

## How to play with word and letter sounds

### Listening games

- Play games where your child has to listen to sounds and guess what they are. Use lots of different sounds, such as paper bags scrunching, water splashing, metal saucepan lids clanging together, a creaking door ...
- Make a pile of toys or instruments. Encourage your child to try out different sounds. Then tell the child to cover his or her eyes. Make a sound and see if he or she can guess which instrument or toy you are using.
- Use your voice to make lots of different sounds, for example, the animal sounds in ‘Old MacDonald had a farm’. Ask your child to copy you.

### Rhymes, songs and jingles

- Sing rhyming songs and chant well-known nursery rhymes; perform actions or clap, stamp or skip to the rhythm.
- When reading or reciting rhymes, pause just before the rhyming word and encourage your child to say it. Alternatively, you could substitute the rhyming word for one that does *not* rhyme – and let the child correct you.
- Read or recite sentences, jingles and chants where all the words start with the same letter sound. Exaggerate the repeated sounds, for example:  
Max the monster likes mushrooms on his marmalade.

### Over to you!

- Make up your own ‘silly sound sentences’ where all the words begin with the same letter. Some letter sounds are easier to hear than others: ‘s’ and ‘m’ are good ones to start with as you can stretch them out. Children thoroughly enjoy making the sounds ‘sssssss’ and ‘mmmmmmmm’.
- Once your child is familiar with a few letter sounds, play ‘I-Spy’ together.
- Make up your own versions of rhymes, giving alternative endings or using different rhyming words.

### Brainwave

Make a collection of objects whose names start with the same letter sound. For example, have a ‘sss’ day and collect things whose names start with a ‘sss’ sound.