



---

*Family Language Fun to Go*



Carole A. Gnatuk, Extension Child Development Specialist

## ***Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go***

### **♥ Acknowledgments**

**Gratitude is heartily extended to the following individuals for their valuable contributions to the development of this program:**

***Ann Vail***, Ph.D., director, Family and Consumer Sciences, and director, School of Human Environmental Sciences, University of Kentucky

***Suzanne Badenhop***, Ph.D., family resource management specialist, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Clif Cason***, director of music, Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church, Lexington, KY

***Karen DeBord***, Ph.D., associate professor and Extension specialist for child development, North Carolina State University

***Robert DeMattina***, Ph.D., Extension communications specialist for electronic media, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Mark K. Eclov***, Extension communications specialist for electronic media, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Sherri Farley***, Campbell County Extension agent for 4-H/Youth Development, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Robert H. Flashman***, Ph.D., professor of family studies and Extension family resource management specialist, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Janet Johnson***, Allen County Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Alex Lesueur***, staff support associate, Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Sam Quick***, Ph.D., professor and Extension specialist emeritus of human development and family relations, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Wendy J. Stivers***, Ph.D., 4-H/Youth Development specialist, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Laura Wathen***, co-director, University of Kentucky Early Childhood Laboratory

**Graduate students in FAM 659, Advanced Child Development, Department of Family Studies, University of Kentucky, fall semester 2004, who developed some of the core activities for this program in a class project:**

Infants: ***Christy Kaylor***

Toddlers: ***Katy Corbett***

Preschool: ***Alicia Tobin and Ginger Yeaste***

Kindergarten and early elementary: ***Cecily Galbreath***

Later elementary: ***Dianne Gibson***

Middle school: ***Heather Mosey***

Young teens: ***Dawn Burger***

**Volunteer contributors of favorite adult-child activities, too numerous to list**

**Children who recorded the songs, chants, and rhymes on the audio resource and their parents:**

***Caroline Copley*** and her parents, ***Rich and Kate Copley***

***Kristen Morrill*** and her parents, ***Michael and Robin Morrill***

**Children of the Alleluia and Jubilate Choirs** at Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church, Lexington, KY, who participated in the video taping of resources for older children, and director ***Camilla Turner***

**Children of the Preschool Classroom** at the University of Kentucky Early Childhood Laboratory, who participated in the video taping of resources for younger children, and teacher ***Trisha Manning***

**Program reviewers:**

***Grace Angotti***, Carroll County Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Karen DeBord***, Ph.D., associate professor and state Extension specialist, Child Development, North Carolina State University

***Janet Johnson***, Allen County Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension

***Sally S. Martin***, Ph.D., professor and Extension specialist, University of Nevada-Reno

***Sam Quick***, Ph.D., professor and Extension specialist emeritus, University of Kentucky

**Editor:** ***Terri McLean***, Agricultural Communications Services, University of Kentucky

**Graphic Artist:** ***Pati Ray***, Agricultural Communications Services, University of Kentucky

# Table of Contents

## Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go*

A Word of Introduction .....	4
Program Features .....	5
How to Use This Program .....	6
Ground Rules for Families .....	7
Resources and Readings .....	89

## ♥ Parent-Child Activities ♥



### Babies and Toddlers

All the Pretty Little Horses.....	9
Clocks.....	10
Easy Nursery Rhymes .....	11-20
Here's a Ball for Baby .....	21,22
Hickory Dickory Dock .....	23,24
If All the Raindrops Were. . .	25
I'm a Little Teapot .....	26
Ten Little Fingers .....	27
Toddler Talk .....	28
Two Little Dickie Birds.....	29,30
Wheels on the Bus .....	31,32



### Preschool

The Ants Go Marching .....	34,35
Elephant Song .....	36,37
Guessing Game.....	38
Itsy Bitsy Spider.....	39,40
John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt.....	41
Preschool Talk .....	42
There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly .....	43-45
Whim-Wham-Doodles .....	46,47



### Kindergarten—Early Elementary

Alice the Camel.....	49,50
Bobby Goat and Other Pretend Stories ....	51,52
Fun with Fables .....	53-55
Kookaburra.....	56,57
Sara-sponda.....	58,59
She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain When She Comes .....	60,61
Songs That Fit the Individual.....	62
The Time Machine.....	63



### Older Elementary

Alphabet Game .....	65
A Ram Sam Sam .....	66
His-story/Her-story .....	67,68
Name That Tune.....	69
Roundabout Stories.....	70
Swimming, Swimming in the Swimming Pool.....	71,72



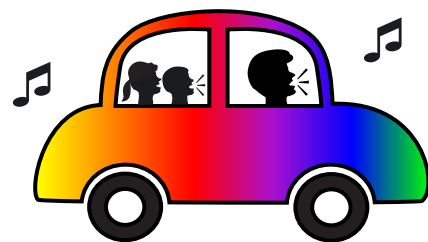
### Middle School

Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover (or Drivers by Their Cars) .....	74
Flee! Flee-Fly! Flee-Fly-Flo!.....	75,76
Guess My Rule .....	77
"Hot Potato" Stories .....	78
Riddling, Viking Style.....	79
The Ultimate License Plate Game.....	80



### Young Teens

Book Talk.....	82
Meal Time Is a Social Time .....	83
Do-Re-Me .....	84
In the Zone.....	85
Sounds Like a Plan! .....	86
Stories from the Proverbial Wise Guy.....	87,88





## *Family Language Fun to Go*



Carole A. Gnatuk, Ed.D  
Extension Child Development Specialist  
Family and Consumer Sciences

### **A Word of Introduction**

Have you wondered how to find time to truly connect with your child? Life for most of us has become hectic. We dash between work, school or child care, after-school sports, lessons, hobbies, and community activities. Many families barely have time to sit down and eat together. Sharing the day's happenings, feelings, and successes is often impossible.

Isn't something wrong with this picture? Research and common sense tell us that children's achievement in school, their relationships with friends, and their later success as adults are largely dependent on feeling secure, known, and trusted by a loving family or at least one other person. How in the world are we to forge those bonds during our hurried, harried days?

Friendly communication between you and your child – talking, smiling, laughing, and singing – is an essential building block for creating mutual trust, respect, understanding, and love. From infancy on, our children learn to use language by listening, making sounds as babies, and gradually using more complex words and sentences. Rhyming, rhythmic words, and storytelling help language skills grow at a rapid pace. When we adults join in, we all have even more fun. Our children will likely form a lifelong love of language. They will probably create beloved memories of family bonds through such oral activities. However, there is a catch! We need time to build and cement these critical bonds.

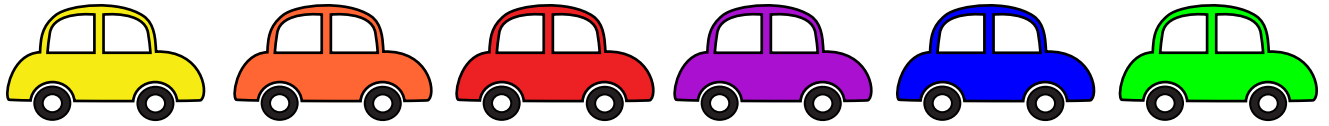
If we look carefully we may discover bits of unoccupied time as we hurry about – the time that we spend together in our vehicles commuting from place to place and traveling long distances or the time we spend waiting around for something to happen.

- Don't put up with boredom, arguments, or misbehavior!
- Don't pull out electronic games that isolate each person in a corner, or shut down family interaction with a video or DVD!

Why not use this unoccupied time for creative language fun that encourages family members to enjoy and learn more about each other?

*Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go* is a Web-based program that features a collection of playful language activities for you and your children and youth to enjoy together during travel and waiting times. The purpose of the program is to provide intentional, enjoyable opportunities for communication and language development.

All of the activities are useful when your family members are seated together in tight spaces. The activities consist of traditional and invented, non-copyrighted rhymes, songs, riddles, fables, games, stories, and conversation starters. The program also provides additional resources and readings for you, as your child's most important teacher.



# Traveling Light

## *Family Language Fun to Go*

### Program Features

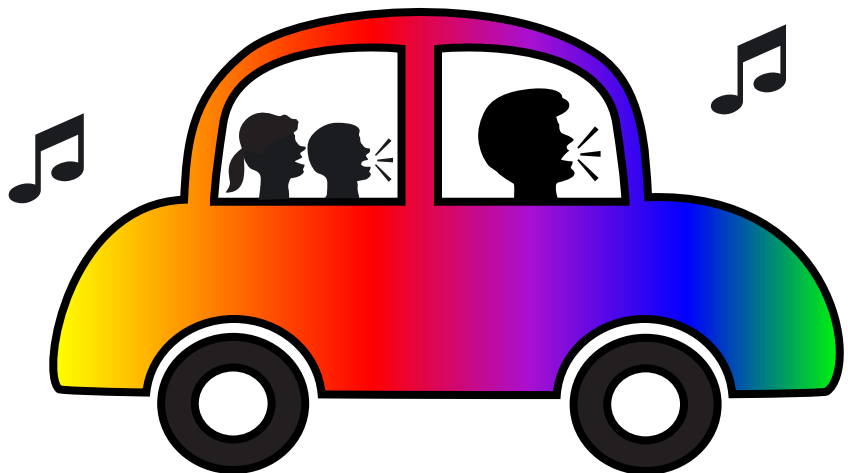
Specific features of the program include:

- How to use this program
- List of ground rules for enhancing respect and enjoyment
- Age-graded activities for infants through young adolescents, including:
  - Ways the activity helps your child develop
  - Easy-to-read instructions
  - Words for all songs, chants, rhymes, riddles, and stories
- A checklist to help you determine your child's developmental progress after using the activity
- Audio CD and video DVD to help you learn the tunes and body movements
- A facilitator's guide and teaching outlines for educators working with groups of parents
- An evaluation tool for assessing program impact and children's developmental progress
- A list of additional readings for adults

# How to Use This Program

Here are some general suggestions for using the *Traveling Light* activities. You will also find specific ideas for use on each activity sheet.

- Browse through the activities that you think would be fun for you and your child.
- Print out the activities that suit your needs and are age-appropriate for your child.
- Many activities are enjoyable for children younger or older than the suggested age.
- Collect the printed activity sheets in a folder, three-ring binder, or spiral-bound pad. Keep it near you for convenient access at a moment's notice.
- Listen to the audio CD to help you learn the words and tunes for the songs and chants. Read the activity sheets and practice any hand movements that are included before trying out activities with your child.
- There is more than one way to introduce a new activity to children. You may just start by singing or chanting (rhythmically reciting words without singing a tune). You may sing or chant the whole song or rhyme, then go back and try the first line and ask your child to repeat it, and then go on to the next line. You may also play the CD in your car, then sing or talk along with it.
- Be sure to go over the "Ground Rules" on page 7 when you introduce the program to your family. Taking turns, cooperating, respecting, and appreciating individual choices are important human relations skills. Teach older children to gently assist younger ones.
- Picture in your mind how you could adapt an activity when you are driving with your hands on the wheel or when you are sitting still with your child and able to make movements with your fingers and hands.
- If you are driving with an infant or young child buckled into a car seat behind you, sing or chant enthusiastically. Nod your head or wave one hand in time to the rhythm if you can safely do so. Glance into the rearview mirror often to see if your child is listening and trying to sing along. Be prepared to repeat the song or rhyme several times.
- Encourage children to select their favorite activities. Respect their wishes when they want to repeat beloved songs, riddles, or stories over and over again.
- Introduce a new activity once in a while to avoid boredom.
- Be alert to "capture" in words and include in the collection any new activities children suggest. They will realize you really care about them.
- Pay attention to interesting scenes around you as you drive. You or your older child may be able to adapt or invent an activity that makes note of those sights. Write down your invented or adapted activity and clip it into this collection.
- Your *Traveling Light* activity collection may become an even more treasured family memory book if your child (or even you as an adult) draws, colors, paints pictures, or takes photographs that illustrate the resources or the places you have traveled.





*Family Language Fun to Go*

## **Ground Rules for Family Times**

- ♥ When we get together we do our best to respect, enjoy, learn from, and encourage one another.
- ♥ We listen carefully to each other and respond in a positive, thoughtful manner.
- ♥ Everyone's feelings and ideas are important.
- ♥ Only one person talks at a time.
- ♥ Speak for yourself ("I think...", "I feel...").
- ♥ No put-downs (of yourself or others) are permitted.
- ♥ Any personal information shared is kept confidential within the family.
- ♥ Each of us is responsible for making our family time a success.

# Babies and Toddlers



---

## *Family Language Fun to Go*

- ♥ All the Pretty Little Horses
- ♥ Clocks
- ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes
- ♥ Here's a Ball for Baby
- ♥ Hickory Dickory Dock
- ♥ If All the Rainbows Were...
- ♥ I'm a Little Teapot
- ♥ Ten Little Fingers
- ♥ Toddler Talk
- ♥ Two Little Dickie Birds
- ♥ Wheels on the Bus





# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ All the Pretty Little Horses

### What children gain:

- Feeling calmed and relaxed while listening to your soothing, slow singing of this song
- Feeling loved and secure
- Learning to make sounds like the words and, later, singing the words clearly
- Forming mental pictures and names of the little horses mentioned in the song

### Instructions:

- Sing this song in a quiet voice when you want to help your child feel relaxed while you are riding in the car, waiting in line, or preparing for bedtime.
- When you are not driving, you could rock your child in your arms as you sing this song. The child will be able to feel the soothing rhythm of the song and your heartbeat during this pleasant, reassuring experience.
- You could substitute your child's name for "little baby" if you wish, especially if the child is older than a baby.
- If you have a book with a picture of a horse, you could say "horse" while you sit together with the book. You could sing the song while you point to the picture.

### To think about...

- Your child imitates the sounds of the words and syllables.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child relaxes and becomes more calm.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child hums or sings along with you.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child points to the picture of a horse when you show her a book with various animals, including a horse.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet



## All the Pretty Little Horses

Hush-a-bye, don't you cry,

Go to sleepy, little baby.

When you wake, you shall have

All the pretty little horses.

Blacks and bays, dapples and grays,

Coach and six of little horses.

Source of the activity: Traditional American nursery song



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Clocks

### What children gain:

- Learning through their five senses – hearing lower and higher sounds and perhaps seeing smaller and larger sizes of real clocks
- Learning what a clock’s job is – to keep time
- Remembering the tune and words after hearing you repeat the song a few times
- Learning to sing the song by imitating the way you sing it

### Instructions:

- Sing or chant this song when your child is buckled into a car safety seat and you are driving. Before you begin you may say, “Let’s sing the song about clocks now.”
- Show your child different clocks in your home or in a doctor’s office. Say “This is a \_\_ (big, small, or tiny) clock!” as you point to the clock.
- Sing or chant the song often. As your little one gains the ability to speak, he may likely begin to make the tick-tock sounds and the hand motions – great fun for both of you.



