



Enjoying the rhyme and rhythm of children's stories is a great way to spend time with your little one. There is lots of fun to be had with the rhyme and rhythm in *Bertha and Bear* by Christine Sharp. Here are some other ideas on how you can share the book at home.

- **Talk about the rhyming words**

Children's early literacy learning starts with listening and speaking. When we talk with children about rhyming words in picture books they are learning that words are made up of different sounds.

Point out the rhyming words on each page and encourage your child to listen to the sounds they hear at the end of the word. It helps if you emphasise the end sound. Ask them if they know another word that sounds the same at the end.

*"Tea" and "me" both have an "ee" sound at the end.*

*Can you hear the "est" sound at the end of "quest" and "west"? I wonder what other words have that sound at the end?*

- **Explain new and unusual words**

Pause and take time to explain words your little one may not know. Connect it to a word/concept/experience/object they already know.

*Hmm, that word, cower, that's what you do if you're scared. You might curl up a bit and shiver.*

*"The joyful birds are warbling" – that means they're singing. Remember when we heard the magpies warbling in the park?*

The more words children know the meaning of before school, the easier it will be for them to understand what they are reading later on at school.

- **Explore the illustrations**

The details in picture book illustrations are incredible to explore together. There are secrets to unlock on every page. It's ok to stop and spend time exploring a single page. What can you find together? Talk about the things you see.

*Can you see those arrows hiding in the branches?*

*Look at the hexagon shapes inside the bee hive!*

*What are the words on the sign posts?*

*Oh, that cloud has a very angry look on its face.*

*I can see a train track hiding on this page, can you spot it?*

*Borrow some Junior Non-Fiction books from your local library to find out more about bees. Find out if there are any native bees in your local area. They are safe and fascinating to watch and learn about.*

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