

# A-Rhyme-A-Week: Classroom Instruction

## Elsie Marley

### Monday

1. Place 2 of the children's favorite rhymes on the chalkboard, and review them with the children. Tell them that we will be learning a new rhyme.
2. This nursery rhyme first appeared in print in 1756. Elsie Marley was, in fact, a real person, the wife of a "public house" (hotel) owner.
3. Introduce the "Elsie Marley" poster to the children. Begin as we usually do, having the children look first at the picture. Direct the children's attention to the window, and ask them if it looks like nighttime outside. Ask them if they have any idea what we might call someone who had chores to do but didn't get up. Explain that we will read the rhyme to find out who this person is and what people call her. Then, read the rhyme again. **Be sure to run your fingers under the words as you read them.**
4. Ask the children if they can remember the name of the lazy girl. Ask them if they know what she won't do. (feed the swine). Explain that swine is another word for pigs. Help the children understand what we mean when we say, "she has grown so fine" (she thinks she's too good to do a chore like feeding the swine). Ask them if they anyone at their house has ever been lazy like Elsie Marley.
5. Again, chant "Elsie Marley", running your fingers under the words as you sing or chant. Work with the children to teach them the rhyme, encouraging them to join in.
6. This Monday, we are altering our follow-up activity. At the end of this file, you will find word cards that feature the "ine" rhyme -- *fine*, *swine*, *nine*. Cut out the cards for this activity. First, show the children the word *fine*. Then, match the word card to the word in the nursery rhyme. Next, show the children the word *swine*, and match it to the word on your nursery rhyme poster. Repeat this process with the word *nine*.
7. Next, cut the *f* off of *fine*; hand the *f* to one child and the *ine* to another child. Repeat this process with the other two words. You should now have six children standing. Put the three who are holding the *ine* pieces near each other, and ask the children if they notice anything special about these three cards. (they all have the same letters). Explain that these letters make the *ine* sound that we heard in our nursery rhyme. Then, have the child holding the *f* step forward. Say, "This is the letter f. It goes fff. If we put it with *ine* (bring a child holding *ine* forward and place the two children's hands together so the *f* is joined to the *ine*), together the letters say "fine". Repeat this process with the *sw* and *ine* and the *n* and the *ine*. Then, collect the pieces from the children. If you have time, you might want a child to match the *f* to the lower case *f* and the *n* to the lower case *n* in this month's alphabet.
8. Finish your lesson by returning to "Elsie Marley". Distribute the hole-punched copies of the rhyming card for "Elsie Marley" to be placed in children's **My Very Own Nursery Rhyme Collection** folders at home.

## Tuesday

1. Begin by putting the "Elsie Marley" poster back on the blackboard, and chant the rhyme.
2. Remind the children that Tuesday is "acting" day. To act out this week's rhyme, you will need 4 children. One child is the sleeping Elsie; s/he simply put his or her hands together to make a pillow and rests on the pillow throughout the recitation. The second child pantomimes being the person who is "telling" this story. At the last line ("lazy Elsie Marley") he or she walk over to the sleeping Elsie to shake a finger at her. The two other children are the swine. They stand together, look hopefully at Elsie, and pretend to cry at the very end.
3. Today, we will let the "teller" of the tale chant the last line of the rhyme by him or herself. You can vary the remainder of the chanting by having the girls and the boys each say alternating lines of the rhyme. For the chanting, children will be seated in our customary circle.
4. As we have been doing, tape record the children's choral performances of the nursery rhyme for use in your classroom listening center. Be sure that you have a copy of the nursery rhyme to keep with the tape.
5. You might like to continue our work from last week that has children stand for each word of the rhyme. This week, you can have each child stand (and not sit back down). If you run out of children, you can having the standing children sit (one at a time) as you all continue speaking a word at a time of the nursery rhyme. Remember that an activity like this helps children understand that words can be separated (segmented) from a stream of speech.
6. Finish this lesson with your cloze activity. Use the following lines in particular:  
Elsie Marley is grown so \_\_\_\_\_.  
She won't get up to feed the \_\_\_\_!

