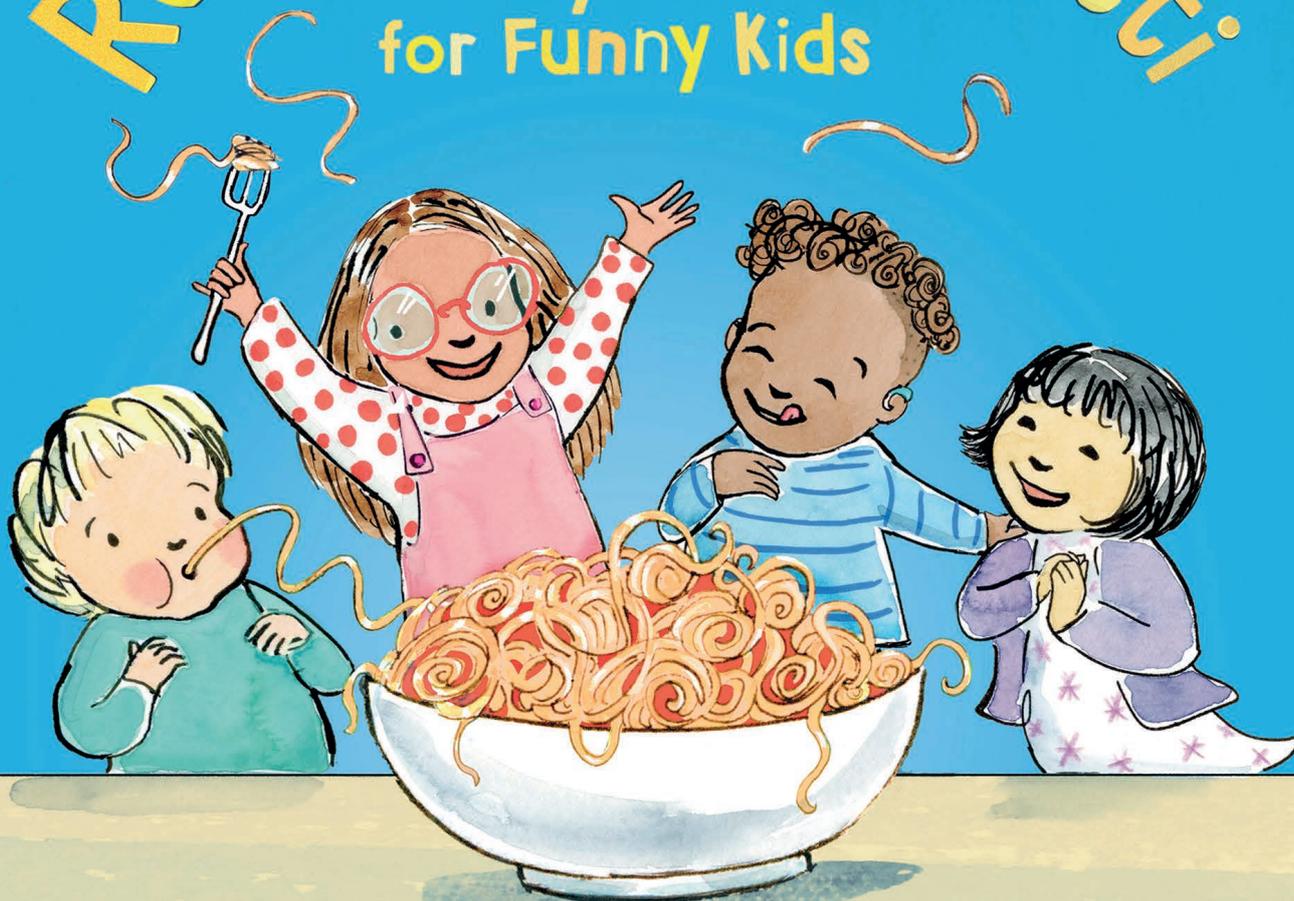


Ready for Spaghetti!

