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# THE CHILD'S FIRST PICTURE BOOK

*Produced through the cooperation of*

**an experimental psychologist**

**a children's illustrator and educator**

**one hundred nursery school children**

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# THE CHILD'S FIRST PICTURE BOOK

by

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**NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY**

**CHICAGO**

**1933**



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# Introduction

Here, I believe, is an epoch-making step in planning picture books for young children. In the past we have had picture books galore—some bad, some good, and many indifferent. There are books which meet adult standards of art and books which educators and others have decided that children *ought* to like. Here, instead, is one which has been tested and tried on children themselves. We adults may not be especially pleased with it, but toddlers are!

While we must have experts in illustrative art and education to pass judgment on children's choices, the acid test of value takes place when a picture book passes into the hands of little children. If it fails to grip interest on its highest level, all the theories, criticisms, and judgments are of no avail. Child interest is not the *sole* test, but it is the *final* test of the success of artists and educators in providing pictures which hold attention and stir imagination. While this book puts the child first, it has received the whole-hearted encouragement of leaders in psychological research, art, and education.

The tremendous influence of pictures in building up ideals and setting standards of behavior is exemplified in the recent investigation of the effects of the movies as reported in "Our Movie Made Children" by Henry James Forman. The psychology underlying this power of "pictured" or illustrated thought is in its infancy, and many more studies need be made; the authors of "The Child's First Picture Book" are pioneers in the scientific approach to the problem in early life. Experiments which preceded this effort to build a book upon children's preferences are recorded in a companion volume.

It has been my privilege and pleasure to encourage and cooperate with others in providing laboratory situations where both these experiments and their practical application could be carried out and demonstrated. Both authors are trained workers—one in the field of psychological research—the other in daily classroom experience with young children. It is hoped that this venture will be welcomed by parents and teachers so that further studies may be inspired in a field where scientific research is much needed.

Morningside Heights  
New York City  
July 28, 1933

Patty Smith Hill, Professor of  
Education, Teachers College,  
Columbia University

## A Foreword to Adults

There have been "picture books" and "books with pictures" almost without end. The only excuse for another one is the fact that it is radically different. *The Child's First Picture Book* is that kind. It has been made by a group of nursery children for others of their own age; the authors have served merely as instruments in their hands. Whatever merit the book may have belongs to these young craftsmen. The only valid test of this merit rests with the larger audience of children to whom it is now addressed.

