Fingerplays and Counting Rhymes

A fingerplay is a rhyme that is accompanied with movements of the hands and fingers.

Dance your fingers
(Have child mimic your actions, dancing fingers in the air and on the body.)
Dance your fingers up,
Dance your fingers down,
Dance your fingers to the side,
Dance them all around.

Dance them on your shoulders,
Dance them on your head,
Dance them on your tummy,
And put them all to bed. (Rest head on hands together at side of face.)

Five little fingers

Five little fingers on one hand. (wiggle fingers)
Two little feet on which to stand. (point to feet)
Two little hands to hold up high. (raise hands up)
With them I reach for the sky.

Five Little Sparrows

Five little sparrows high in a tree. (Wave hand with five fingers up high.)
The first one says, “What DO I see?” (Point to thumb on hand.)
The second one says, “I see the street.” (Point to index finger on hand.)
The third one says, “And SEEDS to eat.” (Point to middle finger on hand.)
The fourth one says, “The seeds are WHEAT.” (Point to ring finger on hand.)
The fifth one says, “Tweet,tweet.” (Point to pinkie finger on hand.)
**Five Little Ducks**

Five little ducks went in for a swim; (Wave hand with five fingers.)
The first little duck put his head in. (Point to pinkie finger on hand.)
The second little duck put his head back; (Point to ring finger on hand.)
The third little duck said, “Quack, quack, quack.” (Point to middle finger on hand.)
The fourth little duck with his tiny brother (Point to index finger on hand.)
Went for a walk with his father and mother. (Walk two fingers on arm.)

**Bunnies’ Bedtime**

“My bunnies must now go to bed,” (Place both hands to cheek in a sleeping motion.)
The little mother rabbit said.
“But I will count them first to see if they have all come back to me.
1 bunny, 2 bunnies, 3 bunnies dear, (Count out on fingers.)
4 bunnies, 5 bunnies – yes, all are here. (Count out on fingers.)
They are the prettiest things alive – (Place arms together and rock them back and forth.)
My bunnies, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.” (Count out on fingers.)

**This little fellow is ready for bed**

This little fellow is ready for bed. (Show index finger.)
Down on the pillow he lays his head. (Lay finger in other palm.)
 Pulls the cover, snug and tight, (Close fingers.)
And this is the way he sleeps all night. (Close eyes.)
Morning comes and he opens his eyes. (Open eyes.)
Quickly he pushes the covers aside; (Open fingers.)
Jumps out of bed, puts on his clothes, (Let opposite hand dress finger.)
And this is the way to school he goes! (Walk fingers up arm.)
Five in bed
*(Hold up five fingers. Bend fingers down 1 by 1 starting with pinkie finger.)*

There were five in bed and the little one said,
“Roll over, roll over.”
So they all rolled over and one fell out.

There were four in the bed...
There were three in the bed...
There were two in the bed...

There were none in the bed so nobody said,
“Roll over, roll over.”

Two little dickie birds

Two little dickie birds sitting on a wall, *(Hold up both index fingers)*
One named Peter, one named Paul. *(Wiggle one finger, then the other)*
Fly away, Peter! *(Hide one finger behind back)*
Fly away, Paul! *(Hide other finger behind back)*
Come back, Peter! *(Bring back one finger)*
Come back, Paul! *(Bring back the other finger)*

Five little froggies
*(Individually: Hold up all 5 fingers. Bend them down 1 by 1 starting with the thumb.)*
*(In Class: Choose five children to be frogs and recite the rhyme. The children crouch in a row, and starting at one end 1 child leaps away, as indicated in the rhyme. You can keep repeating the rhyme until all children get a chance to be a frog.)*

Five little froggies sat on the shore,
One went for a swim, then there were 4.

Four little froggies looked out to sea,
One went swimming, and then there were three.

Three little froggies said, “What can we do?”
One jumped in the water, then there were two.

Two little froggies sat in the sun,
One swam off, and then there was one.

