

Transition Strategies

The following songs, chants, poems, and fingerplays can be used at transition times to ensure that these times in the day are opportunities for language and literacy teaching. They will provide meaningful activities for children that cut down on idle “wait time.”

[Perpetual Preschool Website](http://perpetualpreschool.com/transitionideas.html)

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When you excuse little ones for snack or lunch sing a song to let them know what time it is. Here is one- Have children hold out their hands and show you their "poppers". Ask them where they want to pop (head , hands, knees, etc...)

Popping popcorn

Popping popcorn

pop pop pop

pop pop pop

Popping Popping popcorn

Popping popping popcorn

pop pop pop

pop pop pop

POP!!!!



Transition times require a lot of thought because these unstructured times can be difficult for children. Here is one transition that worked for me in a preschool setting:



Point to the window
Point to the door
Point to the ceiling
Point to the floor
Point to your elbow
Point to your knee
Point to you and point to me.
It gets their attention on you!

When settling down for a quiet time we recite the following rhyme:

Here are grandma's glasses (put thumbs and forefingers together and place over eyes).

Here is grandma's hat (form teepee on head with hands.)
And here is how she folds her hands and lays them in her lap.

Here are grandpa's glasses (form circle on eyes with fingers and thumbs. I usually use a deeper voice)

Here is grandpa's hat. (teepee on head)

And here is how he folds his arms just like that. (Put arms akimbo.)

(Children may have to be shown how to put arms akimbo the first time.)



Hands

**Hands upon my head I place
Upon my shoulders and on my face
At my waist and by my side
And then behind me they will hide
And then I'll raise them way up high
And let my fingers fly, fly, fly
With a clap, clap, clap
And a one, two, three
Lets see how quiet we can be**

I have found a fun way to get the children's attention during transition times. I begin playing a game called "If You're Listening to Me". It is similar to Simon Says but I begin each phrase with "If you're listening to me..." then fill in various directions like ...touch your nose, ...put your hands on your hips, etc. I lead the group and before you know it everyone is playing along giving you their undivided attention. Then it is easy to sneak in any other instructions.

Also, an attention-getter I have used before is: "If you can hear my voice, snap your fingers...if you can hear my voice snap your fingers...etc.", until you have everyone's attention--(speak in a very soft voice.)

The Clock

**Tick-tock, Tick-tock
Tick-tock says the clock.
Little boy, little girl,
Time to *hear the teacher.***



(or: *wash our hands, go outside, put toys away, etc.*)

Countdown

**Five
Four
Three
Two
One
Teacher's Turn!**



A Transition Poem

**Caterpillars bump
Worms wiggle
Bugs jiggle
Rabbits hop
Horses clop
Puppies bounce
Kittens pounce
Lions stalk
But . . .
I walk**



My Fingers

I stretch my fingers away up high
Until they almost reach the sky.
I lay them in my lap and you see
Where they're as quiet as they can be!

Dr. Jean – Jean Feldman

Feldman, Jean. (2000). *Transition Tips and Tricks for Teachers*. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House

Here is a Turtle

Here is a turtle. (Hold out fist.)
He lives in a shell.
He likes his home
Very well.
When he gets hungry, (stick out thumb)
He comes out to eat, (wiggle thumb)
Then goes back
Into his house (tuck thumb back into fist)
To sleep.



Color Chant

If you're wearing RED,
Put your hands on your head.
If you're wearing BLACK,
Then touch your back.
If you're wearing BROWN,
Touch the ground.
If you're wearing GREEN,
Wash your hands real clean.
If you're wearing BLUE,
Put your hands on your shoe.
If you're wearing PINK,
Then think and think.
If you're wearing GRAY,
Have a nice day.

If ORANGE is what you wear,
Then touch your hair.
If you're wearing WHITE,
Squeeze your hands real tight.
If you're wearing PURPLE,
Say, "Murple gurple."
If you're wearing YELLOW,
Wave to your fellow.
You're all looking mighty fine,
And that's the end of the color rhyme.