Funny Poems
for Funny Kids



Michael Rosen

illustrated by

Polly Dunbar

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Teachers' Notes

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BOOKS

These notes have been written by the teachers at the CLPE to provide schools with ideas to develop comprehension and cross-curricular activities around this text. They build on our work supporting teachers to use quality texts throughout the reading curriculum. They encourage a deep reading of and reflection on the text, which may happen over a series of reading sessions, rather than in just one sitting. We hope you find them useful.

The poems and rhymes in this collection follow the journey through a young child's day, from the moment they get up in the morning, to the last thing at night. In the section called "A Note to Grown-Ups" (pages 6–7), Michael Rosen explains the importance of playing with words and language from an early age, as an integral part of exploring the world; he suggests that essential approaches to this are noting rhyme, rhythm, repetition and play.

These notes have been written with preschool children and those working within an Early Years setting in mind.

Poetic and lyrical devices

Rhyme and repetition:

- Rhyming words give children a fun opportunity to play with language. When rereading these poems encourage children to remember the rhyming words and say them with you as you read. This recognition of "matching" sounds will strengthen children's ability to discern sounds, which will support them to learn the alphabetic code (phonemes and their corresponding graphemes).
- Likewise, when reading these poems, allow the children plenty of opportunities to play with the repetition of words and sounds (alliteration, assonance and consonance – see examples below), asking them to repeat them, join in when they know a familiar phrase and say repeated words with emphasis, i.e., varying their voice, tone, pace etc.

Alliteration: repeated consonant sound/s at the beginning of words in a sentence, line or stanza.

Jimmy jammy 'jamas

in my bed.

(from "Jimmy Jams" page 54)

I stare at the stars –

the stars stare at me.

(From "The Stars" page 56)

Assonance: repeated vowel sounds across a series of words in a sentence, line or stanza.

When Grover fell over,

he shouted out: "Ow."

After that shout,

he said, "I'm OK now."

(from "When Grover Fell Over" page 43)

Consonance: repeated consonant sounds within words written in succession or as part of the same sentence, line or stanza (note: alliteration is a form of consonance).

Now my tummy

rumbly rumbles.

(from "Tummy Rumbles" page 14)



Rhythm:

- All of these poems are written with obvious, melodic, rhythmic patterns. These rhythms introduce children to the patterns and natural stresses of language (intonation and prosody) that help readers to understand how words are said, read and spelt, and often give us clues to word meanings.
- When a poem has a strong rhythm, it lends itself to being turned into a song and/or to being accompanied by body percussion (clapping, snapping, stomping, etc.) or percussion instruments. This is suggested for several of the poems but don't be afraid to add your own musical twists to these poems.

Vocabulary

- We are all aware of the importance of broadening children's vocabulary from an early age. Children who know more words can make better sense of the world around them, as well as what they will eventually go on and read; they will also be more motivated to read as they grow older.
- Reading, responding to and interacting with poetry is a fantastic way of introducing children to new vocabulary in familiar contexts, and supporting them to understand and use a growing collection of words.

Art and creative activities:

- Polly Dunbar's enthralling and evocative illustrations will help children to relate the words of Michael Rosen's poetry to their own lived experiences as well as acting to deepen the children's understanding of the words and as an inspiration for their own drawing and painting.
- Encouraging children to draw, paint or create something in response to poetry is a great way of deepening their understanding and enjoyment of the poem as well as helping them to remember and use some of the newly acquired language they have learnt.

Before reading:

- Before you start, ask the children to think about all the things they do during the course of their day: eat breakfast, walk to school, play "let's pretend" or chase their friends around the playground; the activities they enjoy may relate to a favourite toy or being outside. Talk about the weather and whether this has any effect on their mood or choice of activities. This could be a simple conversation or an opportunity for the children to draw and paint pictures of the familiar events of their day-to-day life.