One little froggie said, “This is no fun!”
He dived in the water, and then there were none.
Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

5 little monkeys jumping on the bed (Hold up 5 fingers and move hand up and down)
1 fell off and bumped his head (Rub head with hand)
Momma called the doctor and the doctor said, “No more monkeys jumping on the bed.” (Point index finger and move it back and forth)
Repeat rhyme for: 4 little monkeys... 3 little monkeys... 2 little monkeys...

1 little monkey jumping on the bed (Hold up 1 finger and move hand up and down)
She/He fell off and bumped her head (Rub head with hand)
Momma called the doctor and the doctor said, “Put that monkey straight to bed!” (Point index finger and move it back and forth)

Five little monkeys swinging from a tree

Five little monkeys swinging from a tree. Hold up 5 fingers on right hand. Swing rhythmically.
Along came a crocodile, hungry as can be Make mouth with fingers & thumb of left hand.
Nyah nyah nyah nyah nyah “Can’t catch me!” Wave fingers at left hand.
SNAP! Bite off a finger!

Repeat rhyme counting down to 1
4 little monkeys swinging from a tree... Hold up 4 fingers on right hand. Swing rhythmically.
3 little monkeys swinging from a tree... Hold up 3 fingers on right hand. Swing rhythmically.
2 little monkeys swinging from a tree... Hold up 2 fingers on right hand. Swing rhythmically.
1 little monkey swinging from a tree, Hold up 1 finger on right hand. Swing rhythmically.
I’d better watch out or he might catch me! Point to self.

Jack-in-the-box

Jack in the box. (Thumb tucked in fist.)
Oh, so still. (Cover palm with other hand.)
Won’t you come out? (Raise hand slightly.)
Yes, I will. (Remove hand quickly and pop out thumb.)
Here is the beehive

Here is the beehive. (Make a fist.)
But where are all the bees?
Hiding inside where nobody sees.
Look! Here they come! Out of the hive.
One, two, three, four, five... BUZZ-ZZZ. (Undo fist and wiggle fingers.)

Baby Mice

Where are the big mice? Squeak, squeak, squeak. (Cover eyes with hands.)
I cannot see them. Peek, peek, peek. (Open fingers in front of eyes, to see.)
Here they come from the hole in the wall, (Make hole with two hands.)
One, two, three, four, five - that's all. (Wiggle the fingers on one hand.)

Five Green & Speckled Frogs

(Hold up appropriate number of fingers)

5 green and speckled frogs sat on a speckled log, eating some most delicious bugs. YUM, YUM!
1 jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool. Now there are 4 green, speckled frogs.

4 green and speckled frogs sat on a speckled log, eating some most delicious bugs. Munch, munch!
1 jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool. Now there are 3 green, speckled frogs.

3 green and speckled frogs sat on a speckled log, eating some most delicious bugs. Crunch, crunch!
1 jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool. Now there are 2 green, speckled frogs.

2 green and speckled frogs sat on a speckled log, eating some most delicious bugs. Chomp, chomp!
1 jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool. Now there is 1 green, speckled frogs.

1 lonely speckled frog sat on a lonely log, eating some mostly crumpled bugs. Gulp!
She jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool. Now there are NO green, speckled frogs.
This Little Piggy
(Hold up 5 fingers, and point to appropriate finger.)

This little piggy went to market, (thumb)
This little piggy stayed at home, (index)
This little piggy had roast beef, (middle)
This little piggy had none. (ring finger)
This little piggy went “Wee, wee, wee,” (pinkie)
All the way home!

This little cow
(Hold up 5 fingers, and point to appropriate finger.)

This little cow eats grass, (pinkie finger.)
This little cow eats hay. (ring finger.)
This little cow drinks water, (middle finger.)
This little cow runs away, (index finger.)
This little cow does nothing at all, (thumb.)
But just sits down all day.

Five little fishes
(Hold up all 5 fingers. Bend them down 1 by 1 starting with the thumb.)