## Clocks

Big clocks make a sound like  
TICK TOCK, TICK TOCK.

*(deep voice, slow rhythm)*

Small clocks make a sound like tick-tock,  
tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock.

*(regular voice pitch, tick-tocks twice as fast as first time)*

And the little tiny clocks go tick-tock-tick-  
tock, tick-tock-tick-tock, tick-tock-tick-  
tock-tick!

*(high-pitched voice, tick-tocks twice as fast as second time)*

### To think about...

- Your baby stays quietly alert and watches your face intently as you sing or chant.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your baby wriggles with enjoyment, eyes sparkling, in response to the song or chant.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your baby attempts to move his tongue or mouth to imitate the “tick-tock” sounds.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your toddler imitates your “tick-tock” sounds more accurately.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your older preschool or kindergarten child begins to tell time using the clock hands.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of the activity: Song sung in the author’s family for many years



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm when chanting the rhyme, which strengthens brain cell connections
- Learning new words and how to combine them by listening to the way they rhyme
- Matching voices in singing the tune, if the nursery rhyme includes a tune
- Increasing mental images and concepts through gradual understanding of meanings
- Bonding closely with parents by repeating the rhymes, making eye contact, smiling, and laughing

### Instructions:

- These classic nursery rhymes date back two centuries or more and reflect the cultures and times in which they were created. They have been passed down by children for generations because of their delightful rhythms and word pictures.
- When you select nursery rhymes to chant or sing to your child, carefully consider the messages they convey about the skills, courage, and strength of both boys and girls. You may want to change words that you think show disrespect or stereotyping. The selected rhymes have been chosen to keep these principles in mind. In some cases, new versions are included with some words changed or added.
- Begin by chanting the rhyme over and over again.
- Encourage your child to chant along with you until he learns the words and rhythm.
- Vary the tone of your voice for more drama. For example, in “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep,” indicate the sheep’s answer in a deep, shivery, sheep-like voice, “Ye-e-e-s, si-i-i-r.”
- If you know the tune for any of these rhymes, you may sing the rhyme.
- If you are driving, you may slap your leg to mark the rhythm of the chant. If you are not driving, you may enjoy bouncing your child in your arms while reciting the rhyme or clapping hands on the beat.

### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the words of the rhymes.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child imitates the rhythm with her voice or by body movement.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing voice to yours, if there is a tune connected to the rhyme.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child enjoy being together while chanting or singing the rhymes.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of activity:  
Traditional nursery rhymes

\*Updated lines of rhymes from *Father Gander Nursery Rhymes*, by Father Gander, 1985. Available from Advocacy Press, PO Box 236, Dept. A, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. Reprinted lines added with permission from the National Network for Child Care – NNCC, from an article in its newsletter on April 12, 2005, by Karen DeBord, Professor and Extension Child Development Specialist, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service.

\*\*Additional updated lines created by Karen DeBord

\*\*\*Additional updated lines created by Carole Gnatuk

**rhythm and rhyming!**



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### **Baa, Baa, Black Sheep**

*(original)*

Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?  
Yes, sir, yes, sir, three bags full.  
One for my master, one for my dame,  
And one for the little boy who lives down the lane.



### **Baa, Baa, Black Sheep**

*(new) \*\**

Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?  
Yes, I do, yes, I do, three bags full.  
One for the sunshine, one for the rain,  
And one for the boys and girls who live down the lane.

**rhythm and rhyming!**

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### Hickety, Pickety, My Black Hen

*(original)*

Hickety, pickety, my black hen,  
She lays eggs for gentlemen.  
Gentlemen come every day  
To see what my black hen doth lay.



### Hickety, Pickety, My Black Hen

*(new) \*\**

Hickety, pickety, my black hen,  
She lays eggs for everyone.  
All my friends come every day  
To see what my black hen doth lay.

*rhythm and rhyming!*

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### Humpty Dumpty

*(original)*

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the king's horses, and all the king's men  
Couldn't put Humpty together again.



### Humpty Dumpty

*(new) \**

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the horses, women, and men  
Put Humpty Dumpty together again.

*rhythm and rhyming!*

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### Jack, Be Nimble

*(original)*

Jack, be nimble! Jack, be quick!  
Jack, jump over the candlestick!



### Jack, Be Nimble

*(new) \**

Jack, be nimble! Jack, be quick!  
Jack, jump over the candlestick!  
Jill, be nimble! Jump it, too!  
If Jack can do it, so can you!

*rhythm and rhyming!*

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### Little Boy Blue

*(original)*

Little Boy Blue, come blow your horn;  
The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn.  
Where is the boy who looks after the sheep?  
He's under the haystack, fast asleep.  
Will you wake him?  
No, not I, for if I do, he's sure to cry.



### Come Blow Your Horn

*(new) \*\**

Boys and girls, come blow your horn,  
The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn.  
Tired boys and girls who look after the sheep  
Crawled under the haystack, fast asleep.  
Will you wake them?  
No, not I, for if I do, they're sure to cry.

**rhythm and rhyming!**

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*





# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### Polly, Put the Kettle On

*(original)*

Polly, put the kettle on; Polly, put the kettle on;  
Polly, put the kettle on; we'll all drink tea.  
Sukey, take it off again; Sukey, take it off again;  
Sukey, take it off again; they've all gone away.



### Polly, Put the Kettle On

*(new) \*\*\**

Polly, put the kettle on; Polly, put the kettle on;  
Polly, put the kettle on; we'll all drink tea.  
Billy, take it off again; Billy, take it off again;  
Billy, take it off again; they've all gone away.

**rhythm and rhyming!**

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### Ride a Cock-Horse

*(original)*

Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,  
To see a fine lady upon a white horse.  
Rings on her fingers and bells on her toes,  
She shall have music wherever she goes.



### Ride a Cock-Horse

*(new) \*\**

Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,  
To see a fine rider upon a white horse.  
People will dance and people will sing,  
And around them the bells in the tower will ring.

**rhythm and rhyming!**

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### One, Two, Buckle My Shoe

One, two, buckle my shoe;  
Three, four, shut the door;  
Five, six, pick up sticks;  
Seven, eight, lay them straight;  
Nine, ten, a big fat hen.



### Diddle Diddle Dumpling

Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John  
Went to bed with his stockings on.  
One shoe off and one shoe on,  
Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John.



### Hey Diddle Diddle

Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle,  
The cow jumped over the moon.  
The little dog laughed to see such sport  
And the dish ran away with the spoon!

**rhythm and rhyming!**

*The next page is all the rage.  
You can bet a dime you'll find more rhymes!*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Easy Nursery Rhymes

---

### Doctor Foster

Doctor Foster went to Gloucester  
*(pronounced "Gloster")*  
In a shower of rain.  
He stepped in a puddle, up to his middle,  
And never went there again.



### To Market, To Market

To market, to market, to buy a fat pig;  
Home again, home again, jiggety-jig.  
To market, to market, to buy a fat hog;  
Home again, home again, jiggety-jog.  
To market, to market, to buy a plum bun;  
Home again, home again, market is done.



### Pussy-Cat and the Queen

Pussy-Cat, Pussy-Cat, where have you been?  
I've been to London to visit the queen.  
Pussy-Cat, Pussy-Cat, what did you there?  
I frightened the little mouse under the chair.

**rhythm and rhyming!**

*This, my friend, is the end. The rest of the rhymes are all behind.*



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

## ♥ Here's a Ball for Baby

### **What children gain:**

- Feeling and imitating the gentle, simple rhythmic pattern of this song
- Learning the motions that give a sense of order and predictability
- Matching the voice to the tune that contains only five notes
- Making sounds like the words and, later, saying the words clearly
- Forming mental pictures and names of the objects mentioned in the song
- Being motivated to love music – wonderful for brain development

**Supplies needed:** No supplies are necessary. You may supply examples of the items mentioned in the song for your child to play with.

### **Instructions:**

- Sing this song without movements when your child is buckled into the car safety seat and you are driving. Listen for sounds that tell you that he is trying to sing the words.
- When you are at home or waiting somewhere, sit facing your child. Sing the song and make the movements using the instructions that follow.
- Make sure your baby is watching you carefully.
- Look into your baby's eyes and softly sing the verses of the song.
- Move your hands and arms according to the instructions.
- Sing and make the movements of the song as often as your baby seems to enjoy it.
- Stop singing now and then, but keep eye contact, to give your baby a chance to respond with movements or sounds. You are actually conversing with your child!
- End your singing and give-and-take fun when your baby shows signs of being tired.

### **To think about...**

- Your baby watches you intently.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your baby responds to your singing and conversation with voice sounds, wiggles of pleasure, and delighted eyes, the beginning of conversation with you.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your baby tries to imitate your mouth and hand motions.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your baby makes sounds that may be similar to words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Traditional song for very young children*

**rhythm and movement!**



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

## ♥ Here's a Ball for Baby



### Here's a Ball for Baby

Here's a ball for baby, big and soft and round,

*(Make a circle with your fingers.)*

Here is baby's hammer, oh how she can pound.

*(Make hands into fists and pound one upon the other.)*

Here is baby's music, clapping, clapping so,

*(Clap your hands softly together.)*

Here is baby's family, standing in a row.

*(Hold hands up with fingers straight and spread out.)*

Here's the baby's trumpet, toot-toot-toot-toot-toot,

*(Make hands into fists and place one behind the other like a horn; hold up to mouth.)*

Here's the way the baby plays at peek-a-boo.

*(Open hands and hold up before your eyes, then suddenly take them away from your face.)*

Here's a big umbrella, keeps the baby dry,

*(Extend fingers and palm of one hand straight out with palm facing downward. Point the index finger of the other hand into your extended palm like a handle.)*

Here's the baby's cradle, rock-a-baby bye-bye,

rock-a-baby bye-bye, rock-a-baby-bye.

*(Grasp elbows by opposite hands and rock back and forth at chest level.)*



**rhythm and movement!**



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Hickory Dickory Dock

### What children gain:

- Feeling and imitating the uneven but predictable rhythmic pattern of the song
- Matching the syllables of the words to the notes of the melody, giving a satisfying sense of order
- Learning the difference between lower and higher voice pitches in the tune as the mouse runs up and down the clock
- Matching the voice to the catchy tune, and singing the tune correctly
- Making sounds like the words of the song and, later, singing the words clearly

### Instructions:

- Sing this song without movements when your child is buckled into the car safety seat and you are driving.
- Listen for sounds that tell you that she is trying to sing or say the words.
- When you are at home or waiting somewhere, sit facing your child. Sing the song, looking into your child's eyes.
- Move your hands and arms according to the instructions.
- Sing and make the movements of the song as often as your child seems to enjoy it.
- Watch and listen to see if she is trying to sing or say the words or make the motions.
- Praise your child for trying to sing and make the motions. She will likely want to repeat the song if you encourage her.
- If you are at home and have a large mantle or grandfather clock, you could demonstrate the mouse running up and down while holding the child in your arms. Doing so helps your child form a clear mental picture of the clock and the up and down directions.

### To think about...

- Your child watches you intently.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child responds with voice sounds, wiggles of pleasure, and delighted eyes, the beginning of conversation with you.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child tries to imitate your mouth and hand motions.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child makes sounds that may be similar to words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches voice tones to the tune.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of activity: Traditional nursery rhyme

**rhythm and movement!**



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

---

## ♥ Hickory Dickory Dock

---



### Hickory Dickory Dock

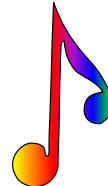
Hickory dickory dock,  
*(Hold one forearm at a right angle to your upper arm, like a tall clock.)*

The mouse ran up the clock.  
*(Run the fingers of your other hand up the extended forearm to the finger tips.)*

The clock struck “One!”  
*(Dramatize the sound of the clock striking “One” with your voice.)*

The mouse ran down;  
*(Run your fingers quickly down your extended forearm.)*

Hickory dickory dock!



**rhythm and movement!**





# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ If All the Raindrops Were...

### What children gain:

- Matching the voice to the catchy tune and, later, singing the tune correctly
- Imitating the syllables and words of the song and, later, singing the words clearly
- As preschoolers, using creative imagination to invent new nonsense words
- Remembering and having fun with this song and many others for a lifetime

### Instructions:

- Sing this song with enthusiasm while you are driving and your child is buckled into a safety seat behind you. Its silliness may lift both of you out of a grumpy mood.
- The song may be especially fun if you are driving in the rain.
- Sing this song during walks. Why not walk (or skip or hop) in time to the rhythm?
- Sing this song while you are waiting in line. If you are able to face your child, make sure you have a happy expression.
- During the last line of the song, make your voice sound loud or silly for fun.
- Try this activity while serving and eating food with your child. You can substitute the food the child is eating for the words “lemon drops and gumdrops.”
- Depending on the weather, snowflakes may be more appropriate to sing about than raindrops.

### To think about...

- Your child imitates the sounds of the words and syllables.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child asks to repeat the song.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child invents new words for the song.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

Source of the activity: Traditional nursery song; activity contributed by Christy Kaylor

## ♥ If All the Raindrops Were...

If all the raindrops were lemon  
 drops and gumdrops,  
 Oh what a rain that would be.  
 Standing outside with my mouth open wide,  
 Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah....





# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ I'm a Little Teapot

### What children gain:

- Matching the voice to the catchy tune and, later, singing the tune correctly
- Imitating the syllables and words of the song and, later, singing the words clearly
- Forming a mental picture and name for a common kitchen object
- Developing creative imagination by pretending to actually be a teapot
- Imitating the body movements of an adult or older child; making the movements helps develop coordination of the large muscles in the upper body, arms, and hands

### Instructions:

- Sing this song without movements while you are driving, with your child buckled into a car safety seat behind you. You could make your head move to one side, if you wish.
- Sing this song and make the movements during times of waiting when the child is in front of you or sitting on your lap. Look directly at your child's eyes, sing in a happy voice, and have pleasant facial expressions.
- If you have a young baby, you could move his body, arms, and hands to the words of the song, so the child will enjoy a music and movement experience.
- If you have a real teapot, you could show it to your child and say, "This is a teapot." You could sing the song at the same time. This helps your child connect the name with the object.

### To think about...

- Your child imitates the words and syllables.
  - \_\_\_ yes
  - \_\_\_ sometimes
  - \_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.
  - \_\_\_ yes
  - \_\_\_ sometimes
  - \_\_\_ not yet
- Your child imitates your body movements while you are singing.
  - \_\_\_ yes
  - \_\_\_ sometimes
  - \_\_\_ not yet

Source of the activity: Traditional nursery song; activity contributed by Christy Kaylor



## I'm a Little Teapot

I'm a little teapot, short and stout.

Here is my handle, here is my spout.