Endpapers

- Ask the children to respond to the broad, colourful brushstrokes that fill the endpapers. Ask them what they remind them of, e.g., a decoration such as a paper streamer, a sweet wrapper or a flowerbed.
- Provide the children with a palette with the same paint colours and a broad brush and ask them to recreate the patterns and make patterns of their own on a large sheet of paper. As they paint, discuss how children would describe the lines that they have created and the movements that they are making (e.g., "swirl", "splodge", "scribble") as well as what each line could represent, e.g., *This line is the sky and this line is my favourite colour.*

After reading:

Revisit rhymes

- All of the suggested activities encourage teachers to read the poems multiple times until the children become familiar with them. This isn't only a useful thing to do when the children are first exposed to the language in the poems but also throughout the week, term or school year.
- Support the children in connecting the poems with their own experiences. Because the poems follow the



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journey of a young child from waking up to going to sleep, there are poems that can be read and reread first thing in the morning, before lunch, and when the children are eating, playing or relaxing.

- Many of the poems are simple to learn and can be memorized and repeated over time. To help you and the children regularly revisit these poems, you might display them throughout the different areas of your Early Years setting, wherever they are most relevant.

Favourite poems and rhymes

There is an index of the poems at the end of the book. Once you have started reading and learning some of these wonderful poems and rhymes with the children, then use this list to support them in recalling their favourites to be read again.

The poems

Below are some teaching ideas for all of the poems in this collection. There is not a full sequence for every poem, but the ideas exemplified could be adapted to support you when reading other similar poems.

Up

- Discuss how it feels when you are tired and have to get out of bed to prepare for school. Ask the children who wakes them in the morning and what is the first thing they do.
- Read the poem all the way through and ask the children what they liked most about it. It is important that we encourage children to share their initial and personal response to reading, even the youngest learners.
- Next, look closely at the illustration and encourage them to share what they see and continue to make personal connections. *Do you have a clock in your bedroom or a cuddly toy who sleeps with you?*
- Now discuss whether this would be a good poem to wake someone up with, or be woken by. Read the poem again, putting emphasis on the word “up”. Be insistent! Then quieten your voice on the lines in between.
- Read the poem a third time and ask the children to physically act out each of the descriptions, e.g., hiding their eyes from the light, stretching their limbs.
- Read it again now with everyone getting up out of bed. You might want a couple of children to use body percussion or instruments such as drums or shakers to really emphasize the “up, up, uppity-up” lines; striking their instruments with each “up”.
- The children could go on to act out the poem in pairs with one child waking up another.
- When you have finished reading the poem, ask the children where they think the door the little girl is going through might lead her.

Mirror

- Find a collection of mirrors; there might be some in the classroom or in the school’s maths resources.
- Ask the children what they think they will see when they look into their mirror. *Can you describe your face without looking at it?* Then, ask the children to look at themselves really closely, watching the way their mouths move and their eyes blink, etc.
- Now read the poem, holding a mirror up to your own face and addressing the questions to the children. When you ask them “*can you see?*”, turn the mirror to them. Ask them if they can see you in the mirror.
- When you say, “*I’ve gone away now*”, hide the mirror behind your back, then when you get to the final line, ask the children, “*Am I still there?*”
- You now have a set of simple actions that go along with this poem (i.e., moving the mirror to face you, then the children, then behind your back). Ask the children to listen again while you repeat these actions.



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- Finally, ask the children to repeat each line of the poem as you say it (echo reading). By copying your intonation, the children are mimicking the language patterns of the poem, learning that questions and statements sound different and following the rhythm of the words.

Where's My Brush?

- Discuss with the children what it feels like when you are in a hurry and you can't find something: a key, your bag, your lunch box, etc. Then, ask the children to reflect on and share what it feels like for them if they are in a hurry. *How do you feel when you lose things or you need to be reminded to get ready to go out?*
- There are some onomatopoeic words in this poem which the children will enjoy saying aloud (they may remind children of other books and poems they know that use this device, such as Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury's *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*; encourage them to consider and make these connections where relevant).
- When you read the poem for the first time, act out being flustered and in a hurry; rush your lines but stop after "I've got to..." and see if the children can predict what comes next:

I'm all in a rush.
Where's my brush?
I've got to...

I'm all in a hurry –
I'm all in a worry.
I've got to...

