

Lesson Plans and Activities

Preschool

- **Fast & Slow & Things That Go** – During a transportation unit, children cut pictures from magazines of things that “go.” Have a discussion in small groups about whether the item go fast or slow. Make a chart with two columns labeled *fast* and *slow*. Children put pictures in the appropriate column. Sing vehicle songs such as *The Wheels on the Bus*, first singing it slowly, then fast. Another good song is *Down by the Station* for trains.

*Down by the station,
Early in the morning,
See the little pufferbellies, all in a row.
See the station master, turn the little handle,
Puff, puff, toot, toot, off we go!*

For more songs, go to <http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/transportation/songs.htm> or do an online search for “transportation songs & young children”.

Music Foundations 1.4. Use body movement freely to respond loosely to beat – loud versus quiet (dynamics) – and tempo.

- **Perform a song** – Teach a simple song such as *Little Bunny Foo Foo* to a small group of children, record it, and sing for the rest of the class. Put the performance on your classroom computer and play it as parents arrive to pick up their children.

Music Foundations 2.2. Explore vocally; sing repetitive patterns and parts of songs alone and with others.

- **Songs Help the Day Go On** – Teach children the song, *Wash, Wash (Lava, lava)* for them to sing as they wash before snack. Observe whether they sing spontaneously when they wash up at other times of the day.

*Wash, Wash
Sung to: Ten Little Indians
(from S Kranwinkel Spanish Piggyback Songs)*

Lava, lava tus manitas (pretend to wash hands)
Lava, lava tu carita. (pretend to wash face)
Lava, lava tus dientitos (pretend to brush teeth)
Todas las mañanas. (every morning)

Music Foundations 3.1. Explore vocal and instrumental skills and use instruments to produce simple rhythms and tones.

- **Feel the Beat** – (from P.S. Weikart, *Movement Plus Rhymes, Songs, & Singing Games: Activities for Children Ages 3 to 7*). Children sit in a circle as the teacher pats the beat on her head and asks the children to copy what she is doing. As they achieve a common tempo, start singing the song (to the tune of “Are You Sleeping?”):

Beat is steady, Beat is steady,
Feel the beat, Feel the beat.
Keep the beat so steady, Keep the beat so steady.
Feel the beat, Feel the beat.

The teacher asks who has another idea about where we can pat the beat? Pat the floor as you all sing the song; pat their knees, etc. For variations, the children can use stuffed toys or dolls to pat or rock with the beat; two children can hold the ends of a rhythm stick and move it together on the slow beat (raising and lowering, for example). Pair children who need help

feeling the beat with those who respond more accurately.

Music Foundations 1.4. Use body movement freely to respond loosely to beat – loud versus quiet (dynamics) – and tempo.

Transitional Kindergarten

- **X Is for Xylophone** – For Choice Time, set up a xylophone with removable bars and post a picture of children dancing in a circle. Encourage children to explore sounds of the instrument as they sing their version of *Ring Around the Rosie*. Some children may watch others play, while others may remove each bar and plink on it. Another may randomly tap while singing the song. Still another may lay the bars in order and, with trial and error, find the bar that makes the appropriate sounds of the song. Explore for several weeks before doing guided activities, such as teaching children how to play a simple song on the xylophone.

Music Foundations 3.1 Apply vocal and instrumental skills and use instruments to produce more complex rhythms, tones, melodies, and songs.

- **Drum Our Names** – For attendance the teacher occasionally uses a drum to tap out the syllables of children’s names. Children will notice that others have the same number of drum beats in their names.

Language Arts Standards for K – Phonological Awareness 2.b – Count and segment syllables

- **Apple Smile** – (from *Book Cooks: 26 Recipes from A-Z Inspired by Favorite Children’s Books*) For a unit on fruit, prepare simple recipe cards. An adult cuts apples into thin wedges and removes the core. Children spread 1 tsp cream cheese or frosting on one side of two separate apple wedges. They place five mini-marshmallows between the apple wedges to make “teeth.” To the tune of *Down by the Station*, children sing *Little Johnny Appleseed*:

Little Johnny Appleseed
Has a great big smile.
Big lips, big teeth...
You’ll see it for a mile.

I wonder what his secret is?
He’s looking rather sly.
Yes, Little Johnny Appleseed
Is quite a funny guy.

Rabbit’s Loose Tooth is a great follow-up for literacy.

K Music Standards 3.2. Sing and play simple singing games from various cultures.

Kindergarten

- **Music Around the World** – At Guided Group Time, the teacher puts out musical instruments from South America (adjust based on your students’ backgrounds). Children examine the instruments and hear the sounds they make. The teacher names the instruments and tells where they come from. She sings a song in Spanish, using the various instruments for accompaniment. Then each child receives an instrument. An experience chart has the words in English and Spanish with pictures of an instrument to use for each line. She teaches children to recite the song and they “read” when to use a particular instrument. Find online information about instruments from around the world at

<http://www.themusichouse.com/musich/kidsdrums.htm>; {Cris, insert a couple of pictures of the instruments)

K Music Standards 3.0: Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.

- **Sea Life Theme** – Teach the song and practice it during Circle Time or Small Group Work Time. At the Art Table, children can draw brightly-colored fish, then cover the page with blue watercolors. As children line up later, they can “swim” their way to the line, keeping time to the music. Integrate other activities and lessons for reading, writing, mathematics, and science.

Over in the meadow where the stream runs blue
Lived an old mother fish and her little fishes two.
“Swim,” said the mother.
“We swim,” said the two.
So they swam all day where the stream runs blue.

K Music Standards 2.2. Sing age-appropriate songs from memory.

K Music Standards 4.1. Create movements that correspond to specific music.

1st Grade

- **What Did I Play?** (adapted from Small boxes, big sounds: Spontaneous music in kindergarten by Nancy Thomas in *Emergent curriculum in the primary classroom: Interpreting the Reggio Emilia approach in schools.*) The Teacher sets out water glasses with different amounts of water – each glass has different colored water. Children experiment/play with the glasses for several days, hearing different sounds coming from different glasses when they are tapped with a small wooden mallet. As one child plays a sequence of sounds, the teacher records her sequence in polka dots with crayons the same color as the water in each glass. The dots are written in a linear fashion. If the child does not understand that the teacher is “writing his music,” she can ask him to “do that part again because it was too fast for me to record it.” Eventually, the teacher asks to use the mallet and taps out the child’s music, pointing to the colored dots as she plays. When these materials are placed in a Choice Center, children will experiment and write their own music which can be shared at Circle Time before they go home. The tunes can be shared with families via email, newsletters, or in a video loop on the computer.

Grade 1 Music Standards 1.0: Students read, notate, listen to, analyze and describe music and other aural information, using the terminology of music.

- **Guess What I Am** – Children listen and watch the YouTube video (**Orchestral Musical Instrument Sounds #1 for Children Kids Kindergarten Toddlers Preschoolers Babies** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awIVJUD7C5c>) to learn the names of instruments. Play lotto or other games with photos of instruments and encourage children to name them. Listen to “Peter and the Wolf” or other music and ask children to hold up the appropriate photo when they hear its sound.

Grade 1 Music Standards 1.3. Identify common instruments visually and aurally in a variety of music.