*(Curve one arm to look like the handle of the teapot.  
Extend the other arm and hand to resemble the spout.)*

When I get all steamed up, hear me shout,  
"Just tip me over and pour me out!"

*(Lean body to one side in the  
direction of your "spout" arm.)*





# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Ten Little Fingers

### What children gain:

- Developing increasing skill in rhyming words
- Learning the names of body parts
- Matching the names of body parts with their locations on the body
- Coordinating hand movements with language use
- Forming mental pictures of body parts including their names
- Building a close relationship with parents and older family members through fun

### Instructions:

- While you are driving, with your child securely buckled into the car safety seat behind you, chant the rhyme and ask the child to point to the correct body part.
- When you and your baby or toddler are waiting in a line, sitting in a doctor's waiting room, or walking around the supermarket, you can point to the body parts on the child's body as you name them using the rhyme. Of course, you can do it at home, too.
- You can vary the body parts in the rhyme as your child learns to identify other parts of her body.

### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the rhyme's words.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child can say the parts of the rhyme in the correct order.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child points to the correct body part, either independently or imitating you.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- You and your child have fun saying the rhyme and doing the motions together.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

Source of the activity: Traditional counting rhyme; activity contributed by Katy Corbett



## Ten Little Fingers

I have ten little fingers and ten little toes,  
 Two little arms and one little nose,  
 One little mouth and two little ears,  
 Two little eyes for smiles and tears,  
 One little head and two little feet.  
 One little chin makes

(child's name)

complete.



# Babies and Toddlers

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Toddler Talk

#### What children gain:

- Opportunities to talk with an adult who wants to listen and respond
- Learning the give and take of conversation, both talking and listening
- Imitating adult forms of language more clearly
- Using one- to three-word questions and answers, along with gestures to indicate meanings
- Following short, simple instructions

#### Instructions:

- Children this age are learning new words every day. They are also learning how to group words together to form simple sentences.
- Wherever you are, whether in your car, at home, or waiting for something to happen, you can encourage your toddler to use language by responding to your child's requests with a brief group of words.
- Listen carefully for spoken words when you are driving and your child is buckled into the car safety seat. You may need to turn off the radio or other source of sound while you listen.
- When you answer, speak words clearly and a little more slowly than you would when talking to an older child or adult.
- Use short, complete sentences. For example, your child says "milk!" You respond, "Would you like some milk?"
- Other ways to encourage your child's language use are by describing what you and your child are doing as you do it, asking your child simple questions that he knows how to answer, and praising your child for using words.
- Be patient and respectful as your child learns to use real words. Wait a bit while he tries out a word before supplying the correct word for him. You'll be thrilled when words start to come.
- Next, listen for two and three words together as he approaches three years of age.

#### Examples of activities to encourage your toddler's language use:

- Listen to your child as he attempts to tell a story. Ask simple "why," "what," "where," or "how" questions throughout his story to help him imagine more details, but do so only if the questions are not disruptive to his train of thought.
- Be patient when attempting to answer your child's questions with simple, to-the-point answers. Take deep breaths if necessary to stay calm. Your time is important to him.
- Encourage make-believe play such as talking on the telephone or into a microphone. Find dress-up clothes for your toddler. He likes to pretend that he is like you.
- Permit your child to "read" books to you. Cuddle up and read simple books together every day, if possible.
- Ask your child to follow simple instructions to put silverware on the table or pick up a toy.

#### To think about...

- Your child makes eye contact with you and listens attentively to your words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child babbles using consonants and vowel-like sounds. Occasionally, you hear a real word.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child points to the object he wants and tries to form the correct word while you wait patiently.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child uses single words and starts putting two and three words together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child begins to follow simple instructions to complete a task.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of the activity: Contributed by Katy Corbett



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Two Little Dickie Birds

### **What children gain:**

- Feeling and imitating the gentle, simple rhythmic pattern of this song
- Learning the motions and repetition that give a sense of order and predictability
- Matching the voice to the tune
- Making sounds like the words and, later, saying the words clearly
- Forming mental pictures of the two lovable birds in the song
- Being motivated to love music – wonderful for brain development

### **Instructions:**

- Whether you are driving or sitting with your child, sing and then repeat the song.
- Encourage your child to sing along with you until she learns the words and tune.
- Teach her the hand motions to go along with the words when you can face her.
- You can also sing the words and do the motions at the same time. In that case your child may likely imitate your motions for some time before learning the words.

### **To think about...**

- Your child clearly pronounces the song's words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child sings and does the motions at the same time.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Traditional children's finger play and song*

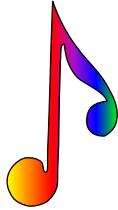
**rhythm and movement!**



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Two Little Dickie Birds



### Two Little Dickie Birds

Two little dickie birds sat upon a wall,  
*(Open both hands completely, fingers extended straight out and thumbs extended upward. Place one hand in front of the other.)*

One named Peter, one named Paul.  
*(Waggle each thumb as you name the dickie birds.)*

Fly away, Peter; fly away, Paul;  
*(“Fly” the outer hand in a wavy motion behind your back; that’s Peter. Fly the other hand behind your back; that’s Paul.)*

Come back, Peter; come back, Paul.  
*(Fly “Peter” back to original position in front of you. Then fly “Paul” back to original position in front of “Peter.”)*

---

*Second version (using the same motions as written above):*

---

Two little dickie birds sat upon a hill,  
One named Jack and one named Jill.  
Fly away, Jack; fly away, Jill;  
Come back, Jack, and come back, Jill.





# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Wheels on the Bus

### What children gain:

- Feeling and imitating the simple rhythmic pattern of this song
- Learning the motions and repetition that give a sense of order and predictability
- Matching the voice to the easy tune
- Making sounds like the words and, later, saying the words clearly
- Forming mental pictures of the bus, the driver, and the passengers
- Being motivated to love music as a “vehicle” for language

### Instructions:

- Begin by singing the song over and over again while you and your child are in the car or waiting for doctor’s visits or during other tedious times.
- Encourage your child to sing along with you until she learns the words and tune.
- Dramatize the various verses by exaggerating the “swish,” “beep,” “wah, wah,” and “shh” sounds. Children have a great deal of fun imitating adults with these sounds.
- After your child has learned the song, you can vary the activity by singing one verse and suggesting that your child sing the second verse, taking turns with her until the song is completed.
- When your child can sing the song by herself, you can teach her the hand motions to go along with the words.
- You and your child might enjoy taking a trip on a real bus.

### To think about...

- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child sings and does the motions at the same time.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your older toddler or preschool child invents new words and motions for the song.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Traditional children’s song; activity contributed by Ginger Yeaste*

**rhythm and movement!**



# Babies and Toddlers

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ Wheels on the Bus

### Wheels on the Bus



- 1** The wheels on the bus go round and round,  
round and round, round and round.  
The wheels on the bus go round and round, all over town.  
*(Move arms and hands, held straight, around each other.)*
- 2** The driver on the bus says, “Move on back, move  
on back, move on back.”  
The driver on the bus says, “Move on back,” all over town.  
*(Motion behind you with forearm and hand, thumb extended.)*
- 3** The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish; swish, swish,  
swish; swish, swish, swish.  
The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish, all over town.  
*(Move arms and hands, held straight, back and  
forth like windshield wipers.)*
- 4** The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep; etc., all over town.  
*(Move palm of hand, fingers extended, up and down,  
as if pushing on a horn.)*
- 5** The babies on the bus go “wah, wah, wah,” etc., all over town.  
*(Pretend to rock a baby by overlapping arms and  
hands as if holding the baby.)*
- 6** The parents on the bus go “shh, shh, shh,” etc., all over town.  
*(Put first finger in front of lips.)*
- 7** The wheels on the bus go round and round, etc., all over town.  
*(Move arms and hands, held straight, around each other.)*



# Preschool



## *Family Language Fun to Go*

- ♥ The Ants Go Marching
- ♥ Elephant Song
- ♥ Guessing Game
- ♥ Itsy Bitsy Spider
- ♥ John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt
- ♥ Preschool Talk
- ♥ There was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly
- ♥ Whim Wham Doodles



# Preschool

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ The Ants Go Marching

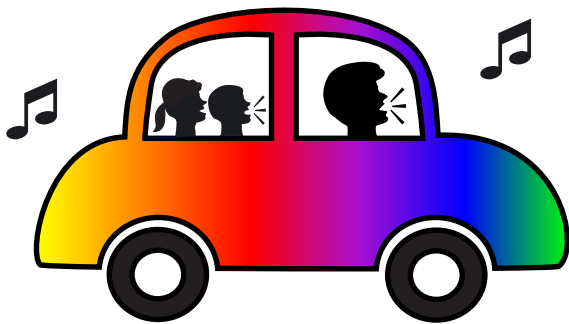
#### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm, important for brain development
- Knowing how to count in correct numerical order
- Listening carefully, using new words, rhyming words together, and building sentences
- Matching another voice in singing a melody
- Picturing in the mind the objects, creatures, and actions mentioned in the song
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun

#### Instructions:

- Begin by repeating the song often while you drive or ride with your child securely buckled into a car safety or booster seat, while waiting for doctor's visits, or during other tedious times.
- Encourage your child to sing along with you while learning the words and tune.
- Vary the song by making up new insects, other animals, and other things for the little ant to do that rhyme with the numbers.
- A creative family member could create hand motions for the song.

singing  
and  
counting!



#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the song's words.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child can sing the tune along with you.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child sings the correct number of ants in verse after verse.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child invents new words that rhyme with the numbers.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- You and your child have fun singing together.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

Source of activity: Traditional counting and silly song



# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ The Ants Go Marching

---

### The Ants Go Marching

The ants go marching one by one, hurrah! Hurrah!  
The ants go marching one by one, hurrah! Hurrah!  
The ants go marching one by one; the little one stops  
to have some fun.

And they all go marching down to the ground, to get out of the rain,  
Boom, boom, boom...

*(The following lines are substitutes for the first three lines of the song. Repeat other lines as above.)*

The ants go marching two by two; the little one is without a clue.

The ants go marching three by three; the little one says,  
“Please look at me.”

The ants go marching four by four; the little one stops  
to find some more.

The ants go marching five by five; the little one stops to jump and jive.

The ants go marching six by six; the little one stops to pick up sticks.

*(Continue singing as you count to “ten by ten”, making up your own words.)*

singing  
and  
counting!



# Preschool

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Elephant Song

#### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm, important for brain development
- Knowing how to count in correct numerical order
- Listening carefully, using new words, rhyming words together, and building sentences
- Matching another voice in singing a melody
- Picturing in the mind the objects, creatures, and actions mentioned in the song
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun

#### Supplies needed: Optional

- Ball of string
- Stick of chalk

#### Instructions:

- Begin by singing the song over and over again while you drive and other family members are riding in the car, waiting for doctor's visits, or during other tedious times.
- Encourage children to sing along with you until they learn the words and tune.
- At home, on a playground, or at rest stops on the highway, walk bent over in a circle while extending one arm down in a swaying motion like an elephant's trunk. The other hand can be stuck out at the back of the body to become a tail.
- Add one more person into the "spider's web" at the beginning of each verse. If desired, the front arm, or "trunk," of one person can grab the "tail" of the next person in line.
- In the car, an adult passenger or older child could make a spider web by tying knots with string, using creative imagination. Children's fingers could "walk" the web.
- On a sidewalk or other hard ground surface, you could draw a web with chalk to walk upon while you and the children sing the song and make the elephant motions.

singing  
and  
counting!

#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the song's words.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child sings and does the motions together.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child sings the number of elephants who came out to play in correct order.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child invents new words and motions.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- You and your child have fun singing together.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

Source of activity: Traditional counting song



# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Elephant Song

---



### “One Elephant Went Out to Play”

One elephant went out to play  
On a spider’s web one day.  
He had such enormous fun,  
That he asked another elephant to come.

Two elephants went out to play...  
Three elephants went out to play...  
Four elephants went out to play...  
Five elephants went out to play...

*(Sing the next highest number in the first line, then sing the other lines as written above. Continue singing and adding elephants until everyone enters the circle.)*

singing  
and  
counting!



# Preschool

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Guessing Game

#### What children gain:

- Developing mental pictures of the spoken ideas
- Increasing problem solving, creative thinking, and memory
- Identifying alphabet letter sounds, increasing the number of known words
- Conversing and listening in a give-and-take manner
- Accepting assistance when needed
- Feeling a sense of accomplishment in solving the riddles

#### Instructions:

- Family members of various ages can play this game in the car or anywhere.
- One family member selects an object or animal – something quite simple to start off the game – and gives a clue in the form of a statement or a question.
- If the child cannot answer correctly, then the speaker gives a more detailed clue.
- If the child still doesn't get it, the speaker gives the beginning letter sound of the answer.
- The speaker always responds in a cheerful, patient, respectful manner to the child's efforts to answer correctly.
- The speaker coaches older children to respond in the same way. The younger child then will enjoy playing the game and will want to try again.

#### Example:

**Clue:** "I bark."

Child gives no response or an incorrect response.

**Clue:** "I wag my tail."

Child gives no response or an incorrect response.

**Clue:** "I have four legs."

Child gives no response or an incorrect response.

Speaker then says, "The answer begins with the 'D-D-D' sound."

- If the child gives a correct answer after a clue, the speaker would ask, "What is the first letter sound in the word 'dog'?" The child would then try to give the "D" sound.
- If the child is correct, the speaker then asks, "What alphabet letter makes the 'D-D-D' sound?" The child could respond with "D."
- If the child is unable to guess the "D" sound or letter, then the speaker helps by telling the correct answer, "Dog."
- It may help to show the child a picture of a dog at some point, so the child will be able to form a mental picture of a dog when the word is spoken.

#### To think about...

- Younger children can name objects or animals after hearing various descriptive words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Younger children are able to cheerfully accept clues and assistance from older children.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Older children show kindness and respect to younger children when assisting them.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Parents and children of all ages become quicker at thinking of objects to guess and clues to give.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Parents and children think creatively about more unusual objects or animals to use as answers to riddles and unusually descriptive words to use as clues.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Parents and children enjoy being together, sharing ideas and affection.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: This activity was adapted by Ginger Yeaste. Ginger interviewed parents of young children who created this game because they wanted enjoyable alternatives to watching videos during long car rides.*



# Preschool

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ The Itsy Bitsy Spider

#### What children gain:

- Practicing rhyming sounds and words
- Using rhythmic patterns when moving, clapping, or banging one object against another
- Increasing vocabulary, memory, and creative imagination
- Enjoying short, humorous nonsense stories such as this one in rhyme
- Coordinating fingers, eyes, and language with finger plays and movement songs
- Increasing their awareness of nature

#### Instructions:

- In the car, while driving or riding, teach the rhyme without the motions by singing it several times.
- Encourage your child to sing along, even if he doesn't get the words and tune completely right for a while. It takes time for people of any age to learn something new.
- Then, when you are not driving, teach the hand motions.
- You and your child could sing and act out the motions by using different voices (squeaky, whispery, etc.), faster or slower speeds, or humming with no words but making the motions. These variations make the activity even more fun.
- You can also ask the child how he would like to sing the song.
- These instructions can also be used with many other finger plays.