- Now read it for a second time and ask the children to repeat the lines from stanzas 2, 4 and 6, after you have said them.
- Once children have heard the poem read aloud a few times, encourage them to chime in by dividing the poem into two voices. You might say the first-person parts of the poem, while the children can make the associated noises.
- Practise this several times until the children can remember the lines (you can still prompt them), and perform the poem together. Depending on the size of the group, you may want the children to dash about as you say the lines, as if they are in a hurry.

Tummy Rumbles

- This poem would be great to read just before lunch when the children are hungry. They could learn some of the lines to say every day as they are lining up to have their lunch.

Long Leggy Egg

- This poem has a similar rhyming pattern and rhythm to "Up" (pages 8–9). You could follow a similar sequence with this poem. Encourage and model tapping out a steady beat representing the pulse of the song while they listen to it being read aloud as well as when they are joining in with the reading (this pulse is indicated by the x marks below). The pulse of the poem remains consistent throughout:

x x x x
Long leggy egggy ...
x x x x
has a hard shell.
x x x x



Long leggy egggy...

x x x x

well, well, well.

- Once children are confident keeping the beat or pulse of the song, they might also try clapping or tapping out the rhythm of the words – using either body percussion or simple instruments again. The rhythm of the poem might vary from line to line and matches with each syllable of the phrase:

* * * * *

Long leggy egggy ...

* * * *

has a hard shell.

- You and the children might clap out the rhythm while reciting the poem aloud, or the children could be challenged to clap the rhythm as they “recite” the poem in their head, while keeping that steady pulse throughout.

Here They Come

- This poem provides a great opportunity for the children to hear and recognize repeated sounds and rhyming words. The onomatopoeic lines follow the same pattern each time:
 - ip -ap -appety -ap
- On first reading, add some actions that represent the sounds in the poem; you might use a pair of flip-flops, a pair of gloves (or washing up-gloves), a toy egg and a cushion or pillow as props.
- Read the poem again and ask the children to echo the lines with the recurring sounds and rhymes.
- When you read the poem for the third time, show the children the props before each of these lines and see if they can remember them (this might take a few goes).
- Finally, read the poem together with the children joining in with all the actions.
- You might choose to extend this session by finding other objects or items of clothing that, when described in the same way as in the poem, fit into the rhyming pattern, e.g.,

Here comes my saggy hat

Cip cap capperty cap

Here comes my cosy anorak

Zip zap zipperty zap

- Prepare some ideas to support the children with these rhymes, although you never know what ideas they might come up with themselves!

Hip Hap Happy

The rhyming pattern in this poem is similar to “Here They Come” (pages 16–17). Follow a similar sequence using body percussion to add emphasis to certain words and phrases.

Silly Old Sun

- After the first reading, engage the children in discussing some of the ideas and themes explored in the poem, as well as any personal connections that they make. Ask the children:

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- *What things do you do that are the same every day?*
 - *What do you think would happen if the sun came out at night?*
 - *How would the moon feel?*
 - *Why is it important that the sun does the “same old thing” every day?*
- This poem has a simple rhyming pattern and is written in a friendly, teasing tone that makes it perfect as a poem that the children can learn by heart, illustrate or perform for others.

Come Back Soon

- Prediction is an essential strategy that readers use to aid their understanding of a text. Fluent readers are constantly asking themselves questions about the text, including what might happen next. This poem is perfect for young children to practise the skill of prediction.
- Before reading, ask the children what they know about balloons, including the behaviours of different kinds of balloons, such as those filled with air and those filled with helium.
- Read the poem up to the end of the first stanza. Ask:
 - *Have you ever held a balloon? Did you enjoy it? Why?*
 - *How might the boy feel about a balloon that is “all his own”?*
 - *Why would he need to tie it to a stone?*
 - *What do you think could happen next?*
- Read the second and third verses and discuss where the children think the balloon might have gone and why.
- Finally read the poem all the way through and ask the children how they think the boy is feeling at the end of the poem.
- There is a clear beginning, middle and end in this poem: it is a simple narrative poem. Ask the children to step into role as the boy, enacting his changing emotions through facial expressions and body language as you reread the poem. Afterwards, discuss the differing emotions and encourage children to make connections with any times when they have felt this way.

