point being practised is embedded in a piece of meaningful language. It is contextualised but it has only a verbal context. When a pupil learns a rhyme, he is learning to associate words with other words, but he is not learning to act in a real-life situation.

(3) *Dialogues and conversational exchanges.* Here the material is fully contextualised. The learner is learning to act in situations. Some of the situations (what to say at a railway station, or in a shop) can only, of course, be simulated in a classroom.

The teacher's job does not end with practising the new material. He must also develop it, get the learners to use it in their everyday conversation and activities. Pictures, games, painting and modelling, are traditional ways of getting a class to talk. The teacher may also encourage the class to exchange news, tell stories, and compose little plays and imaginary conversations. Songs and rhymes come in at this stage too. They can be used as listening material, making the learners familiar with additional uses of the material they have been learning. The learners can also be encouraged to use this new material in composing their own rhymes and jingles. Even Indian and Chinese children, who do not have the same experience of rhyme as European children, can fairly quickly learn to write their own jingles. Here are two by an eight year old Indian girl in her first year of English at a London school:

big clock, big clock  
always go's tick tock  
in walked teddy bear  
and said big clock are you there

two girls, two girls  
you always play together  
you always wear shoes which is made out of leather  
when lorrin come's and sits shirllly starts to knit  
when Shelley strokes a cat lorrin rests on a mat  
and that is what they like to do and eat lovely mushroom too.

Rhymes and songs thus occupy an intermediary position between mechanical drills, if they are used at all, and practice in simulated situations. They are meaningful, some lend themselves to dramatisation and a dialogue approach, and all possess special advantages as practice material. Rhythm and rhyme have an elemental appeal, especially to children.

Perhaps because of the appeal of rhythm, rhymes are memorable. If they are well taught, they are seldom forgotten. Not all language material is so easily retained and evoked. For most learners, singing or reciting a rhyme is also much easier than talking. This makes songs and rhymes

particularly useful for practising the sound systems of the language, but it also helps the learning of vocabulary, structures and conversational exchanges. Through the use of rhyme, the learner can gain fluency and a control over new material which can then be drawn into his everyday usage.

How much time should a teacher spend on rhymes, and how much can he expect to be gained from them? He should not spend more than ten minutes or quarter of an hour in any one lesson on rhymes. If he introduces one, or perhaps two, new rhymes each week, he will not be straining the learner's interest, while he will be providing an enjoyable change from drills, dialogues, or other activities. The emphasis should always be on enjoyment, but a learner who has learnt two-thirds of the rhymes in this book, and can recite them meaningfully and accurately, will have mastered the sound systems of English, and a wide selection of its vocabulary and structures.

## 4 PRESENTING THE SONGS AND RHYMES

Rhymes and songs are easily learnt if they immediately catch the learner's interest. Any new rhyme should, therefore, be simple enough in vocabulary and structure for the learners to understand. It must be appropriate to their age level. It must be relevant to their experience and interests. Once a rhyme is chosen, under these restrictions, the teacher must use all his dramatic power to get it across. He must feel free to modify any parts of the rhyme, particularly unusual vocabulary items, which would puzzle the learner.

Even then, many rhymes are elliptic and possibly too condensed to be appreciated without some introduction. The simplest way of making sure that both the language and the content are understood is to tell the rhyme as a story first. In his introductory story, the teacher can relate the content of the rhyme to familiar language and familiar experiences. The rhyme becomes a summary of a story that the learners understand and enjoy.

The first presentation may still need pictures, mime and gestures. The rhyme should be performed at least twice by the teacher before the learners are asked to join in, and as often again as is necessary until they have learnt it by heart. After two or more repetitions, the learners will probably join in of their own accord. Learning the rhyme can be made a game. First the class, or a group, performs with the teacher. Then groups, or individuals, can perform on their own to see who is best. In all repetitions the gestures and mime appropriate to the rhyme should be practised

with the words. If possible, the rhyme can be turned into a miniature drama with different groups and individuals in the different parts. With children, those who can read can be given the rhyme to write down or copy in their best writing. Other children can illustrate it or model the characters. But the moment interest begins to flag, the rhyme must be abandoned for another lesson, or another day. Whatever benefit the teacher expects the learners to get from the rhyme, he must remember that their interest derives solely from the pleasure it gives them.

There is a section of *NOTES ON PRESENTING THE RHYMES* at the end of this book. It contains indications of the tunes and finger-plays that are traditionally associated with many of the songs and rhymes. It also contains suggestions about how to present and develop some of the rhymes. These suggestions are intended for the teacher of children, though some of the ideas may prove useful for the teacher of adults. An asterisk (\*) placed against the number of the rhyme indicates that it is discussed in the *NOTES*.

