

Finger Plays

By

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Dr. Jean has created videos for these finger plays and posted them on YouTube. Here is the link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f2d7BW3CzI>

You might find it easier to just go to youtube.com and search for **Finger Plays with Dr. Jean** rather than type in the youtube address above.

Where have all the finger plays gone? They used to be an integral part of early childhood classrooms; I couldn't have gotten through a day without using a finger rhyme to focus children's attention or entertain them during a transition. But today they have been overshadowed by computers and workbooks.

It's amazing that children today are just as mesmerized by finger plays as I was as a little girl half a century ago. I can still remember "Here Are Grandma's Glasses" that Mrs. Meyers taught me my first day of kindergarten, and now as I share these rhymes with my grandson I am reminded of the joy children get from simple things like finger stories. Though I've done "Where Is Thumbkin?" thousands of times, it's NEW to him. The magic is still there as he dances his thumbs behind his back.

As our society grows more and more fascinated by computer games and i-pods, we seem to be losing touch with these simple gifts. I'm afraid these gems will be lost if I don't write them down and pass them on to you!

Happy Hands Finger Plays!

GRANDMA'S GLASSES

(I learned this one my first day of kindergarten!)

These are grandma's glasses. (Make circles around eyes.)
This is grandma's hat. (Cup hands and place on head.)
And this is the way
She folds her hands. (Fold hands and put
And puts them in her lap. in them in your lap.)

Say with a deep voice:

These are grandpa's glasses. (Make circles around eyes.)
This is grandpa's hat. (Pretend to put on a hat.)
And this is the way
He folds his arms (Cross arms and fold.)
Just like that!

TEDDY BEAR

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Turn around.)
Turn around.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Touch ground.)
Touch the ground.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Pretend to read.)
Read the news.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Bend down to shoes.)
Tie your shoes.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Climb stairs.)
Go upstairs.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Fold hands.)
Say your prayers.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Pretend to switch.)
Turn off the light.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, (Place head on hands and close eyes.)
Say, "Good night."

*You can change, "Say your prayers," to "Comb your hair" if you wish.

BEEES

Here is a beehive, (Hold up fist.)
But where are the bees. (Shake head.)
Hiding inside where nobody sees.
Soon they will come out of their hive.
One, two, three, four, five. (Slowly hold up one finger at a time.)

Here is a beehive, (Hold up fist.)
But where are the bees.
Flying around all the flowers and trees. (Open and wiggle fingers.)
Soon they will come home from their fun.
Five, four, three, two, one. (Slowly put fingers down to make a fist.)

FIVE LITTLE CUPCAKES

Down around the corner
At the bakery shop, (Hold up 5 fingers and wiggle.)
Five little cupcakes
With sprinkles on top.
Along came (child's name)
With a penny one day.
She bought a cupcake and
She took it away. (Put down 1 finger.)
Four...three...two...one

FIVE LITTLE MONKEYS

Five little monkeys (Hold up 5 fingers.)
Jumping on the bed. (Bounce fingers up and down.)
One fell off and
Bumped her head. (Gently tap head.)
Momma called the doctor (Pretend to call on a phone.)
And the doctor said,
That's what you get (Shake finger as if scolding.)
For jumping on the bed.

Four...three...two...one...

No little monkeys...They're all sick with broken heads!

*Adapt this rhyme and use the children's names in your classroom.
For example, "Josie, Josie, jumping on the bed..."

MONKEYS AND ALLIGATOR

Five little monkeys (Hold up 5 fingers.)
Swinging from a tree,
Teasing Mr. Alligator, (Point finger as if teasing.)
"Can't catch me!
You can't catch me!" (Shake head "no.")
Along came Mr. Alligator (Put palms together and slowly
Quiet as can be, move like an alligator.)
And snatched a monkey (Open and clap palms as if
Right out of the tree! chomping on something.)

Four...three...two...one

"Missed me, missed me! (Put open hands on either side
Now you gotta kiss me!" of your head and wiggle.)

THE FINGER BAND

The finger band is (Start with your hands behind your back
Coming to town, and wiggle them as you slowly bring
Coming to town, them in front.)
Coming to town.
The finger band is
Coming to town
So early in the morning.

This is the way (Pretend to play drums.)
They play their drums...

This is the way (Twirl hands around your head.)
They twirl their hands...

This is the way (Pretend to play a horn.)
They play their horns...

Let children suggest other instruments and motions.

The finger band (Slowly wiggle fingers behind you
Is going away, as you lower your voice to a whisper.)
Going away,
Going away.
The finger band
Is going away
So early in the morning.

HERE IS A BUNNY

Here is a bunny (Hold up index and middle fingers.)
With ears so funny. (Wiggle fingers.)
And here is his
Hole in the ground. (Make hole with fist of the other hand.)
At the slightest noise he hears, (Wiggle fingers.)
He pricks up his ears,
Then hops to his
Hole in the ground! (Pretend to hop bunny ears into the hole.)