Hello, You

- Discuss how they think the children in this poem are feeling. *How do you know?* Ask the children what they feel like doing when they feel that way. *Who would you want to see and where would you like to go?* The children might enjoy echoing and chiming in with the line “Hi-tee-tooty-tie!” – maybe you could make it your morning greeting for the week. You could go on to invent alternative nonsense greetings that are also fun to say.

Hello, Cloud

- A short ditty that is fun to learn by heart. It wouldn’t take long and you could pair it with the reading of “Hello, You” (see above).

Raining Flowers

- This poem provides further opportunities to engage children in rhyme. When you read the first stanza, omit the word “flowers” at the end of line one:

*One day it rained _____
for hours and hours.
For hours and hours
it was raining _____.*



- Tell the children that this is a rhyming poem. Discuss other rhyming poems and songs that they know. *What could possibly be raining if it rhymes with “hours”?* Prepare photographs or images of “showers”, “towers” or “flowers”, etc., to give children some clues if they struggle to think of some rhyming options. Try out any suggestions that they make. Discuss the images these choices make in their minds. *What would that be like?*
- Then read the first verse, inviting children to chime in with the language in the poem. Draw their attention to the word in print that Michael Rosen selected. Invite the children to imagine what it would be like if it was raining flowers. *Would you like that? Why/why not?*
- Now read on, this time missing out the word “peas” from the end of the first line and repeat the rhyming activity. There are more options this time, e.g., “bees”, “keys”, “trees”, “cheese” and of course “knees”. Imagining these objects falling from the sky may cause some laughter from the children, so let them spend some time imagining the consequences.
- Read the poem all the way through. Ask the children if they enjoyed the final stanza. *How was it different? What do they prefer, real rain or crazy rain?*
- The repetition in this poem makes it easy to remember if the children want to recite it themselves.
- You may also follow up the reading with an opportunity for them to imagine other objects falling instead of rain. *How would it feel? Can you rhyme the object with another word?*
- If you do generate rhyming pairs, use these to create new verses to recite together such as:

*One day it rained goats
We had to build boats.
We had to build boats
It was raining goats.*

OR

*One day it rained cake
That made the ground shake
It made the ground shake
The day it rained cake.*

- Finally invite the children to draw a picture of them playing in a silly rain storm. They can pick flowers or peas or choose an idea of their own.

Bumble Bee and Butterfly

- The “um” sounds repeated throughout the first verse of this poem are pleasing to say and make a buzzing sound across your lips a bit like a bumblebee’s buzz. This poem is full of repeated sounds: rhymes, alliteration, assonance and repetition. After reading it to children, invite them to say it along with you, maybe whilst out marching in the outdoor area looking for minibeasts! The poems on this spread might entice children to create their own short rhymes about their favourite minibeasts too.

Snail

- This is another great poem to chant with the children whilst out hunting for beasties in outdoor areas or gardens. Pair this with some wider reading and discussion about snails (see below) and encourage the children to imagine what the day in the life of a snail might be like; what tale would they tell?



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Snail facts:

- snails live in the sea and on land
- their shells protect them from other animals that might eat them
- snails' eyes are on the top of long stalks
- snails' bodies are moist

Books and Weblinks to support learning about snails:

- *Minibeast Adventure with Jess: Snails* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/mini-beast-adventure-with-jess-snail-adventure>
- *Teeny Tiny Creatures, Episode 6: Snails* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000slf7>
- *Eye Spy*, Ruth Brown (Sallywag Press)
- *Snail Trail*, Ruth Brown (Andersen Press)
- *My First Book of Garden Bugs*, Mike Unwin and Tony Sanchez (A&C Black)
- *Are You a Snail?*, Judy Allen and Tudor Humphries (Kingfisher)

Pages 30–35

The next four poems are about outdoor activities. Start a conversation with the children about what they enjoy doing when they are playing outside. Talk about the play equipment in your own setting and whether the children visit parks and playgrounds outside of school. Provide appropriate resources and encourage children to draw a picture of themselves and their friends or family playing outdoors. Some children might like to label these pictures or write simple sentences about what they are doing in the picture.