*rhythm and rhyming!*

#### To think about...

- Your child frequently sings this song or other rhyming songs and chants with enthusiasm even when you are not close by.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child moves (marching, skipping, hopping, skating, etc.), claps, or bangs one object against another in rhythmic patterns, often in time to music or chants.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child uses more words to tell you creative stories, tells you about past events, and asks for songs, chants, or stories that he hasn't heard for a while.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child shows enjoyment of this activity and other finger plays and stories by asking you to sing them with him or by singing them himself at any moment.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child is able to make the finger and arm motions in a smooth, coordinated manner and at the right time in the song.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet

*Source of activity: Well-known traditional finger play; activity developed by Alicia Tobin*



# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ The Itsy Bitsy Spider

---

### The Itsy Bitsy Spider

The itsy bitsy spider went up the water spout.  
*(Hold one forearm straight up with fingers straight. “Walk” the first two fingers of your other hand up the “spout.”)*

Down came the rain and washed the spider out.  
*(Stretch both hands up above your head. Wiggle your fingers as you slowly lower them.)*

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain,  
*(Hold your arms in a circle over your head.)*

And the itsy bitsy spider went up the spout again.  
*(Hold one forearm straight up with fingers straight. “Walk” the first two fingers of your other hand up the “spout.”)*

*rhythm and rhyming!*





# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

## ♥ John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt

### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm, important for brain development
- Listening carefully, using new words, rhyming words together, and building sentences
- Matching another voice in singing a melody
- Increasing memory capacity by repeating the song many times
- Understanding and making the difference between louder and softer sounds
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun and silliness

### Instructions:

- You can easily teach this song while you drive by singing it over and over, which is really the fun of the song anyway.
- To begin, sing the song loudly.
- The next time sing it a little bit more softly, but sing the “Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la” loudly.
- Continue to repeat the song more softly, but each time sing the “Tra-la-las” loudly.
- The final repetition is only mouthed, with no sound. Shout “Tra-la-la-la-la-la-la-la!” very loudly at the end, and see if everyone finishes together.
- Vary the song by singing it faster and softer at the same time.
- If your child asks who John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt is, you could reply with another open-ended question such as, “What do you think he did that made him so famous?” Your child and you might be able to brainstorm a wonderful, fantastic appearance, talents, and occupation for this imaginary man!

## John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt

John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt,  
His name is my name, too.

Whenever I go out, the people always shout,  
“There goes John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt!”

**TRA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA...**

*(Repeat the song several times softer and softer,  
or faster and faster, or both together.)*

### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the song’s words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can sing more softly, but can contrast the volume by singing the “tra-la-las” loudly.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can sing faster and faster with clear pronunciation, keeping up with the speed of the words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing and being silly together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child asks curiously about John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt and enjoys sharing ideas.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Traditional children’s song*



# Preschool

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Preschool Talk

#### What children gain:

- Increasing awareness of parents' ways of using words when they talk together
- Increasing awareness of parents' ability to read printed words to get things done
- Learning to talk with others in back-and-forth conversation
- Hearing and remembering more words and understanding their meanings
- Speaking in more complex sentences
- Learning to put ideas in logical order by telling short stories to others about everyday events
- Growing curiosity about things, people, and ideas
- Strengthening the parent-child bond and the child's self-esteem

#### Instructions:

- When you and your child are in the car together or waiting at a doctor's office, you can be a great language role model by talking about what you are thinking and seeing.
- Questions that your child can answer with "yes" or "no" put a stop to a conversation. Avoid using such questions.
- Use short, clear, open-ended questions starting with "What, why, how, or who."
- For example, you can say, "I see a red stop sign with the word 'Stop' coming up. What do you think I should I do when I get there? Why should I do that?"
- Listen attentively to your child's responses, smile, and follow up with brief, friendly comments. Be patient and respectful while she thinks of the words to say.
- Compliment her by naming her good ideas: "You are right. I have to stop when I get to the stop sign." Respectfully correct her mistaken notions: "Yes, everyone must stop still. People are breaking the law when they only slow down before going on. They could cause an accident."
- You can name special buildings you are driving by, such as your county courthouse or fire station. Briefly explain what goes on in those places, pause to listen for your child's response, and again answer in a kind, patient way.

- Be short and clear in your questions and comments. Remember that your preschool child may have a short attention span.
- Help your child take turns to talk by saying something like, "Joe, after you talk, it will be Betsy's turn. Hang on, Juan; it will be your turn after Betsy is finished."
- Use every chance you get to converse with children. You are helping them use their brains to think about ideas and reasons and put them into words. Children become better readers and learners when they have many opportunities to use language before and after they start attending elementary school.

#### To think about...

- Your child listens closely when you talk with others and watches you read signs.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- When you and your child are together, she starts talking about something important to her or asks you a question.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- You listen carefully to understand her ideas and give a short, clear answer. Then you wait patiently and with good humor for her to speak again.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child is able to wait her turn to speak.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can accept gentle corrections to her mistaken words or ideas.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can pronounce and use more words with correct meanings.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Activity developed by Alicia Tobin; also adapted from Dixie Lee Speigel, Jill Fitzgerald, and James W. Cunningham (1993). Parental perceptions of preschoolers' literacy development: Implications for home-school partnerships. Young Children, 48 (5), 74-79.*



# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

## ♥ There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly

### **What children gain:**

- Developing a sense of rhythm, important for brain development
- Listening carefully, using new words, rhyming words together, and building sentences
- Matching another voice when singing a melody
- Increasing memory capacity by repeating the basic song with sillier variations
- Understanding the difference between types and sizes of animals as the story goes along
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun and silliness

### **Instructions:**

- This song is great fun to sing while you are driving, waiting somewhere, working with a group of children, or anywhere.
- Begin by singing and repeating the song while you and your child are together. Encourage your child to sing along with you until he learns the words and tune.
- Vary your voice sounds as the various animals are mentioned and as the story gets more ridiculous. You can get some ideas by listening to the recording.
- Show your child what each animal looks like by finding pictures in books, plastic toys made to look realistic, or by visiting real animals on a farm. Be sure to name the animals and see if your child can repeat the names. With older children, you could talk about kinds of spiders and birds, as well as breeds of cats, dogs, pigs, goats, cows, and horses.
- Make the song as silly as you possibly can! It is a wonderful way for you and your child to enjoy each other.

**rhythm and rhyming!**

### **To think about...**

- Your child clearly pronounces the song's words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child shows that she can picture the animals in her mind by making the correct sounds in the song, and by talking about some characteristics of each animal.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child remembers the order of the animals in the song.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing, being silly, and exaggerating each of the old lady's eating escapades.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Traditional silly song*

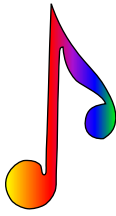


# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

## ♥ There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly

### There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly



1

There was an old lady who swallowed a fly;  
I don't know why she swallowed a fly!  
Perhaps she'll die.

2

There was an old lady who swallowed a spider  
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her.  
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly;  
I don't know why she swallowed that fly.  
Perhaps she'll die.

3

There was an old lady who swallowed a bird –  
How absurd, to swallow a bird!  
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider  
That wriggled and jiggled and tickled inside her.  
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly..., etc.

4

There was an old lady who swallowed a cat –  
Fancy that, to swallow a cat!  
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird;  
She swallowed the bird to catch the  
spider..., etc.



*Don't stop now; more verses on next page!*



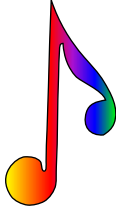
# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly

---



5

There was an old lady who swallowed a dog –  
What a hog, to swallow a dog!  
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat..., etc.

6

There was an old lady who swallowed a goat –  
She just opened her throat and swallowed a goat!  
She swallowed the goat to catch the  
dog..., etc.

7

There was an old lady who swallowed a cow –  
I don't know how she swallowed a cow!  
She swallowed the cow to catch the goat..., etc.

8

There was an old lady who swallowed a horse –  
She's dead, of course!



**rhythm and rhyming!**



# Preschool

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Whim-Wham-Doodles

#### **What children gain:**

- Feeling very special and important to receive this exciting invitation from an adult
- Enjoying the rhythms and sounds of the strange food names
- Picturing the unusual menu items that sound so delicious but are completely unknown
- Imagining the tastes of the unfamiliar foods and perhaps deciding to try out real new foods

#### **Instructions:**

- Read the story a few times until you are able to read it smoothly. Listen to the audio resource, if possible, to capture the sound and flow of the words.
- Choose a special moment to introduce the story to your child when he is calm, wide awake, and seems ready to listen. A good time might be while riding in the car, waiting for something to happen, at home waiting for dinner to cook, or at bedtime.
- Start either by introducing the story, such as “I have a special invitation for you!”
- You could also start by just saying his name, and then beginning the story.
- Be ready to repeat the story often. Some children love being invited to the fantasy meal over and over.

you are  
invited!

#### **To think about...**

- Your child’s eyes light up and a big smile appears when you invite him to dinner.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child tries to say the names of the fantasy foods.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child talks about the appearance or draws a picture of one of the foods.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child expresses interest in eating one or more of the imaginary foods, or shows a willingness to try a real food that he had been refusing to eat.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Contributed by a veteran nursery school teacher; source unknown*



# Preschool

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

## ♥ Whim-Wham-Doodles

### Whim Wham Doodles

*(Child's name),*

will you eat dinner with me in my garden?

I'm going to have a good dinner.

I'm cooking it now.

There will be whim-wham-doodles,

Creamed whim-wham-doodles.

They are very choice.

And puff-stuffies on sweetstuffs, cooked just right.

Do you like them?

Rusky-musks? Yes, we'll have rusky-musks.

No dinner is done without rusky-musks.

Next, we'll have tuffabunny tic-tac.

It's very special nice, served on toast.

To drink, we'll have krink-krank,

Plenty of good hot krink-krank.

Nothing like it.

And for dessert—shall I tell, or make it a secret?

Tell? Well—it's whistle-fissle.

That's for dessert.

Whim-wham-doodles, creamed whim-wham-doodles,

Puff-stuffies on sweetstuffs and rusky-musks,

Then krink-krank to drink,

With whistle-fissle for dessert.

Will you come? You're on your way?

Good! Then you may set the table.

# Kindergarten and Early Elementary

---



*Family Language Fun to Go*

- ♥ Alice the Camel
- ♥ Bobby Goat and Other Pretend Stories
- ♥ Fun with Fables
- ♥ Kookaburra
- ♥ Sara-sponda
- ♥ She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain  
When She Comes
- ♥ Song That Fit the Individual
- ♥ The Time Machine





# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Alice the Camel

#### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm, important for brain development
- Knowing how to count in correct reverse numerical order
- Learning the one-to-one correspondence of number to quantity
- Listening carefully to match another voice in singing a melody
- Creating mental pictures of the objects, creatures, and actions mentioned in the song
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun and silliness

#### Instructions:

- Introduce the song starting from the highest number you are certain your child understands. Usually the song starts at 10 humps and goes to “no humps,” or zero.
- **Variations**
  - Starting the song at numbers higher than 10
  - Using fingers to show the number
  - Counting down by twos
  - Singing faster as the numbers decrease
- Showing the number of humps by holding up the correct number of fingers helps younger children match number words to actual objects, or one-to-one correspondence.
- The final phrase of the last verse provides a funny surprise. Sing it in a silly way!

singing  
and  
counting!

#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the song’s syllables.  
\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can sing the song with the correct rhythm by herself.  
\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can count backwards with the numbers in the correct order.  
\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child understands one-to-one correspondence by holding up the correct number of fingers when singing the number of humps.  
\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun being silly together.  
\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_ not yet

Source of activity: Traditional children’s camp song



## ♥ Alice the Camel

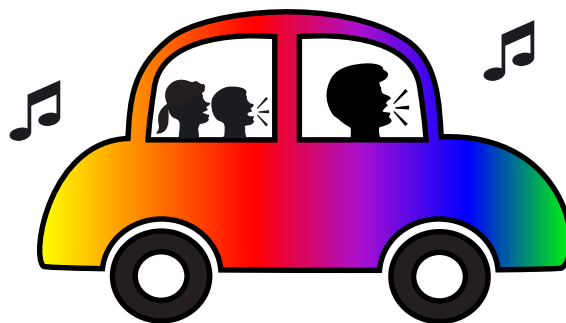
---



### Alice the Camel

Alice the camel had 10 humps;  
Alice the camel had 10 humps,  
Alice the camel had 10 humps,  
Go, Alice, go, boom, boom, boom.

Alice the camel had 9 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 8 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 7 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 6 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 5 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 4 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 3 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 2 humps, etc.  
Alice the camel had 1 hump, etc.  
Alice the camel had no humps, etc.  
'Cause Alice the camel was a HORSE!





# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Bobby Goat and Other Pretend Stories

#### What children gain:

- Developing creative imagination and memory of past events in the child's life
- Solving the problems of the story's characters and, in doing so, learning to solve actual problems
- Resolving conflicts between the story's characters and, in doing so, gaining insight into resolving real conflicts with family members or friends
- Enhancing parent/child collaboration through creating the plot of the story
- Learning the meanings of new words as they are used in the story
- Increasing knowledge of geography, history, and mathematics

#### Instructions:

- Begin by deciding, along with your child, the main character of the story.
- Then ask your child a series of open-ended questions about the main character to develop the story. Be sure to include the child in all decisions.
- Help your child put the character in a scenario. Ask questions, give suggestions, but let the child choose the outline of the story.
- Help your child make up a problem for the character or a conflict with someone. Perhaps the character and a friend get into an argument or a stranger asks the character to take a ride.
- Let the character go to different countries and tell your child what you know about the places.
- Let the character meet past presidents or participate in historical events. The character could share apples with a friend and incorporate simple math into the story.
- If the character and stories capture your child's imagination and enthusiasm, you could tape them on a cassette tape recorder. You could also write them down and suggest that the child illustrate them with drawings.
- The possibilities are endless!

*Source of the activity: Contributed by Cecily Galbreath. Cecily related, "My younger half-sister and our father began to make up stories about "Bobby Goat" when she was four. For two years both parents were continuously telling her made-up stories about "Bobby Goat" and his many friends and the adventures upon which they went. My sister was always an active participant in spinning elaborate tales and still recalls many of the stories years later."*

#### To think about...

- Your child describes the main character in detail.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child discusses the character's situation in a logical way.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child invents a story for the main character.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child responds to your guidance when you suggest historical, geographical, mathematical, or cultural details.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child enjoys recording the stories in oral or written form (optional activity).  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun developing the stories together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- A topic in the story leads to more conversation and bonding between you and your child.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Bobby Goat and Other Pretend Stories

---

### Examples of story-building questions to ask your child:

“Once upon a time there was a ...”