These games (also from Dr. Jean Feldman, reference above) can be used to have children move from group to centers, to wash hands for lunch or snack, or a variety of other ways:

Sound Matching

If your name begins like "baseball" you may.....

If your name begins like "kite" you may.....

If your name begins like "sun" you may.....

If your name begins like "wind" you may.....

(And so forth until all of the children have moved.)

Bibbity Bobbity

Bibbity Bobbity Boo

Bibbity Bobbity Boo.

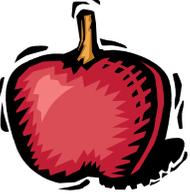
Who are you?

Bibbity Bobbity B_____. (Say child's name by dropping first letter and substituting "B")

You are (child's name).

(For example: "Bibbity Bobbity Bimmy. You are Jimmy.")

The poem below may be used with preschool children at group time:

	Criss-Cross Applesauce	
	Criss-cross applesauce, Give a little clap. (clap hands) Criss-cross applesauce, Put them in my lap. (put hands in lap)	Criss-cross applesauce, Quiet as can be. Criss-cross applesauce, Eyes on me. (point to self)

Animal Rhymes

Children listen to the "clues" in these rhymes to determine the animal.

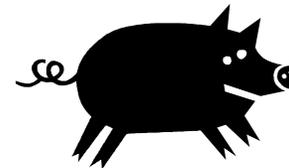
I give you milk.
 I say, "Moo moo."
 On the grass and hay
 I chew and chew.

"Neigh, neigh,"
 I gallop and run.
 I'll give you a ride
 That's lots of fun.



"Oink, oink, oink,"
 Is what I say.
 In the mud
 I like to play.

Waddle, waddle, waddle,
 "Quack, quack, quack."
 My feathers can be
 White, yellow or black.

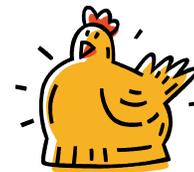


I like to sleep.
 I also "Purr."
 I have whiskers
 And very soft fur.

"Baa, baa, baa,"
 Yes, I have some wool.
 "Baa, baa, baa,"
 Three bags full.

"Woof, woof, work"
 Give me a bone.
 If I'm your friend
 You'll never be alone.

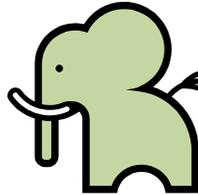
I'll lay some eggs
 In my nest.
 "Cluck, cluck, cluck,"
 I'll do my best.



From the website: <http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/songspoems27.html>

The Elephant

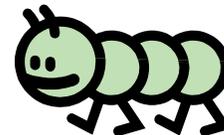
**An elephant goes like this and that,
 (pat knees)
 He's terribly big,
 (hands high)
 And he's terribly fat;
 (hands wide)
 He has no fingers,
 (wiggle fingers)
 And has no toes,
 (touch toes)
 But goodness gracious,
 What a long nose!**



Alphabet Call and Response
 ABCDEFG
 School is so much fun for me
 HIJKLMN
 Learn and play with all my friends
 OPQRS & T
 We're the best as you can see
 UVWXYZ
 Now it's time to stop and freeze.

Caterpillars

“Let’s go to sleep,” *(wiggle your fingers)*
 The little caterpillars said,
 As they tucked themselves *(interlock fingers as if praying)*
 Quietly in bed.
 When they awake
 By and by *(palms up, cross over hands)*
 Each one will be *(clasp thumbs and flutter fingers to make a butterfly)*
 A pretty butterfly.