Padding Pool

- Read the poem all the way through. Ask the children if they have ever played in a paddling or swimming pool. *Did you enjoy it? What was the weather like? Who was with you? Would you do it again? Can you remember a time when you were so hot that water cooled you down?*
- Read the poem a second time and ask the children to help you generate ideas for actions for some of the words or phrases, such as waving your hand near your face to show you feel hot, acting out paddling and waving your arms as if you are splashing everyone.
- When discussing this poem, you might choose to focus briefly on the omission at the end of the first verse: *“And now I am not”*. If necessary, help the children connect this with the first half of the verse in which the narrator explains just how hot they are. *Why are they now “not” hot? What has cooled them down?*
- When you read the poem through, encourage the children to join in with the words as well as the actions that you have created together.
- Ask the children how they might feel before jumping in the pool compared to when they get out.
- If you have the equipment, create opportunities for the children to play with water (a small pool or water tray), splashing and pouring, measuring, listening to and discussing the sounds it makes and feeling it on their skin.

Sandpit

- A nice ditty for the children to say and learn when playing in the sandpit. You might discuss the word “grand” as its meaning may be unfamiliar to them. *Have you heard the word “grand” before? Where have you heard it? What do you think it could mean?* Children might make connections with nursery rhymes as well as the



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names of family members. *What might it mean in this context? What else might you describe as “grand”?*

- If they have heard stories about fairy-tale castles or castles from history, ask them to compare these to a sandcastle.
- *Have you ever made a sandcastle? What would you include?* Children might create plans and drawings for their own sandcastle designs, which they could discuss and label before heading to the sand tray or sandpit to build. They might use terms to describe their castle such as “tower”, “moat”, “turret”, “drawbridge”, “flag”, etc.

Digger

- If possible, have a collection of digger toys, of various sizes, handy before you read this poem.
- This is the perfect poem for echo reading. The lines are easy to remember as they are short and repetitive. There is no narrative structure or theme, so just have fun with the language and rhythm of the poem.
- The first time you read the poem let the children just listen. Hold up a digger as a prop and swap it with others of increasing size as you read through the poem.
- Now read the poem for a second time but this time ask the children to repeat the lines after you read them (echo reading). The children might add actions to clarify meaning for words containing “big” and “dig”. For example, you could move your arms out wide for “big” and “bigger” and perform a digging motion with your hands for “dig” and “digger”.
- You might choose to explore the terms “big” and “bigger” further while developing children’s mathematical skills across the setting, comparing the size of different everyday items and adding the superlative “biggest” to children’s vocabulary too.
- Put the poem up on the wall near the digger toys and perform it with the children when they are exploring and building.

On the Swings

- Like many of the poems in this collection this poem has repetition and rhyme at its heart. Read it to the children and encourage them to say the repeated words and language with you. As part of the suite of poems that refer to the children’s outdoor games, ask the children to reflect on all four of the poems on pages 30–35 and decide which activity they would like to join in most and why.

Ready for Spaghetti

- “Ready for Spaghetti” is a fun phrase to say because of the assonance (repetition of the short /e/ sound) as well as the invented “-etti” rhymes too. As you enjoy reading, rereading and performing the poem, encouraging children to join in, you might draw children’s attention to the playfulness at its heart. Discuss Michael Rosen’s choice to take the words “set”, “get”, and “yet” and add the long /ea/ sound to the end of each. *Do you like it when poems and songs play with words like this? What do you like about it? Do you ever change words like this?* Perhaps when they were little they used different names for family members or favourite toys, or perhaps it reminds them of their friend’s nicknames. You could also use this poem to talk about the food and meals that the children enjoy eating. They might draw pictures of their favourite meals.