“Who will this story be about?”

*(Examples: A favorite animal, a boy or girl, a man or woman, the character’s name, etc.)*

“What does \_\_\_\_\_ (main character) look like?”

*(Let your child describe the eyes, hair, clothing, etc.)*

“Where does \_\_\_\_\_ live?”

“Who is in \_\_\_\_\_’s family?”

“Where is \_\_\_\_\_ right now?”

“What has just happened to \_\_\_\_\_?”

“Oh, what a mess \_\_\_\_\_ is in!”

What is \_\_\_\_\_ going to do about it?”

“Wow, that was a close call. Where did they travel after that?”

“How do you think this story is going to end?”



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Fun with Fables

#### What children gain:

- Developing social, moral, and literacy skills for real life through contact with the fables
- Forming mental pictures of the characters and scenes
- Learning how to predict the outcomes of the stories
- Gaining insight into another creature’s situation and respect for another’s point of view
- Appreciating the timeless values found in classic fables
- Learning to distinguish fantasy from real life situations

#### Supplies needed:

No supplies are necessary. Several fables are included on the next two pages for your use. You may want to read or remember some additional classic fables. Consult your public library for storybooks of Aesop’s Fables. Because Aesop’s Fables are in the public domain, they can be reproduced in written form as stories without copyright concerns.

#### Instructions:

- Fables – short stories containing moral lessons – have captured the imaginations of people of many generations, ages, and cultures. They are best when told orally as stories.
- Read a fable from the collection included here until you can tell it without using the written words. Then it will be easy to tell it to your child while driving or waiting for something.
- You may start the story with “Once upon a time...” or “There once was...” Or you can begin the story right where the action starts. For example: “Two frogs lived together in a marsh. But one hot summer the marsh dried up, and they left it to look for another place to live in. ...”
- It is fun to stop at two or three places in the action to ask your child what he thinks will happen to the homeless frogs (or whatever creature the fable features).
- Increase the fun by making your voice raspy like the frogs or squeaky like a mouse.
- You might like to give your child a bonus point if she is able to state the point of the fable’s lesson.
- Your child will likely ask to hear these ancient yet timely and entertaining stories over and over again.

#### To think about...

- Your child is able to correctly predict the character’s actions, behavior, and story outcomes.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Younger children can distinguish fantasy from real life situations in these stories.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members practice good-humored respect for the differing abilities and ideas of each person.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members can explain the moral values illustrated in the stories in their own words and tell how the values apply to their own lives.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members show by their facial expressions, words, and enthusiasm that they enjoy the stories and feel happy with themselves.  
 yes     sometimes  
 not yet

*Source of the activity: Adapted from: Mountain, Lee. (2003). Predicting with myths and fables: “King Midas is in trouble!” Dimensions of Early Childhood, 31 (1), 9-12. One source of Aesop’s Fables is: Scrocco, Jean L. (Ed.) and Walt Sturrock (Ill.) (1988). Aesop’s Fables. Parsippany, NJ: The Unicorn Publishing House, Inc. Copyright applies to the book cover, interior graphics, and artwork. The fables themselves are in the public domain.*



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Fun with Fables

---

### The Fables

#### *The Frogs and the Well*

Two frogs lived together in a marsh. But one hot summer the marsh dried up. They left it to look for another place to live in, for frogs like damp places if they can get them. By and by they came to a deep well, and one of them looked down into it, and said to the other, “This looks like a nice cool place. Let us jump in and settle here.” But the other who had a wiser head on his shoulders, replied, “Not so fast, my friend. Supposing this well dried up like the marsh, how should we get out again?”

♥ **Moral:** Look before you leap.

#### *The Dove and the Ant*

An ant, going to a river to drink, fell in and was carried along in the stream. A dove pitied her condition and threw into the river a small twig, by means of which the ant was able to swim to shore. Afterwards, the ant, seeing a man with a gun who was aiming at the dove, stung him sharply in the foot and made him miss his aim, and so saved the dove’s life.

♥ **Moral:** Little friends may prove great friends.

#### *The Ant and the Grasshopper*

In a field one summer’s day, a grasshopper was hopping about, chirping and singing to its heart’s content. An ant passed by, bearing along with great toil a kernel of corn he was taking to the nest. “Why not come and chat with me,” said the grasshopper, “instead of toiling in the hot sun that way?” “I am helping to lay up food for the winter,” said the ant, “and I recommend that you do the same.” “Why bother about winter?” said the grasshopper. “We have plenty of food right now.” But the ant went on its way and continued its toil. When the winter came the grasshopper had no food and found itself dying of hunger, while it saw the ants distributing every day corn and grain from the stores they had collected in the summer. Then the grasshopper knew:

♥ **Moral:** It is best to prepare for the days of necessity.

**More fabulous fables follow!**



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Fun with Fables

---

### *The Milkmaid and Her Pail*

A farmer's daughter had been out to milk the cows and was returning to the dairy carrying her pail of milk upon her head. As she walked along, she daydreamed in this way: "The milk in this pail will provide me with cream, which I will make into butter and take to market to sell. With the money I will buy a number of eggs, and these, when hatched, will produce chickens, and by and by I shall have quite a large poultry-yard. Then I shall sell some of my fowls, and with the money which they will bring in I will buy myself a new gown, which I shall wear when I go to the fair. All the young men will admire it and will flirt with me, but I shall toss my head and have nothing to say to them." Forgetting all about the pail, and suiting the action to the word, she tossed her head. Down went the pail, all the milk was spilled, and all her fine castles in the air vanished in a moment!

♥ **Moral:** Do not count your chickens before they are hatched.

### *The North Wind and the Sun*

A dispute arose between the North Wind and the Sun, each claiming that he was stronger than the other. At last they agreed to try their powers upon a traveler to see which could soonest strip him of his cloak. The North Wind had the first try. Gathering up all his force for the attack, he came whirling furiously down upon the man, and caught up his cloak as though he would wrest it from him by one single effort. But the harder he blew, the more closely the man wrapped it around himself. Then came the turn of the Sun. At first he beamed gently upon the traveler, who soon unclasped his cloak and walked on with it hanging loosely about his shoulders. Then he shone forth in his full strength, and the man, before he had gone many steps, was glad to throw his cloak right off and complete his journey more lightly clad.

♥ **Moral:** Persuasion is better than force.

### *The Hare and the Tortoise*

One day the hare, laughing at the tortoise for his slowness and general clumsiness, was challenged by the tortoise to run a race. The hare, looking on the whole affair as a great joke, consented, and the fox was selected to act as umpire and hold the stakes. The rivals started, and the hare, of course, soon left the tortoise far behind. Having come midway to the goal, she began to play about, nibble the young blades of grass, and amuse herself in many ways. The day being warm, she even thought she would take a little nap in a shady spot. She said to herself, "If the tortoise passes me while I sleep, I can easily overtake him again before he reaches the end." The tortoise meanwhile plodded on, unwavering and unresting, straight toward the goal. The hare, having overslept, jumped up from her nap and was surprised to find that the tortoise was nowhere in sight. Off she went at full speed, but upon reaching the winning-post found that the tortoise was already there, waiting for her arrival

♥ **Moral:** Slow and steady wins the race.





# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Kookaburra

#### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm and word rhyming
- Pronouncing words clearly
- Listening carefully to match another voice in singing a melody
- Becoming aware of a folk song from Australia, a different culture
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun

#### Supplies needed:

None, unless you want to supply a bag of gumdrops for a special treat

#### Instructions:

- Listen to the audio CD to learn the tune and words.
- Practice the song until you can sing it easily and enthusiastically.
- Sing it with gusto while you are driving with your child in the car. It is short enough to sing in a silly way (whatever that means for you) to distract a grumpy mood or a fuss between siblings, perhaps distributing a few gum drops to those who begin to smile.
- You could vary the song by singing in a very high or very low voice, or starting slow and repeating the song faster.
- If you wish, search the Internet sites listed below or visit the library. Find information and pictures about Australia to share with your children. Discover what the bush is, what “gumdrops” are, and if there is a real Kookaburra!

#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the words of the song.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child shows interest in the meaning of the song by asking questions, looking puzzled, or laughing at the seeming non-sense words.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing the song and being silly together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

**rhythm and rhyming!**

Source of the activity: Traditional Australian folk song.

For more information about the kookaburra, visit:

[www.honolulu zoo.org/kookaburra.htm](http://www.honolulu zoo.org/kookaburra.htm)

[www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/birds/printouts/kookaburraprintout.shtml](http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/birds/printouts/kookaburraprintout.shtml)

[www.calm.wa.gov.au/plants\\_animals/odd\\_kookaburra.html](http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/plants_animals/odd_kookaburra.html)

[www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/kookaburra.htm](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/kookaburra.htm)





# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

## ♥ Kookaburra

---

### Kookaburra

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree.  
Merry, merry king of the bush is he.  
Laugh, Kookaburra, laugh, Kookaburra,  
Gay your life must be.

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,  
Eating all the gumdrops he can see.  
Stop, Kookaburra! Stop, Kookaburra!  
Leave some there for me.

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,  
Counting all the monkeys he can see.  
Stop, Kookaburra! Stop, Kookaburra!  
That's not a monkey, that's me!

*rhythm and rhyming!*



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Sara-sponda

#### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm and word rhyming for phonetic learning
- Increasing the ability to pronounce word sounds clearly
- Listening carefully to match another voice in singing a melody
- Concentrating on singing one set of syllables while another line of singing is going on
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun and silliness

#### Instructions:

- The fun is pronouncing the nonsense syllables in the correct order while keeping the tune accurate.
- First, listen to the song on the audio CD and learn to sing along with the recording. You may want to read the words at the same time.
- After you know how to sing the song, introduce it to your child while you are driving, waiting for something to happen where singing is appropriate, or working together with your child at home.
- Repeat the song several times until your child can easily sing it.
- For added fun, start singing the song slowly, then increase the speed of the words each time you repeat the song.
- As another variation, family members with deeper voices can start the song and continue throughout the “Sara-sponda” section with a steady “Boom-da, boom-da, boom-da, boom-da...” Gradually speed up the song until nobody can keep singing it accurately. You will hear this variation on the audio CD.

fun and silly  
syllables!

#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the song’s syllables.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can sing the song with the correct rhythm.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can sing the words clearly while going faster and faster.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing, being silly together, and singing faster and faster until the words get mixed up.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Traditional nonsense song*



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

---

## ♥ Sara-sonda

---



### Sara-sonda

Boom-da, boom-da, boom-da, boom-da

*(Optional beginning to the song by at least one singer that continues while other singers sing the words.*

*“Boom-da” singers join the others on “Ah-doray-oh...”)*

Sara-sonda, sara-sonda, sara-sonda red-set-set;

Sara-sonda, sara-sonda, sara-sonda red-set-set.

Ah-doray oh, Ah-doray boom-day oh;

Ah-doray boom-day red-set-set;

Ah-say possay oh.



*(Repeat the whole song.)*

fun and silly  
syllables!



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain When She Comes

#### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythm and word rhyming
- Pronouncing words clearly
- Listening carefully to match another voice in singing a melody
- Remembering the order of what “she” will be doing when she “comes round the mountain”
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun

#### Instructions:

- This song is easy to learn because it repeats the first line throughout each verse. Just listen to the tune on the audio CD and then sing it a few times with your child.
- Sing this song while riding in your car on a short commute or a longer trip. From the back seat your child can see you rhythmically nodding your head, moving your shoulders, and smiling into the rearview mirror.
- The song is especially fun when you are riding among hills or mountains, or are traveling toward them for a vacation.
- You can describe other geographical features you are traveling through and appropriate activities “she” can do. For example: “She’ll be zooming through the prairies when she comes,” or “She’ll be sailing on the ocean when she comes.”
- The song can become a chant by saying the words without singing. You can then use it with your child while waiting in line at the movie, the supermarket, or wherever other people are listening. Vary the words to tell the story of where you are at the moment or a wonderful time your family has recently had can keep boredom at bay.
- Watch the video DVD to learn some body movements to go with the verses.
- The traditional words are on the next page.

#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the words of the song.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child remembers the order of the verses.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child makes up new words to the tune.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing and inventing new verses together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

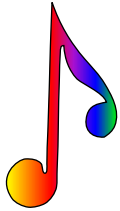
*Source of the activity: Traditional American folk song*

**rhythm and rhyming!**



## ♥ She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain When She Comes

---



### She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain When She Comes

She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.  
She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.  
She'll be comin' round the mountain, she'll be comin'  
round the mountain,  
She'll be comin' round the mountain when she comes.

She'll be drivin' six white horses when she comes.  
*(Repeat to the end of the verse.)*

Oh, we'll all come out to meet her when she comes.  
*(Repeat to the end of the verse.)*

She'll be wearing red pajamas when she comes.  
*(Repeat to the end of the verse.)*

Oh, we'll all have chicken and dumplings when she comes.  
*(Repeat to the end of the verse.)*





# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Songs That Fit the Individual

#### **What children gain:**

- Developing individual musical skills
- Expressing increased awareness of individual behavior, characteristics, and activities
- Becoming more prepared for transitions in activities or tasks
- Growing in intellectual ability to use language and numbers
- Enhancing creative imagination and memory
- Bonding more closely with parents or other adults

#### **Instructions:**

- This activity is about making up songs or using existing tunes with your own words to fit the interests and needs of your child.
- This activity is great for longer car trips when there is time to invent words and come up with tunes to fit them.
- First, think about your child's interests and how a short song could expand one of those interests.
- Then create a very simple song about the idea.
- For example, use the tune to "She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain" to create an individualized song that teaches a child about her family: "Oh, Sarah has two grandparents, yes she does. ..."
- After establishing a certain family member (e.g., grandparent) in the first verse of the song, in following verses you can then list the people's names: "Now their names are Sandy and Duncan, yes they are. ..."
- Making up songs to prepare a child for transitions is also helpful in some situations. For example, driving home in the car after picking up your child at the child care center, school, or a sports practice is a good time to help her anticipate a new activity.

- By singing the preparation in song, your words no longer sound like nagging but instead sound fun and happy. The repetition of words and melody helps the child to mentally prepare for what will happen next. There are many tunes that would work.
- For example, use a simple melody such as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" and replace the words with, "Sarah, Sarah, my big girl, in five more minutes we'll go inside. We'll wash our hands and fix our food. Then we'll sit right down and eat. Sarah, Sarah, my big girl, in five more minutes we'll go inside."