Five little fishes were swimming near the shore,
One took a dive then there were 4.

Four little fishes were swimming out to sea,
One went for food then there were 3.

Three little fishes said, “Now what shall we do?”
One swam away and then there were 2.

Two little fishes were having great fun,
But one took a plunge and then there was 1

One little fish said, “I like the warm sun.”
Away he went and then there were none.
My fingers

My fingers can stand up straight and tall. (hold fingers tall)
My fingers can bend and be very small. (bend fingers)
My fingers can clasp my hands in a ball. (make one fist and clasp with other hand)
My fingers can jump, my fingers can fall. (wiggle fingers while raising and then dropping hands)

Five little soldiers

Five little soldiers, standing in a row. (Hold up 5 fingers)
Three stood straight, (Show thumb, index, and middle fingers)
And two stood so. (Have ring and pinkie fingers bent down)
Along marched the captain, (March 2 fingers of the other hand)
And what do you think?
Up jumped the soldiers, quick as a wink! (Straighten ring and pinkie fingers)

I caught a hare alive

One, two, three, four, five, (Count and hold up fingers of one hand)
Once I caught a hare alive. (Snap fist closed)
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten, (Count and hold up fingers of other hand)
Then I let him go again. (Hold both hands open)
Why did you let him go?
Because he bit my finger so! (Shake hand violently.)
Which finger did he bite?
This little finger on the right! (Hold up little finger of right hand.)

Here is a bunny

Here is a bunny (Hold up 2 bent fingers)
With ears so funny. (Wiggle the fingers)
Here is his hole in the ground. (Make circle with thumb and 4 fingers of other hand)
When a noise he hears, he pricks up his ears, (Straighten 2 fingers in ‘V’ shape)
And jumps in his hole in the ground. (Jump fingers into hole on other hand)
Ten little fingers (Closing)

I have ten little fingers, *(Hold up all 10 fingers)*
And they all belong to me. *(Point to self)*
I could make them do things, would you like to see?

I can shut them up tight; *(Make fists)*
I can open them wide; *(Extend fingers)*
I can put them together; *(Clasp hands)*
And I can make them all hide. *(Hide hands behind back)*

I can put them up high; *(Reach hands above head)*
I can put them low; *(Touch floor with hands)*
I can fold them together, *(Clasp hands and intertwine fingers)*
And hold them just so. *(Place hands in lap)*

Five little snowmen (Preschooler)
*(Hold up all 5 fingers. Bend them down 1 by 1 starting with the thumb.)*

Five little snowmen, knocking at my door.
One melts away, then there are....

Four little snowmen, playing with me.
One melts away, then there are...

Three little snowmen, playing with you,
One melts away, then there are...

Two little snowmen, playing in the sun.
One melts away, then there is...

One little snowman, when the day is done.
He melts away, then there is...

A great big ball (Preschooler)

A great big ball, *(Make a circle by joining hands over head)*
A middle-sized ball, *(Make a circle by touching fingers and thumbs of both hands together)*
A little ball I see. *(Make a circle with thumb and index finger)*

Let’s see if we can count them:
One, two, three. *(Repeat motions above)*
The Farm yard (Preschooler)
In the farm yard at the end of the day,
All the animals politely say,
"Thank you for my food today."
The cow says, "Moo." (Point to thumb)
The pigeon, "Coo." (Point to index finger)
The sheep says, "Baa." (Point to middle finger)
The lamb says, "Maa." (Point to ring finger)
The hen, "Cluck, cluck, cluck." (Point to little finger)
(Point to remaining fingers of opposite hand for the following animals:)
“Quack,” says the duck.
The dog, “Bow wow.”
The cat, “Meow.”
The horse, “Neigh.”
The pig grunts, “Oink.”
Then the barn is locked up tight,
And the farmer says, “Goodnight.” (Hands together against cheek)

Pitter, patter falls the rain (Preschooler)
(Have child mimic your actions)

Pitter, patter falls the rain, (Flutter fingers down)
On the roof and window pane. (Put hands on head for roof. Put hands out with palms flat for pane.)
Softly, softly it comes down, (Flutter fingers down)
Makes a stream that runs around. (Put palms together and make winding motion)
Flowers lift their heads and say, (Cup and stretch out hands)
“A nice cool drink for us today.”