Make a Cake

- Ask the children if they have had a birthday cake or helped an adult bake a special cake. Link this to a discussion about other food that they enjoy at specific times of year such as a birthday or a special, religious or cultural celebration.
- Read the first stanza and then ask the children to say it with you as you read it a second time. Discuss how they feel when it is their birthday. *Can you remember a specific birthday when you might have had a party or spent it with family or friends?*
- Read the first and second stanzas then repeat them, encouraging the children to join in with any words and



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phrases they remember. Show the children some birthday candles; light them and allow the children to blow them out. *Have you ever blown out candles on a cake? What do you like about candles? Do you see candles used on other occasions?* To stimulate further talk, use this discussion to draw out and clarify other vocabulary that exists outside the poem that would help them describe the excitement of a birthday such as “party”, “games”, “candles”, “food”, “family”, “friends”, “presents”. You might annotate a copy of the poem or Polly Dunbar’s illustrations with some of these words.

- Read the whole poem through from start to finish. Ask the children why the speaker might not want to stop. *What might they want to keep doing?* Explore alternative words for “tasty” as well as other words associated with party food: “yummy”, “delicious”, “scrumptious”, “sandwiches”, “full tummy”, “sweets”, “icing”. Support this talk with pictures and artefacts that will stimulate their memories.
- As a follow-up activity, invite the children to create a picture or collage of the perfect birthday cake. Provide them with a range of craft materials to represent cream, chocolate, hundreds and thousands, syrup and ground nuts etc. Encourage the children to represent the sweet treats from their own cultures from mithai to Victoria sponge cakes.

Give Me an ABC

- It is so important that children learn letter names early on and this is a great addition to the traditional songs and rhymes with which children may already be familiar.

Grover Fell Over

- Quite often young children will act out their own experiences or issues through role-play. This poem is reminiscent of that. It would be a great stimulus for talking about what it feels like to be ill or hurt as well as how to be resilient. After reading this poem, the children might want to set up a toy hospital in the role-play area, or just simply talk about their own special toys.

Teddy

- Read in conjunction with “Grover Fell Over”, this poem is also a good starting point for the children to talk about their favourite soft toys and why they like to play with them.

Jumping!

- This is a simple poem for the children to join in with – it will wake them up and get them moving about. There are many opportunities throughout the school day when reciting a poem like this can be fun: waiting in line, at the beginning of a PE lesson, when the children are sleepy straight after lunch or you are worried they have been sitting still for too long...

Throw a Ball

- Present the children with an array of soft balls of differing sizes. Stand the children in a circle and spend some time rolling, throwing and bouncing the balls between you.
- Stop and talk to the children about all the different ways you can pass a ball and encourage the children to echo the words after you, e.g., “bounce”, “push”, “roll”, “throw”, “pass”, “kick”, etc.
- The next bit is easier if you learn the poem by heart before you present it to the children. Put all the balls except one to one side and recite the poem, using the ball to demonstrate all of the actions in turn.
- After hearing the poem multiple times, children might work in small groups – depending on the age and dexterity of the group – performing the poem while rolling and bowling a ball to one another. Children might find it easier if they take it in turns being the one who is reciting the poem and the one in charge of demonstrating the actions. Can they perform the poem whilst maintaining the steady pulse of the words?



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The Itch

- Due to the personification in this poem, it is one of the more difficult poems to understand.
- Talk to the children about what it is like to feel itchy: how an itch sometimes moves around your body; how it is different to pain but still not a pleasant feeling; and how it can be such a relief to scratch it! *Have you ever had an itch like that? What did it feel like? Some children may be able to talk about the experience of a virus like chicken pox where they have had to try hard not to scratch. What was that like? What made the itch feel better when you couldn't scratch?*
- Before reading the poem, look at the pictures. What do they notice? How do they think that child is feeling? How do they know? Children might mimic the movements, facial expressions and body language of the boy, all the while itching.
- Read the poem through several times and encourage the children to join in with the lines that they remember.
- Afterwards you might discuss the idea of the itch talking to the boy. *Why is this a funny idea? What else can you imagine speaking to you unexpectedly – your hair, a bug, your tummy, the sea? What might it say?*

The Sneeze

- A whimsical poem with a clutch of familiar rhyming words, this poem is perfect to lift the children's spirits, especially if someone sneezes!