# HOW TO USE THE TABLES

## I INDIVIDUAL SOUNDS

Most books on English pronunciation list twenty-four consonant and twenty vowel sounds commonly used in acceptable English speech. Many of these sounds will be unfamiliar to the foreign learner and he will probably use sounds from his own language in their place, until he has mastered the English system. A list of the English sounds appears on page 20. The phonetic symbols are those used by Daniel Jones in his *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (Dent, 1956).

There are at least four rhymes or songs for each of the vowel sounds except /ə:/, /ə/, /ɔɪ/, /iə/, /uə/, and for each of the consonants except /θ/, /z/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/ and /j/. These all occur in the rhymes but not very frequently. Practice material is accordingly scarcer. /ə/ is a special case. It is the most frequent vowel sound in English and is practised adequately in nearly every rhyme.

Some teachers like to spend ten minutes a day on sound drills and to work systematically through all difficult points. Others prefer to use exercises occasionally and only when their pupils are repeatedly stumbling over a particular sound. In either case, there are several different ways of practising sounds.

(1) *Making the sound.* This can often be approached from making animal noises (see page 44). The teacher can help the learners by drawing their attention to the position of his own lips and tongue.

(2) *Simple commands.* The teacher can make up simple commands in which the sound occurs. For instance

[p] Put down your pencils

[i] Sit down

The class repeats these commands after the teacher, and individual pupils can take over the teacher's role.

(3) *Practice words.* These are familiar vocabulary items containing the sound in question. They can be repeated after the teacher or put into sentences by individual pupils. Some teachers like to contrast sounds which the pupils confuse. The teacher might ask pupils to identify pictures of a *ship* and a *sheep*, a *cat* and a *cart*, a *cap* and a *cup*—to take a few examples of what are often difficult contrasts for foreign learners.

(4) *A song or rhyme.* The rhymes and songs in this book can be used for practising nearly all the individual sounds of English. Consonant clusters, such as initial /str-/ or final /-ps/ cannot be dealt with so systematically. They do not occur in the rhymes with the same frequency as individual sounds. If the teacher wishes to practice consonant clusters,

some of which may prove very difficult for the learners, he will have to devise his own material. A full list of the sound clusters is given in Gimson's *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English* (Arnold, 1962).

Further drills, suitable for children, appear in C. McCallien and P. D. Stevens *English Speech* (Longmans, 1960). There are also a number of drills, suitable for adults with a fair knowledge of English, in L. A. Hill's *Drills and Tests* (Longmans, 1961).

## 2 STRESS AND RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

The individual sounds and sound clusters of English occur within syllables. Syllables themselves may be stressed or unstressed. The stressed syllables in this line are printed in capitals:

THIS is the HOUSE that JACK BUILT

In English we preserve a fairly regular beat which falls only on the stressed syllables. This means that the intervals between one stressed syllable and the next are roughly equal in time, no matter how many unstressed syllables come in between. The interval between the beginning of one stressed syllable and the beginning of the next is called a *foot*. Feet are marked by vertical lines:

| This is the | house that | Jack | built |

There are four feet in this line. They do not all contain the same number of syllables, but they all take about the same time to say. This means that the three syllables in the first foot

| This is the |

are relatively compressed, and the single syllables in the last two feet

| Jack |, | built |

are relatively drawn out to help preserve the regular intervals between stresses. *Jack* would be spoken more quickly in a sentence such as

| Jack is a | boy |

for the same reason.

There is one very important consequence of this regular beat falling on stressed syllables. The vowels of all unstressed syllables tend to be modified or 'weakened', and are spoken very quickly. Some vowels disappear altogether, and this is recognised in the spelling of very common words:

will, shall = 'll

have = 've

am = 'm, etc.

Spelling only indicates some of the normal abbreviations. It does not show the characteristic modifications which *all* vowels are given in unstressed syllables. In particular, it does not show the modified forms,

or *weak forms*, of the most common grammatical words. In the first two lines below several of these words occur in their weak forms:

Oh | dear | what can the | matter be |

He | promised to | buy me a | bunch of blue | ribbons |

The pronunciation of the weak forms in these lines is indicated below:

<i>Spelling-</i>	<i>Stressed Form</i>	<i>Weak Form</i>
can	<b>kæn</b>	<b>kən</b>
the	<b>ðə, ði:</b>	<b>ðə, ði</b> (before a vowel)
be	<b>bi:</b>	<b>bi</b>
he	<b>hi:</b>	<b>hi, i</b>
to	<b>tu:</b>	<b>tʊ, tə</b>
me	<b>mi:</b>	<b>mi</b>
a	<b>ei</b>	<b>ə</b>
of	<b>ɒv</b>	<b>əv</b>

If the two lines above are read with the stressed form of these words, rather than the weak form, they sound completely unnatural.