Autumn (Preschoolers)

Leaves are floating softly down. (Float hands down and turn them from side to side)
They make a carpet on the ground. (Put hands flat on floor)
Then swish, the wind comes whistling by, (Move arms from one side to the other)
And sends them dancing to the sky. (Hands flutter up into the air)

Winter (Preschoolers)

Here’s a great big hill, (Hold one arm out to your side)
With snow all down the side. (Flutter fingers over arm)
Let’s take our speedy sleds, (Place palm on shoulder)
And down the hill we’ll slide! (Slide hand down arm)
**Spring** (Preschoolers)

This is the way the flowers sleep, *(Make two fists)*
Through the winter long.
This is the way the flowers grow, *(slowly open hands)*
When they hear the robin’s song. *(Raise arms)*

**Summer** (Preschoolers)

A little boy went walking one lovely summer day, *(Walk index and middle fingers of one hand)*
He saw a little rabbit *(Raise index and middle finger of other hand)*
That quickly ran away. *(Hide rabbit behind back)*

He saw the shining river go winding in and out, *(Make winding motion with both hands)*
And little fishes in it were playing all about. *(Wiggle index fingers up and down)*

**I am a pumpkin** (Preschooler)

I am a pumpkin, big and round. *(Hold arms above head in a circle)*
Once upon a time I grew on the ground. *(Point to floor)*
Now I have a mouth, two eyes and a nose. *(Point to mouth, eyes, nose)*
What are they for, do you suppose? *(Point to forehead and frown)*
When I have a candle inside shining bright, *(Hold up index finger)*
I’ll be a jack-o-lantern on Halloween night. *(Put thumbs in armpits and stand up proud)*

**The turkey** (Preschooler)

The turkey is a funny bird, *(Hold up 1 hand, palm outwards. Wrap other hand over thumb, with fingers facing you, and extend other thumb)*
His head goes wobble, wobble. *(Wag thumb back and forth)*
He only knows a single word,
Gobble, gobble, gobble. *(Wag thumb)*

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Let’s go to sleep caterpillars (Preschooler)

“Let’s go to sleep,” the little caterpillars said, (Lay fingers of one hand in palm of other hand)
As they tucked themselves into their beds. (Bend fingers of both hands down to palms)
They will awaken by and by, (Slowly unfold fingers)
And each one will be a lovely butterfly. (Flutter hands up into the air)

A house (Preschoolers)

Here is a nest for the robin. (Cup both hands together)
Here is a hive for the bee. (Put fists together)
Here is a hole for the bunny. (Form a circle with both hands)
And here is a house for me. (Fingertips together over head)

A nest is a house for a robin. (Cup both hands together)
A hive is a house for a bee. (Put fists together)
A hole is a house for a bunny. (Form a circle with both hands)
But a house is a house for me. (Fingertips together over head)

Cobbler, cobbler (Preschooler)

Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe. (Pound one fist on the other hand)
Have it done by half past two; (Show two fingers)
Stitch it up, stitch it down, (Mime sewing motions, holding needle between thumb and index finger)
Make the very best shoes in town.
**Five little pumpkins** (Preschooler) – Halloween

Five little pumpkins sitting on a gate. *(Hold up 5 fingers)*
The first one said, *(Hold up 1 finger)*
“It’s late, it’s late!” *(Point to wrist)*
The second one said, *(Hold up 2 fingers)*
“There are witches in the air.” *(Point to air)*
The third one said, *(Hold up 3 fingers)*
“I don’t care.” *(Shake head 3 times)*
The fourth one said, *(Hold up 4 fingers)*
“Let’s run, Let’s run” *(Run with fingers)*
The Fifth one said *(Hold up 5 fingers)*
“It’s Halloween fun!” *(Cup hands around mouth and shout)*
“Ooooooo” went the wind, *(Wave hands and wiggle fingers)*
And OUT went the light, *(Clap loudly on “OUT”)*
And five little pumpkins, *(Show 5 fingers)*
Rolled out of sight. *(Roll hands)*