Water Over My Toes

- This is the perfect partner poem to "Paddling Pool" (pages 30–31) and if you have access to a paddling pool in your setting (and it is warm enough), explore this poem when the children are sitting with their feet in the water.
- The first stanza is easy to memorize so before you read the whole poem, ask the children to repeat the first verse as you say it (echo reading) until they are confident to say it alone or at the same time as you. This stanza is repeated at the end of the poem too.
- When reading the second stanza, make sure children understand the difference between the different aspects of water mentioned. The children could blow some "bubbles" and compare the difference between a "ripple" and a "wave". Provide the children with cups and buckets too, and model what a *trickle* looks like, by controlling the flow between the two.
- Look back at the suggested activities for "Paddling Pool" and either read the poems together or use some of the suggestions when reading this poem.

Bubble

- Another brilliant water poem! Start by blowing bubbles over the children's heads and letting them play with, catch and burst them. As the children are playing, read this poem and let them enjoy the language. Ask the children why it is so difficult to catch a bubble. *Do you like blowing bubbles? Do you like having bubbles in the bath? What do you like about them?*

Jimmy Jams

- The final poems in this book are perfect for building a bridge between home and school. Read this poem to the children several times until they are comfortable joining in with you. Send the poem home and ask parents to have fun singing or chanting the rhyme and tapping out the rhythm as their children get ready for bed.

The Stars

- Ask the children if they have ever stared out at a night's sky. Depending on the time of year and the time the children go to bed, ask parents to spend some time looking out of the window at night and noticing the



patterns and stars in the sky. You might use an app or website to explore stars and star patterns within the classroom too (for example: <https://stellarium-web.org/>).

- Before the first reading of this poem, teach the children the refrain “Are you listening? / Can you see what I see?”
- When you read this poem to the children for the first time, dim the lights, and if available, play a video clip of a starry night sky. *How does the poem make you feel? Do you have a favourite line or verse?*
- Read the poem again, encouraging the children to join in with the repeated questions at the end of each verse.
- Read the poem for the third time and ask the children for suggestions of actions that could be added for each verse. When you get to the third verse, you might make up a tune that fits the rhythm so you are singing rather than saying the words.
- Practise the poem, with the children joining in with the actions and any words that they can remember.
- Now send the poem home with the children and ask them to teach it to their parents. This poem could become part of their bedtime routine.
- The poem is reminiscent of the nursery rhyme “I See the Moon” that children may already be familiar with. A version of the nursery rhyme set to music is included in Jo McNally’s [Young Voiceworks](#), which older children could learn to sing. This might inspire them to experiment with adding a melody to Michael Rosen’s poem.

Goodnight

- Just like “The Stars”, this poem is a perfect bedtime read. It is a lullaby and the repetition of the /sh/, /u/ and /air/ sounds lends itself to reading in a soft and gentle tone. Another great recommendation for parents to read at home as part of their bedtime routine.

Useful additional reading:

The books below are by the same author or illustrator, contain poems or rhymes, or have a similar theme to *Ready for Spaghetti*

- *A Great Big Cuddle: Poems for the Very Young*, Michael Rosen and Chris Riddell (Walker Books)
- *Honey For You, Honey For Me: A First Book of Nursery Rhymes*, Michael Rosen and Chris Riddell (Walker Books)
- *Bananas in My Ears*, Michael Rosen and Quentin Blake (Walker Books)
- *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*, Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury (Walker Books)
- *Here’s a Little Poem: A Very First Book of Poetry*, edited by Andrew Fusek Peters and Jane Yolen and illustrated by Polly Dunbar (Walker Books)
- *Out and About: A First Book of Poems*, Shirley Hughes (Walker Books)
- *The Puffin Book of Fantastic First Poems*, edited by June Crebin (Puffin)
- *Zim, Zam, Zoom: Zappy Poems to Read Out Loud*, James Carter and Nicola Colton (Otter-Barry Books)
- *Big Green Crocodile: Rhymes to Say and Play*, Jane Newberry and Carolina Rabei (Otter-Barry Books)
- *Caterpillar Cake: Read-Aloud Poems to Brighten Your Day*, Matt Goodfellow and Krina Patel-Sage (Otter-Barry Books)

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