Wiggle Wobble
 Heads go wiggle, wobble, *(wiggle head from side to side)*
 Wiggle, wobble,
 Wiggle, wobble,
 Heads go wiggle, wobble,
 Then they STOP. *(freeze)*
 Hands go wiggle, wobble, *(wiggle hands)*
 Wiggle, wobble,
 Wiggle, wobble,
 Hands go wiggle, wobble,
 Then they STOP. *(freeze with hands in lap)*

A, B, C: One Thing About Me

Teacher says, “A,B,C: One Thing About Me.”

Point to child who says his name and one thing he likes that starts with the same letter as his name.

(Examples: “Jamal likes jellybeans.” “Sophia likes spaghetti.”)

Excerpted from *Teachable Transitions* by Rae Pica (Beltsville MD: Gryphon House, 2003):

Good Morning, Good Morning.

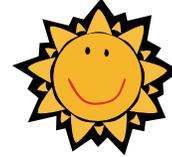
Use this fingerplay with the group as a whole or with children who've arrived before the rest of the class:

Good morning, good morning (clap-clap) (clap-clap)

Good morning to you. (spread arms wide)

I'm happy to be here. (trace shape of a smile with pointer finger)

I hope you're happy, too! (point at children; they point at you!)



Cleanup Imagery

Ask the children to clean up while pretending to be:

Vacuum cleaners
Elves
Garbage trucks
Giant cranes

Toward the Door

Challenge the children to move toward the door as if they were:

A butterfly floating
An eagle soaring
A cat sneaking up on a bird
A weightless astronaut

Hey, Hey, It's Time to Eat

Sing the following to the tune of "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here":

*Hey, hey
It's time to eat.
We're so glad it's lunch (snack) time.
We're so glad it's lunch (snack) time.
Hey, hey
It's time to eat.
Let's not wait a minute more!*

Instant Replay

Ask the children to move to their mats for nap or rest time as though in slow-motion instant replay. They can also act out a scene along the way!

The End of the Day

Chant with the children:
*It's the end of the day
Almost time to go.
Tell us, [Sam],
What do you know?*
The child called on demonstrates something learned during the day! Time permitting; the rest of the children can replicate what they see.

From Sonja Dunn's Book:

Dunn, S. (Nov 1999). *All Together Now*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Cleano

We wash our hands with a rub, rub, rub.
We take a bath with a scrub, scrub, scrub.
We take a swim with a glub, glub, glub.



Rub, rub, rub.
Scrub, scrub, scrub.
Glub, glub, glub.
Cleano, Cleano.
Rub, scrub, glub.

Husha

Husha, husha, husha.
Baby's sleeping.
Husha, husha, husha.
Momma's leaping.
Husha, husha, husha.
Daddy's sweeping.
Husha, husha, husha.
Sister's creeping.
Husha, husha, husha.
Brother's weeping.
Husha, husha, husha.



The following are transition strategies that I have used for years – Source Unknown:

Everybody Say ONE, TWO, THREE

While clapping hands loudly say, "Everybody say ONE... TWO... THREE."
Then in a normal voice say the same words while lightly slapping knees. Finally whisper the words while rubbing palms together to make a "whispery" sound.

Let's Play Copycat

Call and response – say the words as you clap the pattern:

"Let's play Copycat."

"Copycat"

"I've got a cat." (Make whiskers on face with fingers.)

"My cat is fat." (Spread hands apart to indicate "fat.")

"My cat wears a hat." (Use hands to make a pointed hat on head.)

"Copycat."

Clap, Slap, Pat

Begin a pattern by clapping your hands and slapping your thighs. Children will join in as they recognize what you are doing. Change the pattern (ex. Clapping hands, patting head). Continue through several patterns. Finish by putting your hands in the air and shaking them.



Some additional websites that include transition activities (both preschool and elementary activities are on some of these, so you will need to choose the appropriate ones for younger children):

<http://www.inspiringteachers.com/tips/management/attention.html>

<http://drjean.org/>

http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/Tips/Attention_Getters/

<http://songsforteaching.com/allard/boomchikaboom.htm>

http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/newsletter/10_4NL_3.asp