**Johnny pounds with one hammer** (Preschool)
*(You can substitute child’s name for ‘Johnny’)*

Johnny pounds with 1 hammer, 1 hammer, 1 hammer. *(Pound with 1 fist in rhythm)*
Johnny pounds with 1 hammer all day long.

Johnny pounds with 2 hammers, 2 hammers, 2 hammers. *(Pound with both fists)*
Johnny pounds with two hammers all day long.

Johnny pounds with 3 hammers, 3 hammers, 3 hammers. *(Pound 2 fists, stomp 1 foot)*
Johnny pounds with 3 hammers all day long.

Johnny pounds with 4 hammers, 4 hammers, 4 hammers. *(Pound 2 fists, stomp both feet)*
Johnny pounds with 4 hammers all day long.

Johnny pounds with 5 hammers, 5 hammers, 5 hammers. *(Pound 2 fists, stomp feet, nod head)*
Johnny pounds with 5 hammers all day long.

Johnny is so tired, so tired, so tired. *(Continue pounding in slow motion)*
Johnny is so tired all day long.

Johnny goes to sleep now, to sleep now, to sleep now. *(Stop pounding, drop head and close eyes)*
Johnny goes to sleep now, all night long.
Where is Thumbkin? (Preschooler)
(Sung to the tune of “Frère Jacques”)

Where is Thumbkin, where is Thumbkin? (Begin with both hands behind back)
Here I am, here I am. (Bring out 1 hand, show thumb. Bring out other hand, show thumb)
“How are you today, sir?” (Wiggle 1 thumb up and down)
“Very well, I thank you!” (Wiggle other thumb)
Run away, run away. (Place 1 hand behind back, then place the other hand behind back)

Repeat rhyme for each finger:
Where is pointer, where is pointer?... (Repeat rhyme and motions using index finger)
Where is Tall one, where is Tall one?... (Repeat rhyme and motions using middle finger)
Where is ring boy/girl, where is ring boy/girl?... (Repeat rhyme and motions using ring finger)
Where is pinkie, where is pinkie?... (Repeat rhyme and motions using pinkie finger)

Ten little fingers (Preschooler)

I have ten little fingers, (Hold up all 10 fingers)
And they all belong to me. (Point to self)
I could make them do things, would you like to see?

I can shut them up tight; (Make fists)
I can open them wide; (Extend fingers)
I can put them together; (Clasp hands)
And I can make them all hide. (Hide hands behind back)

I can put them up high; (Reach hands above head)
I can put them low; (Touch floor with hands)
I can fold them together, (Clasp hands and intertwine fingers)
And hold them just so. (Place hands in lap)
**Five Little Ducks Went to Play** (Preschooler)
*(Hold up all 5 fingers. Hold 1 less finger as rhyme progresses.)*

Five little ducks went out to play *(Hold up all 5 fingers.)*
Over the hills and far away. *(Make fingers run away.)*
Mama Duck said, "Quack, quack, quack." *(Quacking motion with thumb and four fingers.)*

Four little ducks came running back. *(4 fingers run back.)*

Four little ducks went out to play *(Hold up 4 fingers.)*
Over the hill and far away. *(Make fingers run away.)*
Mama duck said, "quack, quack, quack." *(Quacking motion with thumb and four fingers.)*

Three little ducks came running back. *(3 fingers run back.)*

*Repeat verse with three, two, then one little duck.....*

No little ducks went out to play,
Over the hill and far away. *(Make fingers run away.)*
Daddy Duck said, "Quack, quack, quack." *(Quacking motion with thumb and four fingers.)*
Five little ducks came running back. *(5 fingers run back.)*