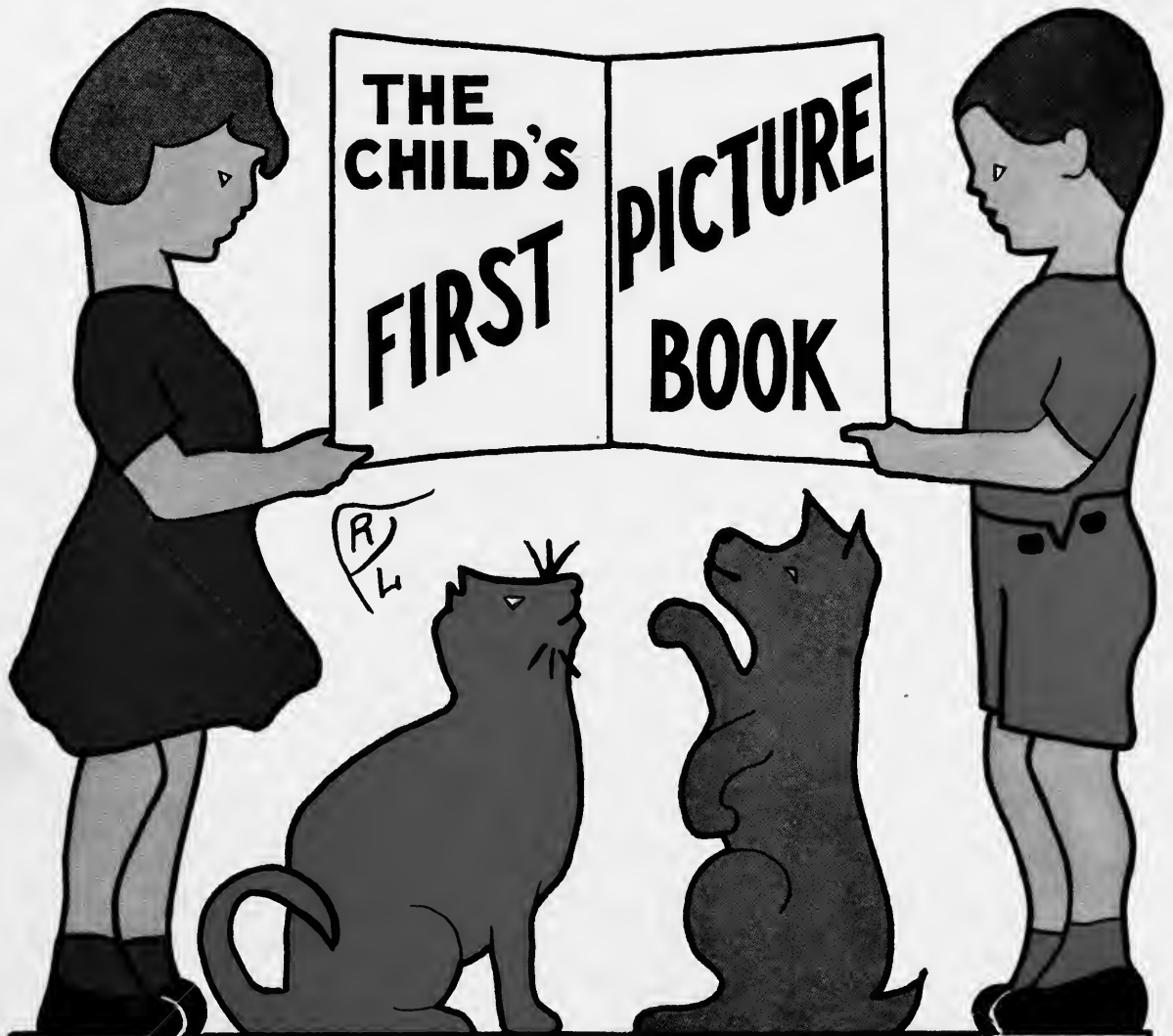
The ideas for the pictures as well as the 'stories' appearing opposite each one were contributed by children in the nursery schools at Winnetka and Evanston, Illinois, The National College of Education, and the Child Development Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University.

It is beyond the scope of this foreword to describe in detail how this book was made and how it should be used. Parents, teachers and librarians interested in the contributions which pictures can make to child development will find help in *The Child and His Picture Book*, a companion volume by the same authors. The most desirable approach is to show the pictures without comment. However, if the child is not stimulated to create 'stories' of his own, one of those printed should be read, with the remark that "Here is what one little boy said about this picture . . . . What do you think they are doing?"

A picture book can be a big event in a child's life, or it can mean nothing to him at all. Adults who wish their next purchase to contribute to the first end may well be guided by the enthusiastic endorsement of those nursery children who had a part in the making of this book.