HERE IS A TURTLE

Here is a turtle. (Make fist.)
He lives in a shell.
He likes his home
Very well.
When he gets hungry (Stick out thumb and wiggle.)
He comes out to eat.
Then he goes back into (Tuck thumb back in fist.)
His house to sleep.

HAVE A CUP OF TEA

Here's a cup. (Hold up right hand.)
And here's a cup. (Hold left hand.)
And here's a pot of tea. (Put hands together.)
Pour a cup. (Pretend to pour in right hand.)
And pour a cup. (Pour in left hand.)
And have a cup with me! (Pretend to drink.)

ME

I've got ten little fingers, (Hold up both hands.)
And ten little toes, (Point to feet.)
Two little eyes, (Point to eyes.)
And a mouth and a nose. (Point mouth and then nose.)
Put them all together, (Circle arms as if hugging.)
And what have you got? (Hands on hips.)
You've got me, baby, (Put thumbs in chest.)
And that's a lot! (Wiggle hips.)

TEN LITTLE FRIENDS

Ten little friends (Hold up fingers.)
Went out to play (Wiggle.)
On a very bright
And sunny day.
And they took a little walk.
Walk, walk, walk. (Walk fingers in front of your body.)
And they had a little talk.
Talk, talk, talk. (Put fingertips together.)

A new verse:
Close the doors (Fold thumbs over each other.)
And hear them pray. (Learn ear down to hands.)
Open the door (Open thumbs.)
And they all go away. (Wiggle fingers behind you.)

DAYS OF THE WEEK

(Stand up to begin this rhyme.)

Sunday, Sunday, (Clap hands.)
Clap, clap, clap.
Monday, Monday, (Tap foot.)
Tap, tap, tap.
Tuesday, Tuesday, (Hop on one foot.)
Hop, hop, hop.
Wednesday, Wednesday, (Hold up hand.)
Stop, stop, stop.
Thursday, Thursday, (Jump on two feet.)
Jump, jump, jump.
Friday, Friday, (Pound fists together.)
Thump, thump, thump.
Saturday, Saturday, (Turn around.)
Turn around.
Now smile quietly (Sit down and smile.)
Without a sound!

THREE SPECKLED FROGS

Three little speckled frogs (Hold up 3 fingers.)
Sitting on a speckled log
Eating some most delicious bugs.
Glub! Glub! (Rub your tummy.)
One jumped into the pool (Jump index finger up.)
Where it was nice and cool (Cross arms and shiver.)
Now there are
two green speckled frogs. (Hold up 2 fingers.)
Two...One...No (Make zero with fingers.)

Came waddling back.
Four...three...two...one

No little ducks went out to play (Make fist.)
Over the hills and far away.
When the daddy duck called,
"QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!" (Open and close arms and say loudly.)
Five little ducks came waddling back.

CATERPILLAR

A caterpillar crawled (Hold up right arm like a tree branch.)
To the top of a tree. (Crawl left pointer up right arm.)
I think I'll take a nap said he. (Wiggle left pointer.)
So under the leaf (Pretend to crawl left pointer
under right palm.)
He began to creep. (Wrap right hand around left pointer.)
He spun a cocoon, (Hold hands very still.)
And he fell asleep.
For six long months
He slept in that cocoon bed.
Til spring came along and said,
Wake up, wake up,
You sleep head. (Shake pointer.)
Out of the leaf he did cry, (Clasp thumbs and open palms.)
Lo, I am a butterfly! (Fly hands around like a butterfly.)

CHOO CHOO TRAIN

Choo, choo, choo, choo, (Slowly crawl left fingers up right arm
from wrist to shoulder.)
Choo, choo, choo, choo,
Up the railroad track.
Choo, choo, choo, choo, (Slowly reverse movement and crawl
fingers back down your arm.)
Choo, choo, choo, choo,
And then it comes right back.

HERE'S THE CHURCH

(I thought everyone knew this, but several people in a recent workshop said they'd never heard it before!)

Here's the church (Cross fingers and fold inside.)
Here's the steeple. (Stick up index fingers.)
Open the doors (Open thumbs.)
And see all the people. (Wiggle fingers.)

They climbed a great big hill (Move fingers over your head.)
And stood on the top very still. (Keep hands still.)
Then they all tumbled down (Roll hands around and down.)
And fell to the ground.
We're so tired, (Hold up fingers.)
They all said.
So they all went home
And went to bed.
10 - 9 - 8 - 7 - 6 -
5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1. (Put down fingers one at a time.)
Good night! (Lay head on hands.)