## Wednesday

1. Begin by putting the "Elsie Marley" poster on the blackboard, then run your fingers under the words as you chant the rhyme. Repeat the cloze activity from Tuesday, having children fill in the missing words.
2. Remind the children that **fine** and **swine** rhyme, and that we are going to learn some other words that rhyme. Introduce these pictures from the picture card set: **dine**, **line**, **pine**, **whine**, **shine**, **twine**, **porcupine**, and **valentine**. (There are other pictures you may include as well.) Be sure to explain to the children what the word and picture mean. Some words, such as *pine* or *twine* may be new for the children. As usual, take the time to talk about the pictures, relating them to what your children have seen and know. Always remember, **if there is a picture that you feel is unsuitable for your particular classroom**, you can eliminate this picture from the set.
3. Many of these words can be pantomimed or acted out. For instance, you can ask the children to chop down the "pine" or to "shine" a shoe.
4. Remind children we have been sorting by rhyming sounds. This week, we'll be contrasting **ine** with **ake**. Use the following pictures: **fine**, **line**, **shine**, **swine**, and **cake**, **bake**, **take**, **snake**. Call children's attention to the words "fine" and "swine" in the nursery rhyme poster. Then, tape the picture for **cake** at the top of one column and the picture for **fine** at the top of the other. Place all other pictures in the chalk tray, saying each one's name.
5. Remind the children that when words end the same we say that they **rhyme**.
6. Call children one at a time to take a picture and decide if it ends the **same** as **cake** or **fine**. Keep in mind that some children are still working to hear and understand "rhyming" and "same-ness". If a child is hesitant, go ahead and support him or her with the task.
7. Finish today's lesson by chanting "Elsie Marley". You may choose to chant it as the "counting out" version we used yesterday, with the children in a circle, standing one at a time for each word of the rhyme.

## Thursday

1. Select 5 or 6 of the downloadable riddle cards that you think are best suited for your students.
2. Begin by putting the "Elsie Marley" poster back on the blackboard. Ask children to chant the rhyme, allowing 2 or 3 at a time to chant or sing the rhyme for the class.
3. Set the pictures from the picture card set on the chalk tray. Tell the children that today we will be guessing the answers to some riddles. The answer to the riddle will be one of the pictures we looked at yesterday.
4. Put the riddle cards on the board one at a time. Read the riddle, then help your students decide which picture best answers the riddle. Tape the picture at the bottom of the riddle card. You read the riddle, letting the children fill in the missing word, completing the rhyme by saying the name of the picture.
5. Finish the lesson with the cloze activity you did on Tuesday, having the children supply the missing word at the end of each line of the rhyme.

## Friday

1. Remind the children of the various activities you've done this week, and tell them that this is **Children's Choice** day. Display 3 different rhyme posters -- **Elsie Marley**, **Hiccup, Hiccup**, and **Hickory Dickory Dock**.
2. We are continuing with the *individual* or *small group* performance option on **Children's Choice** day, when children who are ready to recite a rhyme alone or with a friend can add their name(s) to the Choice list. Because being able to recite the rhymes will ultimately help children with their understandings of "text", we hope that, by the end of the year, all children will be able to successfully recite four to five of the rhymes we are learning. At this point in the year, you should be encouraging those children who have never volunteered to consider reciting with someone who has volunteered several times. Let the children decide which rhymes they would like to act out, to chant, to sort pictures for, or to do the riddle rhymes for.
3. Record the children's choices on the board using the written list as the order to follow. Then complete the activities. Crossing them out as you complete them will give children a chance to think of how we use print to remind us of things.
4. As part of our increasing children's letter knowledge, we are continuing to sing the alphabet song every Friday. Place your alphabet card (see *Dr. Seuss's ABC* in the **A-Book-A-Week** section) on the board, encouraging children to point to the letters as they sing the alphabet song.
5. Finish by chanting "Elsie Marley." All children may pretend to be the sad and hungry swine, who look hopefully at the sleeping Elsie and cry at the end.
6. Remind children to look at their **My Very Own Nursery Rhyme Collections** with their families over the weekend.

swine

fine

nine