

Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques,  
Dormez-vous, dormez-vous ?  
Sonnez les matines, sonnez les  
matines,  
Ding dang dong, ding dang  
dong !

English

*Brother Jack, Brother Jack,  
Are you sleeping, are you  
sleeping?  
Ring the morning bells, ring  
the morning bells,  
Ding-dong, ding-dong!*

Please note: matins are bells rung for morning prayer; “dormez-vous?” is the polite “vous” form of “are you sleeping?”; the informal “tu” forms would be “dors-tu?”; same with “sonnez”, it would become “sonne”.

This is still widely used as an introduction to French songs: probably because of the repetition, so the leader can say the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase and the learner(s) can just repeat it... until they can join in with the whole song! It is short and sweet.

It can also be used to point out that an “s” and a “z” are silent at the end of French words... lots of silent letters there! You can also notice that the letter “j” makes a different softer sound in French.

Older children could play with the language and adapt the song to make it about themselves or a friend and something they like to do, eg amie Nathalie, lis-tu, tourne la page, tourne tourne tourne. You can lengthen vowel sounds at will to make the words fit into the tune!

[Click here for a fab list of French onomatopoeia which I have come across!](#)

You can, as ever, make up your own actions to join in with the rhyme as you say it, or join in with mine!

Have fun!

[Click here to go back to the article and the video.](#)



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