MOUSIE BROWN

Up the tall white candlestick (Hold right arm high in the air.)
Went little mousie brown. (Wiggle left index finger up arm.)
But when he got up to the top,
He could not get back down. (Wiggle finger back and forth.)
He called for Grandma. (Cup hands around your mouth
as you pretend to yell.)
"Grandma! Grandma!"
But Grandma was in town. (Open hands and shake head.)
So little mousie curled right up (Stick left index finger in right palm.)
And rolled right down. (Make fists with hands and roll down
in front of you.)

Cut off the finger from a cloth glove and use it to make a mouse puppet.

THIS LITTLE GIRL

This little girl is
Ready for bed. (Hold up index finger and wiggle.)
On the pillow
She lays her head. (Open palm and lay finger down.)
Wrap the covers
Around her tight. (Wrap fist around finger.)
That's the way
She spends the night. (Rock hand.)
Morning comes,
She opens her eyes.
Off with a toss
The covers fly. (Open fist.)
She jumps out of bed, (Hold up finger.)
Eats her breakfast, (Pretend to feed finger some food.)
And brushes her teeth. (Pretend to brush teeth on finger.)

She gets dressed and	(Pretend to dress finger.)
Brushes her hair.	(Pretend to brush hair.)
Now she's ready	
And on her way,	(Dance finger around.)
To work and play	
At school all day.	

This little boy...	(Do similar motions with the opposite index finger.)
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NOODLES

One small noodle	(Hold up one finger.)
On my noodle plate.	
Salt and pepper,	
Tastes just great.	(Pretend to shake salt.)
Mother's going to the store.	
Mother, mother, get some more.	

Two...Three...Four...

Five small noodles	(Hold up five fingers.)
On my noodle plate.	
Salt and pepper,	(Pretend to shake salt.)
Tastes just great.	
Mother, mother, I am stuffed.	
I think that I have had enough!	

Take a paper plate and cut out five holes as shown. Stick fingers in the holes to match the noodles in the rhyme.

KING KONG

(Say "King Kong" in a loud voice and "teeny tiny monkey" in a squeaky voice.)

KING KONG	(Flex arms.)
Was just a teeny	
Tiny monkey	(Hold up pinky.)
Compared to my love for you.	(Cross arms over chest and then extend.)
KING KONG	(Flex arms.)
Was just a teeny	
Tiny monkey	(Hold up pinky.)
Compared to my love for you.	(Cross arms over chest and then extend.)

THE APPLE TREE

Way up high	
In the apple tree	(Point up.)
Two little apples	
Smiled down at me.	(Hold up 2 fingers.)
I shook that tree	
As hard as I could,	(Pretend to shake a tree.)
And down came the apples,	(Roll hands around.)
Mmmm, mmmm, good!	(Pat tummy.)

*You can vary the number and type of fruit. For example, "Way up high in an orange tree, five juicy oranges smiled down at me..."

FIVE LITTLE SAUSAGES

Five little sausages	(Hold up 5 fingers.)
Frying in the pan.	
The grease got hot,	
And one went BAM!	(Clap hands.)
Four little hotdogs...	(Hold up 4 fingers.)
Three little hotdogs...	(Hold up 3 fingers.)
Two little hotdogs...	(Hold up 2 fingers.)
One little hotdog...	(Hold up 1 finger.)
No little hotdogs	(Hold up fist.)
Frying in the pan.	
The pan got hot,	
And it went BAM!	(Clap hands and say the last word loudly.)

*You can change sausages to "hotdogs."

*Change the rhyme to popcorn and say:

"Five little kernels sizzling in the pot.

The grease got hot and one went POP!"

FIVE LITTLE DUCKS

Five little ducks	(Hold up 5 fingers.)
Went out to play	
Over the hills	(Move hand up and down.)
And far away.	(Put hand over your eyes as if looking.)
When the mother duck called,	
"Quack, quack, quack!"	(Put palms together and open and shut.)
Four little ducks	(Hold up 4 fingers.)

To choose the very best one
And you are it!

*Go around room and point to children as you say
the rhyme. "It" has to sit down. Continue until
there is one child left standing.

*Children can also stand in a circle and hold out
their fists as they say this rhyme.

DIG A HOLE

Dig a hole.	(Make a hole by making a fist with right hand.)
Plant a seed.	(Stick left index finger in the hole.)
Up comes a flower.	(Bring left hand up through right fist.)
Pull out the weed.	(Pretend to pluck a weed.)

WHERE IS MY BUNNY?

(Thanks to Nancy Bauchle for sharing this with me.)

Where is my bunny?	(Begin with hands behind your back.)
No one can see	(Shake head "no.")
I think that my bunny	
Is hiding from me.	(Look over shoulder.)
Here is my bunny.	(Hold up 1 thumb.)
He's found a friend.	(Hold up other thumb.)
Look at all the others.	(Slowly stick up fingers.)
Now there are ten!	