Many foreign learners are quite unaccustomed to the idea of weak forms and to the regularity of the beat in English on stressed syllables. They may tend to use the stressed forms everywhere and to give each syllable roughly the same degree of stress. In consequence, they find native English speakers difficult to understand and will have difficulty in making themselves understood. If the teacher is to overcome these problems, he must pay particular attention to training his class in the use of stressed and weak forms. There is a list of the commonest weak forms on page 24. These are the forms which will occur whenever the words in question are unstressed, as they usually are. The teacher can use the rhymes to practise weak forms and to develop the learners' control over *rhythm*.

All the rhymes are spoken as if each line consisted of either two or four feet. The number of feet in the line sets the rhythm. But the rhythm is not always apparent on the printed page. Many lines look as if they contain only three feet:

| Three | blind | mice

| See | how they | run

An English reader will turn these into regular four foot lines by pausing at the end of each line and adding a *silent beat*. The silent beat acts just like an extra foot. The teacher can make the rhythm apparent by clapping his hands or by tapping out the beat on his desk, making one tap or clap for each stressed syllable and one for the silent beat at the end of the line. A silent beat is indicated by the caret symbol 'ˆ':

| Three | blind | mice | ˆ

| See | how they | run | ˆ

The rhythm of a line is not affected by any syllables that precede the

first stressed syllable. The two lines below both have the same rhythm, though the second one has an additional unstressed syllable at the beginning of the line:

| Pus-sy-cat | pus-sy-cat | where have you | been  
There | was an old | woman who | lived in a | shoe

Each rhyme has an overall *shape* depending on the number of feet in each of its lines. The most common shape is composed of regular four foot lines in groups of two or four lines, often underlined by end-rhyming:

(4) | Georgie | Porgie | pud-ding and | pie  
(4) | Kissed the | girls and | made them | cry  
(4) | When the | boys came | out to | play  
(4) | Georgie | Porgie | ran a | way

There is a variant of this shape in which each line consists of three feet and a silent beat:

(3A) | In-sey | Win-sey | Spider | A  
(3A) | Clim-bing | up the | spout | A  
(3A) | Down | came the | rain | A  
(3A) And | washed the | spider | out | A

Four foot lines often alternate with lines consisting of three feet and a silent beat:

(4) | Jack and | Jill went | up the | hill  
(3A) To | fetch a | pail of | water | A  
(4) | Jack fell | down and | broke his | crown  
(3A) And | Jill came | tumbling | after | A

Or the first three lines may each contain four feet and the last line only three feet and a silent beat:

(4) | We have | come for | Polly | Ann  
(4) | Polly | Ann | Polly | Ann  
(4) | We have | come for | Polly | Ann  
(3A) Can | she come | out to | play | A

Or the first, second and last lines may each contain three feet and a silent beat while only the third line has four feet:

(3A) The | brave old | duke of | York | A  
(3A) He | had ten | thousand | men | A  
(4) He | marched them | up to the | top of the | hill  
(3A) And he | marched them | down a | gain | A

In another variation, the third line is split up into two halves of two feet, giving a shape 4:4:2:2:4

(4) | Humpty | Dumpty | sat on a | wall  
(4) | Humpty | Dumpty | had a great | fall  
(2) | All the King's | horses  
(2) And | all the King's | men  
(4) | Couldn't put | Humpty to | gether a | gain



Another very common shape consists of groups of two foot lines:

- (2) | Two little | birds
- (2) | Sitting on a | wall
- (2) | One called | Peter
- (2) | One called | Paul

A pair of two foot lines may be followed by a four foot line:

- (2) The | North Wind does | blow
- (2) And | we shall have | snow
- (4) And | what will the | robin do | then poor | thing
- (2) He'll | sit in a | barn
- (2) To | keep himself | warm
- (4) And | hide his head | under his | wing poor | thing

A pair of two foot lines may also be followed by a three foot line with a silent beat:

- (2) I | like to | skip
- (2) I | like to | jump
- (3A) I | like to | run a | bout | A
- (2) I | like to | play
- (2) I | like to | sing
- (3A) I | like to | laugh and | shout | A

The *Table of Stress and Rhythmic Patterns* lists the rhymes according to their shape. The different shapes are labelled with letters of the alphabet:

A: regular four foot line	F: 4:4:2:2:4
B: regular 3A	G: regular two foot line
C: 4:3A:4:3A	H: 2:2:4:2:2:4
D: 4:4:4:3A	I: 2:2:3A:2:2:3A
E: 3A:3A:4:3A	

Letters have also been placed against the texts of the rhymes to indicate which group they belong to.

### 3 INTONATION

The sounds of English occur in syllables, and syllables are organised into feet which carry the rhythm of speech. The feet themselves are organised in *tone groups*. Each tone group carries a characteristic intonation pattern, and consists of at least one foot. In the rhymes, tone groups normally coincide with the end of a line. They are marked by double vertical lines.

| Hickory | dickory | dock | |

Within each tone group there is a syllable which carries the main pitch movement. This is called the *tonic syllable*. In these two lines the tonic