

Scots Rhymes, Riddles and Games

Bairns' Rhymes

A wee, wee man cam ower the hill.

The teller places two fingers at the back of the bairn's head and walks them up and over the top of the head stopping at the forehead (broo).

He chappit on the door.

Knock on the forehead.

He keekit in.

Point to the eyes (een).

He liftit the sneck.

Lift up the nose (neb).

Rub finger on the bottom lip.

An walkit in.

Put the finger in the mouth (moo).

The Kittlin Game

Thir wis a wee moose

Hold the bairn's hand (haund).

Wis lookin fur a hoose,

Use the index and middle fingers to go to the palm (luif).

An he went creepy, creepy, creepy, creepy,

Start to walk up the bairn's arm (airm).

Kittle, kittle, kittle.

Reach the armpit (oxter). Tickle (kittle).

Counting Out Rhymes

Ma wee Jeenie hid a nice clean peenie.

Guess what colour it wis?

The child at whom the counting stops, suggests a colour.

The streetwise child will suggest a colour that only she is wearing.

"Purple"

P U R P L E and purple you must hae on.

The count continues until only one child remains who is "het".

Eettle, otle black bottle,

Eettle, otle oot.

If yi want a piece on jam,

Jist yi walk strecht oot.

At the second "oot" the child leaves the line.

In this rhyme the use of the glottal stop is recommended, though not obligatory.

Riddles

Come a riddle, come a riddle, come a rote, tote, tote,
A wee, wee man in a red, red coat.
A stave in his haund, an a bane in his throat.
Come a riddle, come a riddle, come a rote, tote, tote.

A: *A cherry*

Little Nanny Etticote,
In a white petticoat,
Wi a red nose.
The longer she staunds,
The shorter she grows.

A: *A candle*

As I gaed tae Falkland tae a feast,
I met wi an ugsome beast.
Ten tails, a hunner nails,
An no a fit bit ane.

A: *A ship*

Hey. Gee up, ma cuddy,
Ma cuddy's ower the dyke,
An gin ye titch ma cuddy,
Ma cuddy'll gie ye a bite.
Kin ye jalouse whit it is?

A: *A jaggy nettle*

Games

Hey, Gee up ma cuddy

Use the words of the riddle above. Form a circle. Go round to the right, singing or chanting the riddle. At the end shout "O", turn round and continue in the opposite direction, speeding up until you are out of breath or can't say it any quicker.

Burniebee

Burniebee, burniebee,
Tell me whan ma waddin will be.
Flee tae the East,
Flee tae the West,
Flee tae the ane ye loo the best.

The children form a circle with one child in the centre.

The children circle clockwise for lines one and two.

During line three the "burniebee" runs round the inside of the circle clockwise then anticlockwise in the fourth line.

When the chant stops the child she is standing next is the new "burniebee"

The game continues.

The Gallant Ship

Three times roond gaed oor gallant, gallant ship,
An three times roond gaed she;
Three times roond gaed oor gallant, gallant ship,
An she sank to the bottom o the sea.

The children stand in a circle and join hands. They chant the rhyme as they go round.

When they come to the fourth line they sink slowly to the ground.

Whar Ye Gawn , Ma Bonny Wee Lass?

Heard in this version from Stanley Robertson

Whar ye gawn, ma bonnie wee lass?

Whar ye gawn, ma dearie?

Whar ye gawn, ma bonnie wee lass?

A message fur ma mammy.

Chorus: Durum ma doo ma doo ma day

Durum ma doo ma doo ma dearie,

A message fur ma mammy.

Whit's yir nim, ma bonnie wee lass?

Whit's yir nim, ma dearie?

Whit's yir nim, ma bonnie wee lass?

They cry me Bonnie Annie.
Chorus..... They cry me Bonnie Annie.

Hoo auld are ye, ma bonnie wee lass?
Hoo auld are ye, ma dearie?
Hoo auld are ye, ma bonnie wee lass?
I'll be saxteen gin Sunday.
Chorus.....I'll be saxteen gin Sunday.

Wull ye tak a man, ma bonnie wee lass?
Wull ye tak a man, ma dearie?
Wull ye tak a man, ma bonnie wee lass?
I'll hae tae ask ma mammy.
Chorus..... I'll hae tae ask ma mammy.

Wull ye mairry me, ma bonnie wee lass?
Wull ye mairry me, ma dearie?
Wull ye mairry me, ma bonnie wee lass?
I'll mairry ye gin Sunday.
Chorus..... I'll mairry ye gin Sunday.

*Boys and girls face each other as in a country dance set.
The boys advance and retire in each of the first the lines.
The girls advance and retire in the last line.
In the first chorus the boy turns the girl with right hand.
Second Left hand.
Third Both hands.
Fourth Doh see doh.
Fifth Everyone promenades round the room led by the first couple.*

Senga Munro, 2007