Singing together and talking about music is an excellent way to bond with your child and get to know her better. In addition, an individualized song is a fine tool to motivate your child to adjust to a new activity or task. Children usually feel affirmed and loved as part of the family when they hear about themselves in a song or story. They may then be quite willing to cooperate with other family members in an activity or task that benefits everyone.

#### **To think about...**

- Your child clearly pronounces the song's words when singing along with you.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to yours.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child shows more interest in the topics you select for individualized singing.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child willingly cooperates with a new activity after you sang a song about it.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child enjoy singing the individualized song together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of the activity: Contributed by Cecily Galbreath



# Kindergarten—Early Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ The Time Machine

#### What children gain:

- Increasing knowledge of other times and places
- Visualizing, imagining, and placing oneself in others' perspectives and historical times
- Expanding the number and accurate meanings of words
- Telling more complex stories about family happenings in past and present
- Participating in an active exchange of conversation with a parent

#### Instructions:

- This conversational activity is useful when you and your school-age child are traveling by car either short or long distances, when you are waiting to see a doctor, or during another tedious time. Many children this age are interested to know about historical differences in the everyday lives of people they know.
- You could start the conversation by asking the child what he imagines it was like years ago getting from place to place, visiting the doctor, or going to the grocery store (whatever the situation in which you are involved at the current moment) when you or a grandparent was a child.
- You could continue by saying something such as:  
*“When I was a little girl/boy, we walked down to the corner grocery store. ...”*  
*“When your grandparent was your age, he didn’t have a car to drive. ...”*  
*“Can you imagine what we’d do without our car? How would we get places?”*  
*“What games would you play if you didn’t have a television? We played. ...”*
- Ask the child questions about what he is thinking after you explain time differences.
- Ask the child to imagine some more about what life was like during different times and to help tell the story by creating a mental picture with words.
- If you feel as if you can’t think of anything to say, just remember the child’s daily routines and how they differ from when you were a child. Many children love the thought of their parents being their own age.

#### To think about...

- Your child shows increasing interest and curiosity in your family’s history by asking questions and making comments.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child looks forward to talking with you when you are together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child is able to wait his turn to speak.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can pronounce and use more words with appropriate meanings when asking questions or telling a story.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of the activity: Contributed by Cecily Galbreath, who heard about this activity from a friend of hers whose young child was very interested in history. His mother began telling him about what life was like in different time periods, and the little boy became fascinated.*

# Older Elementary



---

## *Family Language Fun to Go*

- ♥ Alphabet Game
- ♥ A Ram Sam Sam
- ♥ His-story/Her-story
- ♥ Name That Tune
- ♥ Roundabout Stories
- ♥ Swimming, Swimming in the Swimming Pool





# Older Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Alphabet Game

#### What children gain:

- Sharpening alphabetical and vocabulary skills
- Increasing knowledge of categories and subcategories
- Developing creative thinking abilities
- Exercising memory
- Practicing social skills such as taking turns and showing respect for others

#### Instructions:

- This game can be played anywhere when time becomes heavy on children's hands. You can participate while driving because you can keep your eyes on the road. Only your memory of words and the alphabet is required.
- In the game's simplest form, players take turns naming items beginning with the letter A. They continue naming items beginning with the appropriate letter until they reach the end of the alphabet.
- Here are two variations that use categories to make the game more challenging:

**Variation 1:** The first person begins the game by saying, perhaps in a rhythmic way, "I'm going on a pic-nic, pic-nic, pic-nic, and I'm going to take an apple." The next person says, "I'm going on a pic-nic, pic-nic, pic-nic, and I'm going to take an apple and a banana." The third person says, "I'm going on a pic-nic, pic-nic, pic-nic, and I'm going to take an apple, a banana, and some chicken." Players continue in correct order of letters throughout the entire alphabet. Players can snap their fingers, clap their hands, slap their legs, or make other sounds to keep the rhythm going.

**Variation 2:** The first person starts with a name beginning with the letter A: "My name is Annie, I'm from Alaska, and I like apples. The next person chooses a person's name, a city or state, and a food, all beginning with the letter B, and so on. It can be extra fun to come up with unusual names, or with a city and state that start with the same letter, such as Anchorage, Alaska. You could also require a particular type of food for the third category, such as all fruits or all vegetables. Other categories can be substituted for food.

#### To think about...

- Your child improves in speed of categorizing and relating the alphabet to specific items within the categories, such as states, cities, peoples, animals, plants, foods, and objects.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Family members practice respect for the differing abilities of each person by complimenting individuals for their answers and helping out when necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Family members show respect for each other by taking turns with patience.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Children and teens show by their "body language," facial expressions, and words that they feel happy with themselves and enjoy the play.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Dianne Gibson and Sherri Farley. Both the Gibson and Farley families have played this game for years during car rides.*



# Older Elementary

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

## ♥ A Ram Sam Sam

### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythmic chanting while singing, for phonetic learning
- Increasing the ability to pronounce word sounds clearly
- Listening carefully, to repeat the nonsense syllables with speed and clear pronunciation, very much like learning another language
- Enhancing memory, to repeat the nonsense syllables in the correct order
- Matching another voice in singing a melody
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun and silliness

### Instructions:

- Practice this song while listening to the audio CD until you can do it smoothly. Then introduce it to your child. You could also learn it along with your child with the help of the audio CD.
- Have fun with this song as you drive along with your child in the car. It is also useful when you are waiting in a drive-through line, sitting in the car with one child while waiting for another child to finish an after-school activity, or during other tedious times.
- **Variations**

Sing the song as a round. The second person or group begins the song when the first person or group starts to sing “A raffi, a raffi.” The second part continues to the end of the song, after the first person or group is finished.

Use hand motions: Pound one fist on top of the other while singing, “A ram sam sam.” Roll hands and arms around each other while singing, “Gooli, gooli, gooli, gooli, gooli.” Stretch both arms above the head each time you sing, “A raffi, a raffi.”

Watch the video DVD to see examples of the motions.



## A Ram Sam Sam

A ram sam sam, a ram sam sam  
Gooli, gooli, gooli, gooli, gooli,  
ram sam sam.

*(These lines may be repeated.)*

A raffi, a raffi,  
Gooli, gooli, gooli, gooli, gooli,  
ram sam sam.

*(These lines may be repeated.)*

### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the syllables of this song.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her chanting and singing tones to yours (or to another leader).  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can chant and sing the song with the correct rhythms.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can chant and sing the words faster and faster.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing and being silly together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Camp song, origin unknown*



# Older Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ His – story/Her – story

#### **What children gain:**

- Creative imagining of customs and living conditions in earlier historical periods
- Increasing knowledge and appreciation of the personalities of one's own family members of past generations
- Becoming better acquainted with the actual locations where older family members lived or, in other words, learning the geography of the lives of older generations
- Becoming able to tell a story with a plot line after listening to your stories
- Becoming able to form grammatical sentences
- Developing social skills by taking turns in speaking with other family members
- Showing respect and appreciation for others' contributions to the family story

#### **Supplies needed:**

No supplies are necessary. However, you could supply mementos, photos, or news clippings about past generations of family members that might stimulate children's curiosity and excitement about telling the story.

#### **Instructions and activity development:**

- This activity could be especially effective during a long trip in the car.
- To be an effective storyteller, learn to observe carefully what is going on around you and pay close attention to your thoughts. Things you see may likely remind you of your past experiences.
- For example, if you are driving your car with your child sitting in the passenger seat, you could begin a story about something you both just saw from the car window. You could say something like, "That big old green car we just passed

reminds me of the car your great-grandpa used to drive. I was about your age then, and I liked to sit in the middle of the huge back seat and imagine that I was the mayor of an important city and grandpa was my chauffeur. ..." Then you could explain more about the great big car, visiting grandpa, life in grandpa's time, your day-dreams, etc.

- Think ahead to opportunities for fun during an upcoming trip. Look for an object, a photo, or other item about which to tell a story. If you are not driving, for example, you could begin a story by pointing out a specific item of interest in the photo. Say something like, "Here is Great Aunt Alice at her farm. I remember visiting her. She was wearing that very same dress you see in the picture. She sewed it herself out of flour sacks..." Older elementary children are able to appreciate history and most of them enjoy an exciting tale about a colorful individual to whom they are related.
- Take your child to the library or other source of information to find out more facts about the historical period you have told about in your story. Although the Internet is an easy way to get information, your child can benefit from handling the original sources written by well-known authors of the time. Doing so may bring the period alive for both of you.
- After you have told some stories, encourage your child to tell a story about an event that means a lot to her. Be sure to listen patiently and respectfully and compliment her when she has finished. Ask open-ended questions, those that need a detailed reply.
- As an additional treat, it could be especially fascinating for your child to visit the place where a past family member lived. Firsthand experience makes history real!



# Older Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ His – story/Her – story

#### **To think about...**

- Your child shows enthusiastic interest in a story about a relative living in an earlier period of time.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child can accurately describe the geographical location where an historical event took place, perhaps being able to find the location on a map.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child is able to tell a story with a logical order of events and a definite ending.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child speaks in grammatical sentences and with clear pronunciation.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members listen carefully to each other's ideas.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members show their respect to each other, even when they disagree.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child shows by body language, facial expressions, and words that she is happy with herself.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

*Source of activity: An appreciative grown-up grandchild*



# Older Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Name That Tune

#### **What children gain:**

- Sharpening memories of tunes, their names, and their origins
- Marking the rhythms of the songs steadily and accurately
- Increasing knowledge of new words, their meanings, and their fit in the songs
- Developing social skills by sharing experiences, taking turns with the songs, and appreciating and respecting various cultures and older generations

#### **Instructions:**

- You and your family can play this game for hours while traveling on vacation or for short periods during your daily commute.
- One member of the family begins the game by humming the first tune.
- Whoever guesses the title of the song correctly is the next person to hum a tune.
- The family can keep score if desired, but this is optional.
- A variation of the game could include reciting the words to the song, as well as the title.
- Another rule for winning the game would be to tell something interesting about the song, such as when the family member first heard it, from what country or part of this country it originated, or in what movie, show, or recording it first appeared.

#### **To think about...**

- Your child is able to say what he thinks with clear language use and logical reasoning.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Family members listen carefully to each other's ideas.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Family members show their respect for each other, even when they disagree.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child shows by his body language, facial expressions, and words that he feels happy with himself, is comfortable playing the game, and is having fun with other family members.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Dianne Gibson*

I know  
that song!



# Older Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Roundabout Stories

#### **What children gain:**

- Creative imagining of other times and places
- Becoming able to tell a story with a plot line
- Becoming able to form grammatical sentences
- Developing social skills by taking turns in speaking with other family members
- Showing respect and appreciation for others' contributions to the story
- Enjoying verbal play

#### **Supplies needed: (Optional)**

- Inexpensive spiral-bound notebooks
- Crayons, markers, pencils, or pens to write or draw pictures of the amazing stories

#### **Instructions:**

- You can use this activity while driving a car with your child riding along.
- The activity also works well when you and your child are waiting in line to check out, while you are sitting in a doctor's waiting room, or on a rainy or snowy day, etc.
- Begin the story with an opening phrase such as, "Once upon a time, I was walking down a mountain road when I came upon a(n)..."
- Go on with the story as long as you want.
- Then hand the tale on to another person with an exciting scene to continue, saying something like, "The bear was about to grab me when I noticed..."
- Stories could be based on actual history of past family generations or on the actions of bygone folk heroes of your area.
- In contrast, they can be concocted about an entirely fantastic world in outer space.
- Just let your imaginations run wild and marvel at the hair-raising and hilarious masterpieces that your minds can create.

#### **To think about...**

- Your child uses descriptive, complex words in a grammatical way.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child contributes ideas to move the story along with a logical, even if fantastical, plot line.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Family members listen respectfully to each other's ideas and encourage creative additions to the story.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child shows with body language, facial expressions, and words that he feels happy with himself and enjoys the family storytelling.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of activity: Wendy J. Stivers*



# Older Elementary

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Swimming, Swimming in the Swimming Pool

#### What children gain:

- Developing rhythm and word rhyming for phonetic learning
- Matching another voice in singing a melody
- Pronouncing word sounds clearly
- Enhancing memory to repeat words and movements in the correct order
- Coordinating the large muscles of arms and upper body with the rhythm and words
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun and silliness

#### Instructions:

- Use this song when children are at loose ends in the house or at camp on a rainy day.
- Children have great fun with it and get quite excited as they imagine themselves swimming. You may want to plan a calmer activity after singing this song.
- This song will work when riding in the car if you plan ahead. Before you begin, set ground rules about keeping hands and bodies in one's own space.
- Listen to this song on the audio CD until you can sing it easily, including the nonsense sounds described later.
- Watch the video DVD to learn the movements while you sing the words. Now you are ready to introduce the song to your child.
- A variation that is especially fun is to sing the song over and over again, leaving out one more set of words each time and just doing the actions. However, always sing the words, "Oh, don't you wish that you had nothing else to do, but..."
- Start by leaving out "fancy diving, too." Instead, hold your nose and say in descending tones, "bloop, bloop, bloop."
- Make a sound like "Sh-tcht," for each set of words and each phrase you leave out. For "fancy diving, too" always say, "bloop, bloop, bloop." Always sing the last phrase, "Oh, don't you wish that you had nothing else to do—BUT ..." Listen to the CD or watch the DVD for clarification of these instructions.
- Speeding up the whole song makes it still more challenging. Usually it ends with mixed up movements and helpless giggles!

#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the words and sounds.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her singing tones to other voices.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can sing the song with the correct rhythm.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child remembers the order of the movements and matches the movements to the swimming terms.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can sing the words faster and faster.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing and being silly together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of activity: Camp song, origin unknown





# Older Elementary

Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

---

## ♥ Swimming, Swimming in the Swimming Pool

---

### Swimming, Swimming in the Swimming Pool

Swimming, swimming, in the swimming pool;  
*(Make alternating Australian crawl motions with arms.)*

When days are hot,  
*(Fan yourself.)*

when days are cold,  
*(Use shivering motion.)*

in the swimming pool.