I CAUGHT A FISH

One, two, three, four, five.	(Hold up fingers one at a time on right hand.)
I caught a fish alive.	(Cup hands and pretend to catch a fish.)
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten,	(Hold up fingers one at a time on left hand.)
I let it go again.	(Pretend to release the fish.)
Why did you let that fishy go?	(Cock head to one side.)
Because it bit my finger so.	(Shake head.)
Which finger did it bite?	(Cock head to one side.)
My little finger on my right.	(Hold up right pinky.)

I love you day	(Make circle with arms.)
And night.	(Lay head on hands.)
My love is out of sight.	(Hands in air.)
KING KONG	(Flex arms.)
Was just a teeny	
Tiny monkey	(Hold up pinky.)
Compared to my love for you!	(Softly say this line as you point to children.)

MISS MOLLY

Miss Molly had a dolly	(Cradle arms and rock.)
Who was sick, sick, sick.	
So she called for the doctor	(Pretend to hold a phone next to your ear.)
To come quick, quick, quick.	
The doctor came	(Pretend to hold up bag.)
With his bag and his hat.	(Touch head.)
And he knocked on the door	
With a rat-a-tat-tat.	(Pretend to knock.)
He looked at the dolly	
And he shook his head.	(Shake head.)
He said, "Miss Molly	
Put her straight to bed."	(Point finger.)
He wrote on some paper	
For some pills, pills, pills.	(Pretend to write.)
"I'll be back in the morning	
With the bills, bills, bills."	(Wave good-bye.)

TWO LITTLE BLACK BIRDS

Two little black birds	
Sitting on a hill	(Make fists and stick up thumbs.)
One name Jack	(Wiggle right thumb.)
and one named Jill.	(Wiggle left thumb.)
Fly away Jack.	(Wiggle right thumb behind back.)
Fly away Jill.	(Wiggle left thumb behind back.)
Come back Jack.	(Bring back right thumb.)
Come back Jill.	(Bring back left thumb.)

Additional verses:

Two little red birds sitting on a wall.
One named Pam and one named Paul.
Fly away Pam. Fly away Paul.
Come back Pam. Come back Paul.

Two little blue birds sitting in the tree.
One named Brad and one named Bree.
Fly away Brad. Fly away Bree.
Come back Brad. Come back Bree.

Two little yellow birds sitting on a sled.
One named Tami and one named Ted.
Fly away Tami. Fly away Ted.
Come back Tami. Come back Ted.

I HAVE A CAT

I have a cat. (Make "cat" in sign language by stroking whiskers.)
 I have a cat. (Children repeat.)
My cat is fat. (Hold out arms in front of you like a tummy.)
 My cat is fat. (Children repeat.)
My cat wears a hat. (Pretend to put a hat on your head.)
 My cat wears a hat. (Children repeat.)
My cat sees a bat. (Link thumbs and pretend to fly hands.)
 My cat sees a bat. (Children repeat.)
My cat sees a rat. (Hold up pinky like a rat's tail.)
 My cat sees a rat. (Children repeat.)
I have a cat. (Pretend to stroke whiskers.)
 I have a cat. (Children repeat.)
MEOW! (Make hands like claws and say together.)

BUBBLEGUM

Bubblegum, (Pat thighs to the beat.)
Bubblegum
In a dish.
How many pieces
Do you wish?
1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
6, 7, 8, 9, 10..... (Clap and count.)

*Let different children chose an amount and clap.

A LITTLE MOUSE

A little mouse (Wiggle left thumb.)
Lived quietly in his hole. (Make fist with right hand.)
A little mouse (Wiggle left thumb.)

Lived quietly in his hole. (Place left thumb in right fist.)
When all was as quiet
As quiet could be.
Sh! Sh! Sh! (Say very softly and slowly.)
Out popped he! (Remove left thumb and wiggle.)

STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN!

Stop, (Hold your palm up.)
Look, (Point to your eyes.)
And listen, (Cup hands behind ears.)
Before you (Point finger and shake as if bossing
Cross the street. someone.)
Use your eyes, (Point to your eyes.)
Use your ears, (Point to your ears.)
And then use your feet! (Point to your feet.)

MR. TURKEY

Mr. Turkey went for (Start with hands behind your back.)
A walk one day (Bring right thumb out in front of you.)
In the very best
Of weather.
He met Mr. Duck (Bring left thumb out in front.)
Along the way
And they talked (Have thumbs look at each other.)
Together.
"Gobble, gobble, gobble." (Wiggle right thumb.)
"Quack, quack, quack." (Wiggle left thumb.)
"Good-bye." (Bow right thumb.)
"Good-bye." (Bow left thumb.)
And they both walked back! (Wiggle thumbs behind your back.)

ONE POTATO

One potato, (Hold up fingers as you count.)
Two potato,
Three potato,
Four.
Five potato,
Six potato,
Seven potato,
More.
My mother told me