

Arroz con leche

Arroz con leche, me quiero casar con una señorita de San Nicolás, que sepa coser, que sepa bordar, que sepa abrir la puerta para ir a jugar.	Con esta sí, con esta no, con esta señorita me caso yo.
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WHAT IT MEANS Rice pudding, I want to marry a young lady from San Nicolás who knows how to sew, who knows how to embroider, who knows how to open the door to go out and play. This one yes, this one no, this is the young lady I will marry.

TRY IT Sit facing your child and clap each other's hands on the beat; on the last verse, point around the room (at a teddy, at the cat) and land on someone for 'me caso yo'.

Traditional, anonymous (public domain)

Aserrín, aserrán

¡Aserrín! ¡Aserrán!
Los maderos de San Juan
piden queso, piden pan;
los de Roque, alfandoque;
los de Rique, alfeñique;
¡los de triqui, triqui, tran!

WHAT IT MEANS Sawdust, saw-saw (the sound of sawing). The woodcutters of San Juan ask for cheese, ask for bread; Roque's get a cane-sugar sweet, Rique's get a sugar candy, and Trique's get triqui, triqui, tran (just a happy sound).

TRY IT Hold hands facing each other and rock forward and back like two people sawing a log; on 'triqui, triqui, tran' give a big bounce or a gentle tickle.

Traditional, anonymous (public domain); one common version, endings vary

Sana, sana, colita de rana

Sana, sana,
colita de rana,
si no sana hoy,
sanará mañana.

WHAT IT MEANS Heal, heal, little frog's tail; if it doesn't heal today, it will heal tomorrow.

TRY IT Say it softly while rubbing a bumped knee or elbow. By the third bump of the week your child will say it with you.

Traditional, anonymous (public domain)

Que llueva, que llueva

Que llueva, que llueva,
la vieja está en la cueva,
los pajaritos cantan,
las nubes se levantan.
¡Que sí, que no,
que caiga un chaparrón!

WHAT IT MEANS Let it rain, let it rain, the old woman is in her cave, the little birds are singing, the clouds are rising. Yes! No! Let a big shower come down!

TRY IT Walk in a little circle holding hands; on 'que caiga un chaparrón' both of you crouch down fast like falling rain. Save it for the next rainy afternoon.

Traditional, anonymous (public domain)

Arrorró, mi niño (Duérmete, mi niño)

Arrorró, mi niño,	Duérmete, mi niño,
arrorró, mi sol,	duérmete, mi amor,
arrorró, pedazo	duérmete, pedazo
de mi corazón.	de mi corazón.

WHAT IT MEANS Hush-a-bye, my little one, hush-a-bye, my sunshine, hush-a-bye, little piece of my heart. Go to sleep, my little one, go to sleep, my love, go to sleep, little piece of my heart.

TRY IT Hum or whisper it slowly at the very end of bedtime, lights already off. Swap niño for niña for a girl. Same words every night is the point.

Traditional, anonymous (public domain); the 'duérmete' verse keeps its traditional form

Estaba la pájara pinta

Estaba la pájara pinta
sentadita en el verde limón;
con el pico recoge la rama,
con la rama recoge la flor.
¡Ay, ay, ay! ¿Cuándo vendrá mi amor?

WHAT IT MEANS The painted bird was sitting in the green lemon tree; with her beak she picks up the branch, with the branch she picks up the flower. Oh, oh, oh! When will my love come?

TRY IT One person sits in the middle as the pájara pinta while the others walk around; on '¡Ay, ay, ay!' everyone flaps their arms, then swap who sits in the middle.

Traditional ronda of Spanish origin, anonymous (public domain)

Al pasar la barca

Al pasar la barca	Yo no soy bonita
me dijo el barquero:	ni lo quiero ser,
las niñas bonitas	arriba la barca,
no pagan dinero.	una, dos y tres.

WHAT IT MEANS As the boat went by, the boatman told me: pretty girls don't pay money. I'm not pretty and I don't want to be; up goes the boat, one, two and three.

TRY IT Sit your child on your lap facing you and rock side to side like a boat; on 'una, dos y tres' lift them up on each number.

Traditional, anonymous (public domain)

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How to use rhyme cards

- You don't need to sing well. Say the rhyme in a steady beat, like a chant, and clap or rock along.
- Use the same rhyme at the same moment every time: Sana, sana for bumps, Arrorró at lights-out.
- Leave off the last word and let your child fill it in.
- These are old traditional rhymes and they keep their original words.

The rhyme texts are traditional (public domain); the English meanings are ours.