Breast stroke,  
*(Extend arms together straight ahead in front at shoulder height,  
then move them apart to stretch out to the side, palms of hands facing outward.)*

Side stroke,  
*(Both arms alternating movement to one side of body.)*

Fancy diving, too –  
*(Extend arms to front of body, in arching movement, fingers straight and pointing down.)*

Oh, don't you wish that you had nothing else to do – BUT...  
*(Repeat the whole song.)*

**rhythm and rhyming!**



# Middle School

TRAVELING LIGHT



---

*Family Language Fun to Go*

- ♥ Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover (or Drivers by Their Cars)
- ♥ Flee! Flee-Fly! Flee-Fly-Flo!
- ♥ Guess My Rule
- ♥ "Hot Potato" Stories
- ♥ Riddling, Viking Style
- ♥ The Ultimate License Plate Game



# Middle School

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover (or Drivers by Their Cars)

#### What children gain:

- Engaging in creative thinking
- Sharpening powers of observation
- Increasing geographical knowledge
- Building respect and appreciation for other family members
- Cultivating empathy and cultural sensitivity for unknown people driving on the highways

#### Supplies needed: (Optional)

- Pencil and pad of paper
- State maps

#### Instructions:

- This activity works best with several people traveling together in a car on a major highway.
- The object of the game is to predict the circumstances, characteristics, and customs of drivers based on the type of vehicle they are driving, their state of origin, bumper stickers, and their observed driving habits.
- All family members can participate at one time in observing one car, or they can take turns, each with a different car. The family can decide such rules.
- Family members decide before the game begins on the value of each member's predictions. For example, a guess based on an undesirable stereotype might get a very low score, but a guess showing imagination and knowledge might score higher.
- One family member takes the role of "caller," and identifies the vehicle to be observed. The caller also keeps score and adds up the totals after a designated period of time.
- The person with the highest score wins.

#### Variations:

- Decide on three or more personality categories of drivers before beginning the game.
- Predict the type of credit card(s) the drivers might carry.
- Decide on categories of prizes awarded winners.
- Remember that, as an older family member, you are an important model of attitudes about other people. This is a good time to teach respectful, optimistic, empathic thoughts about those who

may be somewhat different from you. You may also want to teach sharp observation skills and caution about interacting with other people who behave in threatening ways.

- Your creative thinking may help your child imagine interacting in peaceful ways with others. After all, peacemaking begins with caring individual attitudes and actions.
- You may also want to coach your child on the locations of states, their capitals, major crops and industries, history, etc. Take maps along on your trip to assist you.

#### To think about...

- Your child develops categories and characteristics of drivers that demonstrate respect and empathy, rather than cultural, ethnic, gender, or geographical stereotypes.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Your child creates imaginative stories about drivers based on sharp observation of them.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Your child can tell you correct information about the locations of states and their capitals, based on car license plates he observes.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Your child practices good-humored respect for the differing abilities of each family member by complimenting and helping out when necessary.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Family members show respect for each other by patiently taking turns.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Your child shows with body language, facial expressions, and words that he feels happy and relaxed while playing the game with other family members.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet

*Source of the activity: A freelance newspaper reporter and writer, her daughters, and her grandmother invented this game on a long cross-country trip when extreme boredom threatened.*



# Middle School

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Flee! Flee-Fly! Flee-Fly-Flo!

#### What children gain:

- Developing a sense of rhythmic chanting for phonetic learning
- Increasing the ability to pronounce word sounds clearly
- Listening carefully, to repeat the nonsense syllables with speed and clear pronunciation, very much like learning another language
- Enhancing memory, to repeat the nonsense syllables in the correct order
- Matching another voice in singing a melody
- Building the parent-child relationship through shared fun and silliness

#### Instructions:

- Practice this chant while listening to the audio CD until you can do it smoothly. Then introduce it to your child. You could also learn it along with your child with the help of the audio CD.
- Have fun with this chant as you drive with your child in the car. It is also useful when you are waiting in a drive-through line, sitting in the car with one child while waiting for another child to finish an after-school activity, or during other tedious times.
- **Variations**
  - Make this song as dramatic as you can by exaggerating the sounds of the syllables.
  - Chant it in a very high or very low voice, chant it very fast, as well as in your normal range and speed.
  - Sing the series of “bee-stays” softer and softer.
  - One person can act as the leader and chant each part, with others repeating him.
  - Hand-clapping or other rhythmic sounds after the “Flee! Flee-fly! Flee-fly-flo” introduction make this song even more fun.
- The person who can sing this song at breakneck speed without forgetting something or messing up syllables deserves everyone’s praise!

#### To think about...

- Your child clearly pronounces the syllables of this chant.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child matches her chanting and singing tones to yours (or to another leader).  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can chant and sing the song with the correct rhythms.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child can chant and sing the words faster and faster.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- You and your child have fun singing and being silly together.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of activity: Camp song, origin unknown



# Middle School

Traveling Light: *Family Language Fun to Go Activities*

---

♥ Flee! Flee-Fly! Flee-Fly-Flo!

---

## Flee! Flee-Fly! Flee-Fly-Flo!

*Leader:* Flee!

*Response:* Flee!

*Leader:* Flee-fly!

*Response:* Flee-fly!

*Leader:* Flee-fly-flo!

*Response:* Flee-fly-flo!

*Leader:* Bee-stay!

*Response:* Bee-stay!

*Leader and responders (or continuing to alternate):*

Cooma-latta, cooma-latta, cooma-latta, bee-stay

No, no, no, no not a bee-stay

Bee-stay, bee-stay, bee-stay, bee-stay

*(Softer and softer)*

Eenie-meenie, ex-a-meenie, ooh-walla-walla-meenie;

Ex-a-meenie, sal-a-meenie, ooh-walla-walla-meenie

Beep biddley ote-dote boo-bop-ba-deeten-dahten,

Shhhhhhhhhhhhh....

*(You may repeat, with variations.)*

fun and silly  
syllables!



# Middle School

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Guess My Rule

#### **What children gain:**

- Exercising cognitive skills such as sorting, classifying, and categorizing
- Increasing vocabulary and verbal descriptive skills
- Developing creative and quick thinking
- Sharpening the memory
- Practicing social skills such as taking turns and showing respect for others
- The guesser can ask if an item not in the group would fit. The rule maker can only answer “yes” or “no.”
- The person who correctly guesses the rule (or the next person in turn) becomes the next rule maker or however the family wishes to plan the game.

#### **Supplies needed:**

Optional supplies could include 10 to 20 different objects, carried in a container in the car or kept in a known place for quick access.

- Shoes
- Rocks
- Leaves
- Seashells
- Hair clips or barrettes
- Any other small items that you can collect

#### **Instructions:**

- This guessing game needs at least two people.
- One person is the rule maker; the others must guess the rule.
- The rule maker chooses several objects that have something in common. The thing all the objects have in common is the “rule.” (Example: They could all have the same shape or color.) The rule maker keeps the rule a secret.
- Objects can be named with words or can be real items.
- Another person guesses under what rule all the objects fit. (Example: They are all round or are all things you buy at the grocery.) Guessers take turns guessing.

#### **Variations**

- Use the same rule with a different set of objects.
- Make a different rule with the same group of objects.

#### **To think about...**

- Your child is able to categorize objects and identify the rule within categories.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child is able to use an increasing number of different, creative words when naming objects within categories.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child remembers and names objects more quickly.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child practices good-humored respect for the differing abilities of each person by complimenting individuals for their answers and helping out when necessary.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child waits patiently for his turn.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet
- Your child shows by body language, facial expressions, and enthusiastic words that he feels happy with himself and enjoys the play.  
\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_ sometimes    \_\_\_\_ not yet

Source of the activity: Heather Mosey



# Middle School

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ “Hot Potato” Stories

#### What children gain:

- Increasing the imaginative use of descriptive words and creative ideas
- Expanding vocabulary
- Sharpening memory and grammatical skills
- Recognizing cause and effect relationships when continuing a story
- Encouraging respect, cooperation, and conversational skills among family members

#### Instructions:

- This activity invites family members to create stories together without prior planning.
- The goal of the storytelling is to never leave the word “and” hanging without a response. The idea is similar to the game in which a group of people quickly passes an object called a “hot potato” from one person to another without dropping it, but this game passes words and story events along instead of an object.
- You can begin the story in a very simple way. Here is an example: “I went to the store today, and I bought milk, green beans, and ketchup. As I drove home a tractor trailer nearly ran me off the road and...”
- The next person takes up the story. It can match the previous story, or go off in a new direction. For instance “...and I drove into a pothole the size of Texas. Suddenly, I was surrounded by longhorn cows, and the car was now a ranch pony. Obviously, I was a bit shaken up. I don’t really know how to ride a horse. I was holding on for all I was worth and...”
- Someone else takes up the story at this point, ending with “and” as the cue for the next person to pick up the story.
- The game can be played in the round, taking turns in order or as someone gets an idea, picking up at “and.” An object could be passed from one person to another to indicate the next storyteller.
- The story can last as long as the players care to embellish it, and it can be as fantastic or as mundane as you like.

#### To think about...

- Your child creatively narrates new story angles.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child uses more new and descriptive words as well as correct grammar.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child practices good-humored respect for the differing abilities of each person by complimenting individuals for their answers and helping out when necessary.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child shows respect for other family members by patiently taking turns.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your child shows by body language, facial expressions, or enthusiastic words that she feels happy with herself and enjoys the play.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

*Source of the activity: Frederick J. Mosey, father of Heather Mosey*



# Middle School

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Riddling, Viking style

#### What children gain

- Thinking creatively
- Expanding vocabulary
- Expressing themselves clearly through language
- Developing their sense of humor
- Coming up quickly with answers that may have more than one meaning
- Learning geography

#### Instructions:

- Vikings were some of the most feared fighters of the past. However, a Viking warrior was considered pretty lame unless his word skills were as good as his weapon skills. Riddling was a good way to show how smart Vikings were with words. Their riddles might be one-liners or poems 100 lines long, but all described things they used or saw every day in an unusual but guessable way.
- All family members can look at everyday things and try to make up riddles.
- Can you think of a riddle describing your skateboard, computer, or even your lunch?
- Who is the most feared riddle-maker in your family? Who is the best guesser?

#### Examples:

**Riddle:** On the way a miracle: water becomes bone.

**Answer:** An icicle

**Riddle:** Three eyes have I, all in a row; when one red one opens, all freeze.

**Answer:** A traffic light

**Riddle:** I am the red tongue of the Earth; I bury cities.

**Answer:** Lava from a volcano.

**Riddle:** I am the yellow hem of the sea's blue skirt.

**Answer:** Sand on a beach.

#### To think about...

- Family members improve in ability to make up riddles about their everyday activities, showing a different way of understanding.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Family members practice good-humored respect for the differing abilities of each person by complimenting individuals for their answers and helping out when necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Family members show respect for each other by patiently taking turns.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Children and teens show by their body language, facial expressions, and words that they feel happy with themselves and enjoy the play.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of the activity: Heather Mosey*





# Middle School

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ The Ultimate License Plate Game

#### **What children gain:**

- Increasing knowledge about U.S. states; their locations; capital cities; official state birds, flowers, and trees; agricultural and mineral products; history; and topography
- Developing memory skills
- Sharpening powers of observation
- Building abilities to cooperate and respect others' ideas

#### **Supplies needed:** (Optional):

- A map of the United States
- An atlas
- Other reference materials

#### **Instructions:**

- Begin the game with younger children by identifying only the license plates.
- As children grow older, parents can award one point for identifying the license plate, two points for identifying the state and its capital, and more points for correctly describing other characteristics of the state.
- Parents may give prizes for those children with the most points, with consideration given to best score in a particular age group.
- One family member is designated as the knowledge checker and keeper of the reference books.
- If enough family members are riding together, playing as teams may work well.



#### **To think about...:**

- Family members improve in speed of recognizing specific license plates and recall of knowledge about states.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members practice good-humored respect for the differing abilities of each person by complimenting individuals for their answers and helping out when necessary.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members show respect for each other by patiently taking turns and being good sports about losing and winning.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Children and teens show by their body language, facial expressions, and words that they feel happy with themselves and enjoy the play.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

Source of the activity: Robert H. Flashman



# Young Teens



---

*Family Language Fun to Go*

- ♥ Book Talk
- ♥ Dinner Is a Social Time
- ♥ Do-Re-Me
- ♥ In the Zone
- ♥ Sounds Like a Plan!
- ♥ Stories from the Proverbial Wise Guy



# Young Teens

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Book Talk

#### What teens gain:

- Valuing reading and books
- Activating the imagination as words are translated into mental images
- Increasing insights about the culture, abilities, and problem-solving techniques of the characters in the book
- Appreciating one another's knowledge, attitudes, and prior experiences that come into play in response to the book's plot
- Growing understanding between parents and teens that may well lead to more respect, in-depth communication, and bonding

#### Instructions:

- This activity can take place while you and your teen are traveling together in the car or while waiting for something to happen.
- Tell your teen that you would like to have fun with him by talking about an idea that really is fascinating to him.
- To find that idea, suggest that he – or both of you together – locate a book that both of you can read and then talk about. You can set requirements that the book must not contain a great deal of violence, abusive language, or outrageous sexual overtones, if you like.
- Your public library is a good place to start looking. Bookstores, discount stores, supermarkets, friends, and the Internet are other sources.
- Decide together whether to discuss the book while you both are reading it or when you have both finished it. One or both of you may decide to bring the book along in the car or wherever you are planning to talk it over.
- To get the conversation started, ask open-ended questions: "What did you like best or least about the book?" "Which characters did you like or dislike, and why?" "Would you have chosen a different ending?" "Do you agree with the author?" "Did you believe the narrator?"
- Agree to listen thoughtfully to each other's ideas without criticizing or putting each other down. If you dislike something in the book, try to analyze why that theme or character bothers you. You may be able to talk over that insight together, opening more of a window into your life experiences and opinions.
- Celebrate when you both have finished reading and discussing the book together. You have accomplished a worthy goal!

#### To think about...

- Your teen is able to say what he thinks with clear language use and logical reasoning, taking his age level into account.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your teen listens carefully to others' ideas.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Family members show their respect for one another, even when they disagree.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet
- Your teen shows by his body language, facial expressions, and words that he feels comfortable with the conversation and happy with himself.  
 yes  
 sometimes  
 not yet

*Source of the activity: Fortner, Jana (2004, June 27). Go from cover to cover for summer vacation. Lexington Herald-Leader, p. D3. Adapted with permission from the author.*



# Young Teens

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Meal Time Is a Social Time

#### What teens gain:

- Increasing ability to freely communicate their feelings and ideas to family members
- Listening carefully and respectfully to others' ideas

#### Instructions:

- You will need food, a table and chairs, your teen, and other family members.
- Think of meal time as a valued opportunity to catch up with your teen and other children in the family when everyone sits and talks together.
- If you cannot find time to eat a meal together each day, set a certain day of the week to eat together as a family.
- Turn off the TV and, as a general rule, do not answer the telephone.
- Make a rule that no one leaves the table until everyone has finished eating. Family members thus become accustomed to participating in "family time."
- Ask nonjudgmental, open-ended questions that invite involved answers, such as "What was the best thing that happened to you at school today?" or "What was the high/low part of your day?"
- If you really want to get in touch with your teen, ask an initial question to find out something about her school or a friend, listen to her answer, and then ask a probing question of strong interest to her, such as: "I heard about \_\_\_\_\_; how is that going?"
- Listen thoughtfully and use appropriate eye contact. Let your facial expressions reflect your teen's feelings.
- You want your teen to confide in you and talk to you about things that are important to her. At the same time, be sure to set firm standards about your feelings, rules, and morals. As the parent, you must demonstrate that you are the leader of the household.

