

# Nursery rhyme land

Have fun discovering the well-loved nursery rhyme characters in and around the fairytale castle

## Activities to support the Early Years Foundation Stage framework

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Invite the children to search the poster for characters from nursery rhymes related to food and drink, such as Polly, Jack and Jill, the man selling hot cross buns and the Queen of Hearts. Check for any food allergies and dietary requirements, then enjoy a nursery-rhyme-themed snack, with food items such as jam tarts, and water to drink.
- Discuss the role that the poster characters might play in the life of the Queen of Hearts, for example, Mary the gardener and the lady visitor on a white horse. Encourage the children to talk about the different roles people have in their own lives, for example, relatives, friends and people who help them.

### Literacy

- Laminate the poster and create a set of name cards or labels for the characters and animals depicted on it. Play games involving picking a card, reading it aloud, finding the character on the poster and attaching the card alongside it using Blu-Tack.

### Communication and Language

- Encourage the children to make up stories about the poster characters. Ask them to imagine what might happen if Doctor Foster fell into a puddle made by Incy Wincy Spider's water spout on his way to visit the Queen. Who could rescue him?

### Mathematics

- Ask the children to find poster characters by following the positional clues you give them, for example, 'This character is standing on top of a turret wall playing a musical instrument/riding towards the castle/looking out of the castle door'.
- Laminate the poster and lay it on the floor. Ask the children to put a red brick on top of each person on the poster and then count how many there are altogether. Now put a yellow brick on top of every animal. Pose simple problems involving counting, for example, 'Are there more people or more animals?'.

### Understanding the World

- Ask the children to find nursery rhyme characters associated with water on the poster, for example, Doctor Foster, and Jack and Jill. Discuss how the rain made a puddle by falling down the pipe from the castle roof, and how it filled the well with water.
- Search the poster for the Pussy Cat visiting the Queen and frightening the mouse under the chair. Talk about Buckingham Palace in London where Queen Elizabeth II lives, and help the children to search the internet to find out more about the queen's residences ([www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)). Compare these to the fairytale castle on the poster.



### How to use the poster

Attach the poster to the centre of the bottom of a display board and create a three-dimensional castle wall around it using folded card and boxes painted grey. Cut out a large central arch-shaped door above the position of the poster so that the children can shine a torch through it and spot the characters on the poster. Attach the children's artwork to the castle wall depicting the nursery rhyme characters who live there. Add appropriate labels, captions and EYFS links.

### Physical Development

- Using the poster for reference, invite the children to create their own fairytale castles from recyclable materials. Suggest that they choose appropriate small-world characters and animals to inhabit their 'nursery rhyme' castles.
- Ask the children to work in groups, with each group choosing four different poster characters to invent mimes for. Provide a wide selection of props and dressing-up clothes and invite the groups to take turns to perform the nursery rhymes to the others in role.

### Expressive Arts and Design

- Explore the poster castle together and ask the children whether the heart-shaped patterns might give them a clue about who lives there. Suggest that the children paint castles and then print red heart-shaped patterns on them when they are dry.
- Transform a three-sided screen into a fairytale castle by covering the outer walls in white paper and printing it with stone brick shapes and red hearts. Create a roof from thin draped fabric and suspend flags from this. Provide appropriate dressing-up clothes and props for the characters. Display the poster on the wall inside the castle to stimulate related drama and imaginary play.

**Jean Evans** is an early years consultant and author.

### FREE RESOURCE

Access up to 10,000 ready-made resources at [scholastic.co.uk/subscribe](http://scholastic.co.uk/subscribe)  
Membership from as little as £1.25 per month!

**Resource Bank**  
early years