Evanston, Illinois  
August 1, 1933

G. LaVerne Freeman  
Ruth Sunderlin Freeman



THIS BOOK BELONGS TO \_\_\_\_\_

**She is swinging  
Leaves on top of her**

**Little flower**

**Little flower**

**Little flower**

**Big flower**

**Big flower**



**Engine, engine  
On the track  
Blue car, red car  
All going to town**

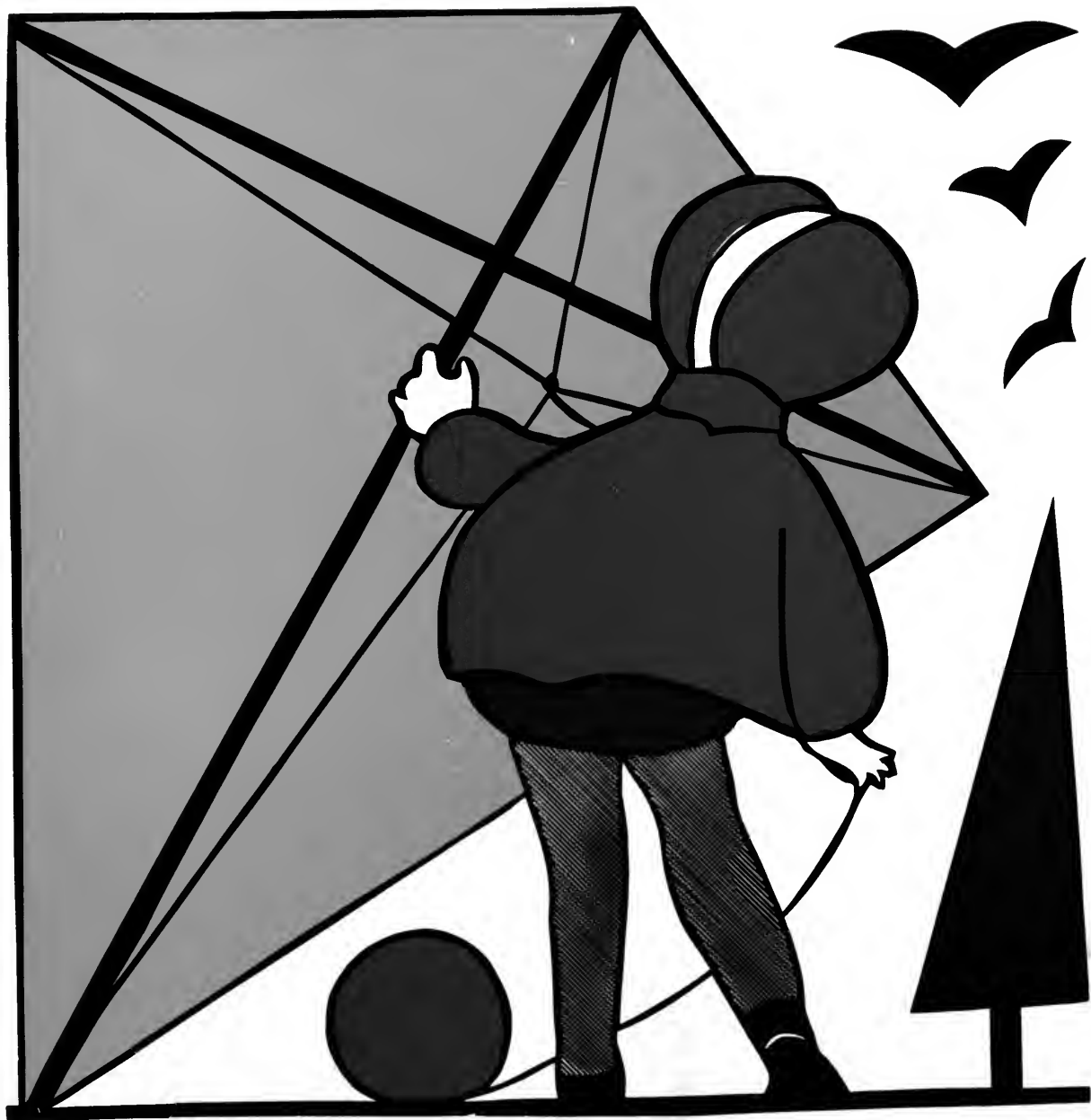
**Here's a choo choo  
Boy and path**



**There's a little girl and a kite  
Look at those birds  
Look! Look! Look!**

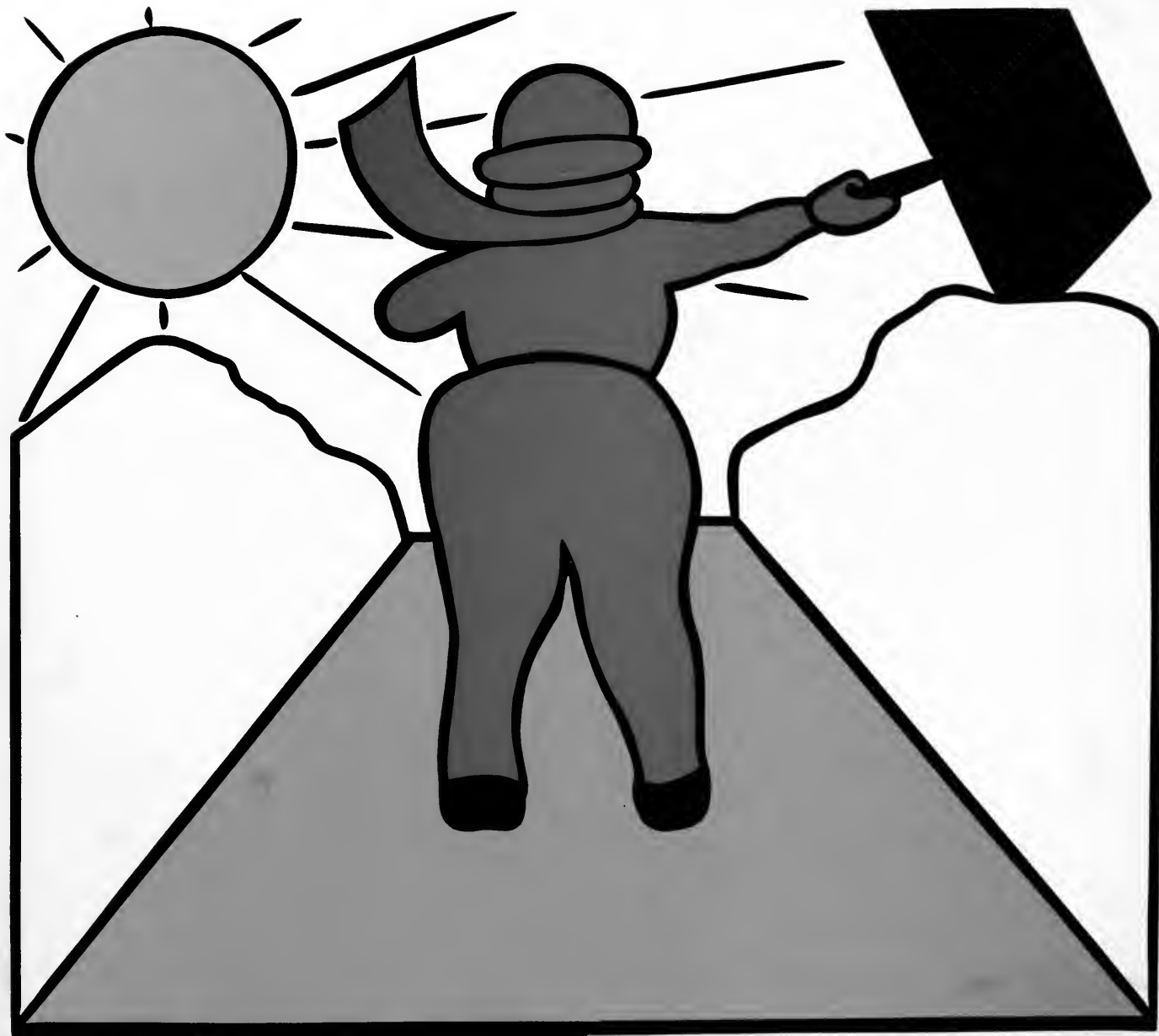
**Tree, Birds, Kite  
Going far up in the air  
She holds the string**





