

Cumbria County Council
Chat Play Share
Rhymes and songs

Five little ducks

Five little ducks went
swimming one day
Over the hill and far away
Mother duck said, “Quack
quack quack quack”
And only four little ducks
came back!

(Repeat verses as you count
down from five to one)

One little duck.....all five
little ducks came back!

<https://wordsforlife.org.uk/activities/sing-five-little-ducks-your-child/>

Birth – 2 years



Sit facing your baby and sing the song in an animated way. Add in some simple actions and see if over time your child starts to join in with the actions and ‘quack quacks’. As your child gets older, pause after singing ‘Mother duck said...’ and see if your child adds the duck sounds. Give them time to think about their response before stepping in; wait and smile encouragingly.

2-3 years



If you have toy ducks have fun acting the song out at bath time. Encourage your child to point and count each duck with you at the start of each verse. Part way through the song, add a random animal sound e.g. ‘moo, moo, moo, moo’ instead of the quacks. See if your child notices and corrects you or finds it funny as this shows they are listening carefully.

3-4 years



Provide simple props (e.g. ducks/duck pictures and blue fabric) so your child can act out the song as they sing. Can they sing the song on their own? Hide an animal picture or figure in a box or under a blanket; if you make the sound can your child guess which animal it is? For older children you could sound out the name of the animal and see if they can blend the sounds to identify what it is e.g. d-u-ck, p-i-g.

Chat Play Share...Other ideas you could try....

Share a story together about ducks, chickens or baby animals and chat about the pictures and story. Point out words that rhyme or make up actions to go with the story. Examples of stories:

- Duck in a Truck by Jez Alborough
- Dora's Eggs by Julie Sykes
- Noisy Farm by Rod Campbell
- That's not my Duck...by Fiona Watt
- Find the Duck by Claudia Zeff
- Farmer Duck by Martin Waddell
- Come on, Daisy by Jane Simmons

Electronic versions of stories can also often be found online. Some children prefer information books to stories and there are lots about the life cycle of a duck or child friendly information can be found on-line.



Enjoy a walk together to feed the ducks if you have them in your local area. Talk to your child about what you see using words such as beak, feathers, webbed feet. Have fun imitating the sounds the ducks make...can you do this quietly and very loudly? Stop and listen for other sounds around you, see what sounds your child recognises and share what you hear.

Collect some animal play figures, soft toys or animal pictures and ask your child to lay them out in a line (start with just two or three, then more can be added). Show your child how to clap as you say the syllables in the words e.g. pig (1 clap), chick-en (2 claps), kang-a-roo (3 claps). Clap together as you say the animal names (it may take lots of practice before your child understands it is not just always one clap per word. Encourage them to listen to you if they find it tricky). Keep moving the animals in the line so you end up making different rhythms with your claps or try using different actions such as tapping a pan with a spoon.

Think about the animals you might see locally or try to spot them on a walk. Introduce the names for the adult and baby animals (For example: cow/calf, duck/duckling, sheep/lamb). Talk about the different sizes and colours of the animals or use words to describe an animal and see if your child can guess which animal it is.