#### To think about...

- Your teen is able to say what she thinks with clear language use and logical reasoning, taking her age level into account.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Family members listen carefully and supportively to each other's ideas.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Family members show their respect for one another, even when they disagree.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Your teen shows by body language, facial expressions, and words that she feels comfortable with the conversation and herself.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of the activity: Dawn Burger*

around the table  
or on the go!



# Young Teens

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Do-Re-Me...

#### What teens gain:

- Participating in an activity that both teens and parents usually enjoy – singing
- Promoting self-confidence in the activity of singing
- Increasing communication and appreciation between parents and teens

#### Supplies needed:

Favorite CD or tape and CD/tape player

#### Instructions:

- Listen to the same music your teen likes while you are riding together in the car.
- If your teen likes one singer, but you are a big fan of another kind of music, listen to your teen's choice for at least a couple of songs without expressing a judgment.
- Learn the words and then talk to your teen about what the words mean to him.
- Ask your teen open-ended questions about times when he especially enjoys this music and how the music makes him feel.
- Share honestly but tactfully your thinking about the music and the singer. Perhaps your attitudes about that kind of music have changed because of your careful listening.
- Your teen may likely think that it is exciting that you are interested in the same thing that he and his friends enjoy.
- After listening and discussing his music, you may be able to tell your teen about the music you enjoyed when you were his age and why you liked it so much. This kind of conversation may well lead to other topics that you both can talk about.

#### To think about...

- Your teen is able to say what he thinks with clear language use and logical reasoning, taking his age level into account.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- You and your teen are able to listen carefully to each other's ideas.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- You and your teen show respect for one another, even when you disagree.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Your teen shows by his body language, facial expressions, and words that he feels comfortable with the conversation and himself.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of the activity: Dawn Burger*

**singing and sharing!**



# Young Teens

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ In the Zone

#### What teens gain:

- Using language and practicing communication
- Preparing mentally for their activity; in other words, getting “in the zone”
- Building self-confidence
- Increasing awareness of parents as important energy and confidence boosters

#### Instructions:

- In the car, as you are driving your teen to a sporting event or extracurricular activity, ask her what the game plan is, what she is planning to do, or what she wants to accomplish.
- Be enthusiastic and interested. The more positive, reinforcing things you say to your teen, the more she will think that you are proud of her and want her to do a good job.
- Watch your teen during the activity.
- Afterwards, talk with her in a supportive way about what you saw her do in the game or about how the activity went.
- Listen carefully to your teen’s impression of the outcome of the activity or her performance. If she feels negative or sad, you could let her know you understand her feelings by saying something such as, “It sounds like you think you could have played better (or use a more descriptive word).” Teens often begin to feel more cheerful after talking over their experience with a sympathetic person. Your teen may then be able to listen to your thoughts about what she did well and to agree with your ideas. Together you could then envision how she could change her performance the next time.

goals and support!

#### To think about...

- Your teen is able to say what she thinks with clear language use and logical reasoning, taking her age level into account.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- You and your teen listen carefully to each other’s ideas.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- You and your teen show your respect for one another, even when you disagree.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

- Your teen shows by body language, facial expressions, and words that she feels happy with herself.

\_\_\_\_\_ yes

\_\_\_\_\_ sometimes

\_\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of the activity: Dawn Burger, who interviewed a parent of six children who keep her on the go*



# Young Teens

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Sounds Like a Plan!

#### What teens gain:

- Increased self-esteem and cognitive stimulation as adults ask their opinions and then listen attentively to their responses
- Improving logical reasoning and debating skills, vocabulary, ability to clearly express thoughts, and decision-making skills
- Clarifying family values
- Strengthening family belonging and interpersonal relationships, even when family members disagree
- Developing mutual respect and relaxed sharing of feelings and thoughts with other family members

#### Supplies needed:

- Two or more envelopes or boxes labeled “Discussion Topics” for short and long trips
- A writing pad and pencils

#### Instructions:

- The car, a confined space with a captive audience, is ideal for this activity, which involves the give and take of discussion and planning. Other waiting times also work.
- Collect discussion and family planning topics as you listen to your teen and other children talk with you, each other, and their friends. As the collection catches their interest, they may directly designate topics to be saved for the next car trip.
- Separate the topics into shorter and longer trip times, such as “30 minutes or less,” or “30 to 60 minutes.” Place the topics into the correct container for use in the car or other waiting times.
- You can categorize topics if you prefer. Categories could include, but not be limited to, “School,” “Relationships,” “Science,” “Music and Videos,” “The Next Family Vacation,” “Things to Buy,” “Right and Wrong,” etc.
- Together with your teen and other children, draw up a set of ground rules for respectful behavior and

consequences for violation of the rules. Ground rules promote positive relationships and self-respect, which are essential for the success of this and other family activities. While probing questions and arguments can benefit the discussion, belittling and harsh criticism should be firmly ruled out of bounds.

- Family members can decide whether one person should be designated moderator or discussion leader for any one trip or whether the family can function more informally as a whole during the discussion.
- One member may want to write down decisions made about the topic of discussion on the pad of paper, especially if something specific is decided that people want to remember.
- The whole family may likely come to appreciate and look forward to these times of purposeful conversation.

#### To think about...

- Your teen is able to say what he thinks with clear language use and logical reasoning, taking his age level into account.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Family members listen carefully to each other’s ideas.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Family members show their respect for one another, even when they disagree.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet
- Your teen and other children in the family show by their body language, facial expressions, and words that they feel comfortable with the activity and happy with themselves.  
 yes     sometimes     not yet

*Source of the activity: Fortner, Jana (2004, August 24). Talking to teens begins when they’re toddlers. Lexington Herald-Leader, p. D3. Adapted with permission from the author.*



# Young Teens

## Traveling Light: Family Language Fun to Go Activities

### ♥ Stories from the Proverbial Wise Guy

#### **What teens gain:**

- Seeing the connections between common proverbs (sayings) and real life situations
- Creatively imagining stories
- Remembering categories of situations (funny, embarrassing, outrageous, etc.) to which the proverbs apply
- Increasing vocabulary and correct sentence structure
- Telling and listening attentively to other people tell stories that reflect the ideas, age ranges, and cultures of the participants

#### **Supplies needed:**

- Pencil, scissors, a long envelope, and extra paper
- A list of the proverbs for each participant

#### **Instructions:**

- Write the proverbs below (or others you add to the list) on strips of paper and place the strips in the envelope to be drawn at random by family members.
- A family member or a team of two family members then chooses a proverb from the list below without telling the others or draws a strip of paper with a proverb written on it out of the envelope.
- The family member or team silently reads the proverb and makes up a story that illustrates it.
- Upon hearing the story, the others present must guess the correct proverb.
- If desired for the first few times this game is played, the list of proverbs could be handed to each person to assist with guessing the correct answer.
- The first person or team to guess the proverb and correctly recite it chooses the next proverb.
- **Variations:**
  - The family can add more proverbs to the list and can vary the rules to make the game easier or more difficult.
  - One way to make the game more difficult would be for the family to agree first on what type or category of story will illustrate the proverb (funny, embarrassing, outrageous, wise, historical, etc.). After hearing the story, not only must the rest of the family guess the proverb, they must also decide if the story illustrates the category selected.

#### **To think about...:**

- Your teen is able to say what he thinks with clear language use and logical reasoning, taking his age level into account.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Family members listen carefully to each other's ideas.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Family members show their respect for one another, even when they disagree.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet
- Children and teens show by their body language, facial expressions, and words that they feel happy with themselves.  
\_\_\_\_ yes  
\_\_\_\_ sometimes  
\_\_\_\_ not yet

*Source of the activity: Carole Gnatuk*





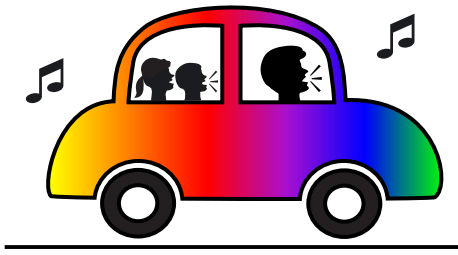
## ♥ Stories from the Proverbial Wise Guy

---

### Proverbs:

- Haste makes waste.
- One person's trash is another person's treasure.
- A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket.
- It's the early bird that catches the worm.
- Beggars can't be choosers.
- Brain is better than brawn.
- United we stand; divided we fall.
- Don't cry over spilled milk.
- Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.
- Make hay while the sun shines.
- An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
- Absence makes the heart grow fonder.
- The love of money is the root of all evil.
- Honesty is the best policy.
- Everything that glitters is not gold.
- Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.
- A turning wheel gathers no moss.
- Don't let it get under your skin.
- If the shoe fits, wear it.
- You can't tell a book by its cover.
- Rome wasn't built in a day.
- People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.
- Out of sight, out of mind.
- As you sow, so shall you reap.
- You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.
- A friend in need is a friend indeed.
- The best things in life are free.





## Resources and Suggested Readings

The author has drawn from the resources below in building this program. Additional readings are included that parents, primary caregivers, and parent educators may find interesting and useful. Resources are categorized according to general interest and age-related topics. Please feel free to contact the author for more information. Her contact information can be found at the end of this list.

### General Resources

- Barbarin, O. A. (2002). *Culture and ethnicity in social, emotional, and academic development*. In *Set for success: Building a strong foundation for school readiness based on the social-emotional development of young children, The Kauffman Early Education Exchange, 1* (1) (pp. 45-61). Kansas City, MO: The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.
- Covey, S. R. (1997). *The 7 habits of highly effective families*. New York: Golden Books/Franklin Covey Company.
- Elkind, D. (1988). *The hurried child (Rev. Ed.)*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- Ginott, H. G., Ginott, A., and Goddard, H. W. (2003). *Between Parent and Child*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Hart, B. and Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experiences of young American children*. Baltimore: Brookes.
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Hudley, E. V. P., Haight, W., and Miller P. J. (2003). *“Raise up a child”: Human development in an African-American family*. Chicago: Lyceum Books, Inc.
- Jennings, E. T., Jr., and Whitler, E. T. (1997). *Adult literacy in Kentucky: A report on the Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey*. Frankfort, KY: Kentucky Department for Adult Education and Literacy, Cabinet for Workforce Development.

Levin, D. E. (1998). *Remote control childhood: Combating the hazards of media culture*. Washington, D. C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children. [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

Rath, L. K. and Kennedy, L. (2004). *The between the lions book for parents*. New York: HarperCollins.

Sherlock, M. (2003). *Living simply with children*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Strother, S. (2004). *Forgotten neighborhood games*. AuthorHouse. [www.getkidsoutside.com](http://www.getkidsoutside.com).

Trelease, J. (2000). *The new read-aloud handbook*. New York: Penguin Books.

Wasik, B. H., Dobbins, D. R., and Herrmann, S. (2001). Intergenerational family literacy: Concepts, research, and practice. In S. B. Neuman and D. K. Dickinson, *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 444-458). New York: The Guilford Press.

### Ages and Stages-Related Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics/Greydanus, D. E. and Bashe, P. (2003). *Caring for your teenager*. New York: Bantam Books.

American Academy of Pediatrics/Schor, E. L. (2005, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). *Caring for your school-age child*. New York: Bantam Books.

Espinosa, L. M. (2002). The connections between social-emotional development and early literacy. In *Set for success: Building a strong foundation for school readiness based on the social-emotional development of young children, The Kauffman Early Education Exchange, 1* (1) (pp. 30-44). Kansas City, MO: The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

Foster, M. A., Lambert, R., Abbott-Shim, M., and McCarty, S F. (2005). A model of home learning environment and social risk factors in relation to children’s emergent literacy and social outcomes. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 20*, 13-36.

Gnatuk, C. A. and Lesueur, A. (2003). *Feed hungry young minds through storybook adventures*. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension. [www.ca.uky.edu/fcs/Hungry\\_Minds/index.htm](http://www.ca.uky.edu/fcs/Hungry_Minds/index.htm).

Gnatuk, C. A. and Quick, J. S. (2002). Cuddle, talk, and read with your child. In *Keys to great parenting: Fun and learning with your baby or toddler*. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. FCS7-180. [www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/fcs/keys/](http://www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/fcs/keys/).

- Hill-Clarke, K. Y. and Robinson, N. R. (2004). It's as easy as A-B-C and Do-Re-Mi: Music, rhythm, and rhyme enhance children's literacy skills. *Young Children*, 59, (5), 91-95.
- Howes, C. and Wishard, A. G. (2004). Linking shared meaning to emergent literacy: Looking through the lens of culture. *Zero To Three*, 25 (1), 10-14.
- Jordan, S. (September, 2004). How your child learns to talk. *Parenting*, 154-156, 159.
- Luster, T., Bates, L., Vandenbelt, M., and Nievar, M. A. (2004). Family advocates/perspectives on the early academic success of children born to low-income adolescent mothers. *Family Relations*, 53 (1), 68-77.
- Mountain, L. (2003). Predicting with myths and fables: "King Midas is in trouble!" *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 31, (1), 9-12.
- Ortiz, C., Stowe, R. M., and Arnold, D. H. (2001). Parental influence on child interest in shared picture book reading. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 16, 263-281.
- Ramey, C. T. and Ramey, S. L. (1999). *Right from birth*. New York: Goddard Press.
- Ramey, S. L. and Ramey, C. T. (1999). *Going to school*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Raviv, T., Kessenich, M., and Morrison, F J. (2004). A mediational model of the association between socioeconomic status and three-year-old language abilities: The role of parenting factors. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19, 528-547.
- Rosenkoetter, S. E. and Knapp-Philo, J. (2004). Learning to read the world: Literacy in the first 3 years. *Zero To Three*, 25 (1), 4-9.
- Seeger, R. C. (1975). *American folk songs for children*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group.
- Stone, J. (1993). Caregiver and teacher language—Responsive or restrictive? *Young Children*, 48 (4), 12-19.
- Whitehurst, G. J. and Lonigan, C. J. (2001). Emergent literacy: Development from prereaders to readers. In S. B. Neuman and D. K. Dickinson, *Handbook of early literacy research*. (pp. 11-29). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Youth News Team of the Kentucky Conference for Community and Justice (KCCJ) (2005). *High school students have parents, too: Summary report*. Lexington, KY: Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

### **Author's Contact Information**

Carole A. Gnatuk, Ed.D.  
 Extension Child Development Specialist  
 University of Kentucky Cooperative  
 Extension Service  
 149 Washington Avenue  
 Lexington, KY 40506-0060  
 Phone: (859) 257-5083  
 Fax: (859) 257-3212  
 Email: [cgnatuk@uky.edu](mailto:cgnatuk@uky.edu)