**Sun is shining  
Little boy shoveling**

**When it's cold  
I shovel the snow**



The little girl cries  
The boy is sorry  
Gives her a flower

That's her scooter  
He wants it



**Dogs they yelp**

**Bow-wow**

**Bow-wow**

**Dog wants bone**

**Boy says**

**Can't have it**

**A boy, a dog, a bone**

**The other dog is full**



**She has many big balloons**

**Yellow**

**Green**

**And blue**

**The little boy wants his balloon**

**I like the blue one**





**Oh, here he comes!**  
**Hands out like this**

**It's the slide**  
**Zip we go**





**Bye, baby  
Go to sleep  
I shall take you  
To the park**

**She has a dolly  
Birds are flying high**



**She's eating**

**Green table**

**Green chair**

**Green bowl**

**Eating breakfast**

**The little boy has milk**

**See the children**

**Eating carrots**

**Drinking milk**



**Kitty wants to go away**

**Little girl says**

**No, play with me**

**Meow, meow**

**Says the cat**

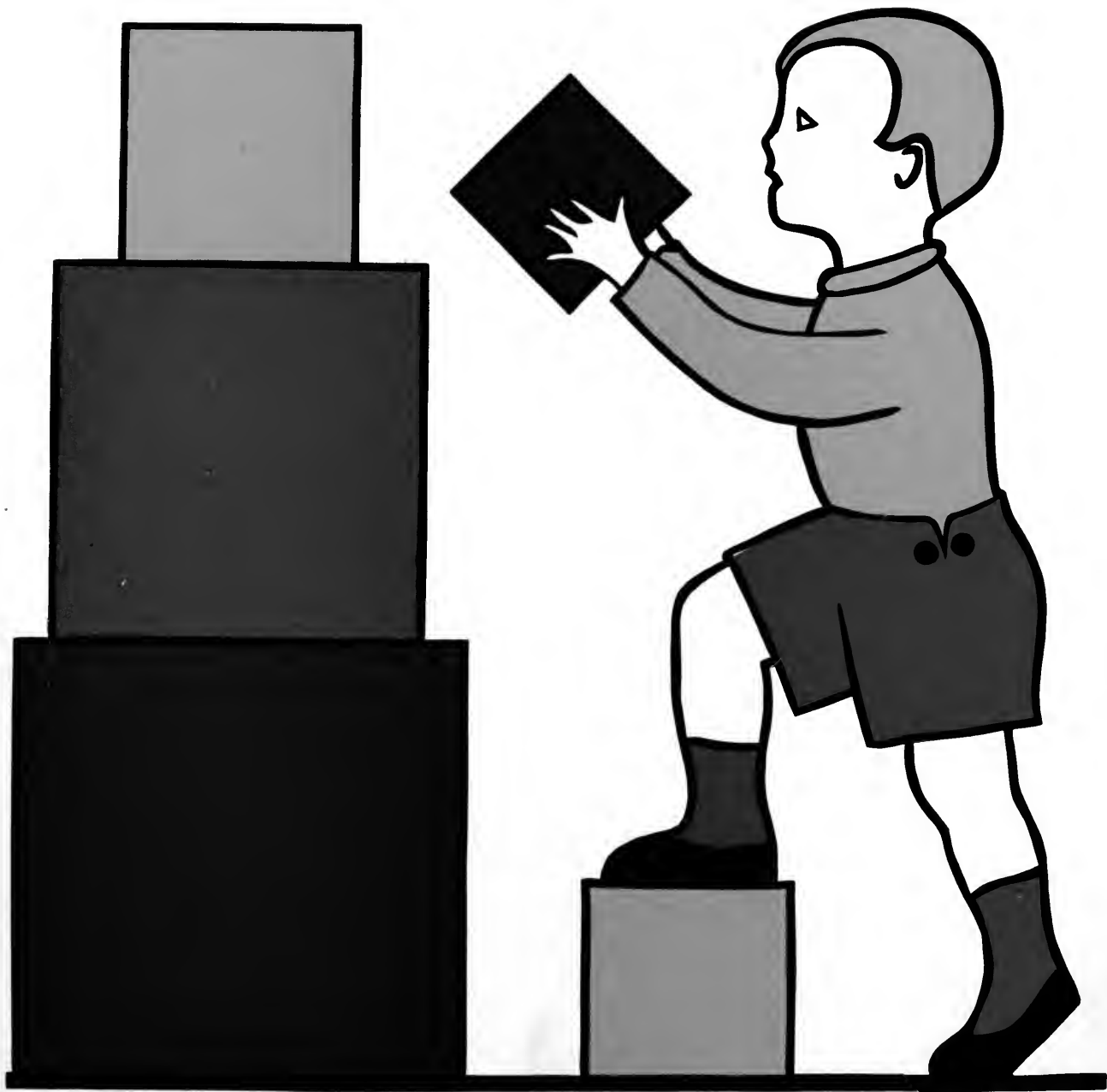
**See the mouse**





**A boy, a block  
Another one  
Another one  
Baby green block  
Big green block  
Two yellow ones  
Making towers**

**There's my blocks  
1-2-3-4-5  
Big and little ones**



Blue horse  
Jiggity, jiggity, jig  
Away we go  
John riding a horse

He rides to Banbury Cross  
Lost his hat



She's washing  
Hanging up dolly's clothes  
A coat, a towel  
Another towel  
All on the line

Clothes in the tub  
Scrub, scrub, scrub  
Hang them on the line



**Girl is riding**

**So is dolly**

**Little boy is blowing horn**

**That's how to play automobile**

**Toot! toot! Here we come**





**Bed time**  
**Says the clock**  
**See the cat**  
**And the moon**

**Little boy**  
**Big clock**  
**Tick-tock**  
**See the moon**

