

THE FIRST MUSIC

By Dylan Pritchett

Kindergarten

Outcome:

Students will explore what makes them special and learn about their classmates.

Materials:

Large end rolls newsprint or other paper, markers, scissors

Small juice cans, cardboard tube, foil, rubber bands, tape, dried beans or uncooked macaroni, comb, wax paper cut to fit comb

Cardboard tube from toilet paper or paper towels, small pieces of wax paper cut to fit over the opening of the tube, rubber bands, pencils

Empty drink bottles (different sizes, at least 3 of each size), pitcher of water

Empty coffee cans or oatmeal containers with lids, masking tape, spoons (metal and plastic), pencils with erasers, crayons or markers, unlined paper

Music CDs or tapes and appropriate player

Computer with Internet access

Optional: Sing Me a Story: Song-and-Dance Tales from the Caribbean (Grace Hallworth, August House 2002).

Shake-It-Up Tales! Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum, and Act Out (Margaret Read MacDonald, August House 2000).

Treasured Time with Five-to Ten-Year-Olds (Jan Brennan, August House 1990).

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Introductory Activity:

Materials: Large end rolls newsprint or other paper, markers, scissors

1. Teacher asks students to sit in circle and share information about themselves.
2. Ask students to identify an activity or skill they are good at doing. Teacher models desired type of response (i.e.: I am a good cook).
3. Encourage students to tell about a time that something was hard for them to do but they kept trying to achieve success. Again, teacher models an example of the desired response (i.e.: I had a hard time learning to drive a car. I did not pass the test for my driver's license the first two times I took the test. I just kept on trying until I passed the test).
4. Teacher tells students to look around the room and notice how students are alike and how they are different.
5. Teacher asks students to lie down on a large sheet of paper, one at a time, as he/she traces around each child's body.
6. Students color in their body tracings to make their figure look like them and to show how they are different and special (hair color, eye color, clothes...). If they have a favorite sport or hobby, they can add those details to the picture.

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Teacher Reading of Story:

Teacher informs students they will listen to a story from Africa. They need to listen carefully to find out what makes each animal **unique**. Teacher asks students what unique means (one of a kind) and adds information as appropriate.

Comprehension:

- Name the animals in the story.
- Where does this story take place?
- What are some of the sounds that the animals made?
- How did the elephant make the Boom Boom sound?
- How did the monkey make his sound?
- King Frog told Parrot why the frogs were silent. What did he say?
- How hard did the animals dance and play?
- Why was it quiet on the seventh day?
- What was the new sound on the seventh day?

Interpretation:

- What was unique about each animal?
- How are the animals like each other?
- How are the animals different from each other?
- If you could be one of the forest animals, which would you choose to be? Why?
- How did the forest animals cooperate with each other?
- How did King Frog feel when he said, "...there is nothing for us to do but watch and listen"?
- What did the animals think when they heard the frogs singing?
- At the end of the book, it says that King Frog likes to practice singing a lot. Why do you think he practices so often?
- What did Crane mean when he said, "Someone's arms and legs may be too short to play or dance. But they can use their voices, no matter how different they may sound"?
- Do you think that each animal had something to contribute to the music?
- What did you learn from this story?

Follow Up Activities:

- Action words

There are many action words in this story. Teacher re-reads the story and asks the students to act out the action words on each page.

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Follow Up Activities cont.:

• African Polyrythms

African music has multiple layers of rhythms in each song. The African musician strives to have at least two different rhythms going at the same time. When performing, one person may begin to improvise, or make up their own version of the melody while the other singers continue singing the original melody.

1. Teacher chooses a song such as, "Row, Row Your Boat" and teaches students to sing the song in a round.
2. Teacher divides the class into 2 groups. The first group continues to sing the song used in the round exercise and the second group chants a word from the song, such as "row."
3. Teacher divides the class in to 3 groups. The first two groups sing the song in a round while the third group chants, "row" or what ever word was chosen.
4. Teacher divides the class into small groups and asks students to consider what other songs would work like "Row, Row Your Boat." What other ways can you create layers of rhythm in songs? How can you do this by adding tapping or clapping to the songs? Can you think of two different songs you can sing at the same time? Can you clap or tap a song in a round?
5. Students share the results of their small group exploration with classmates.

• Making Musical Instruments

Early African people made instruments by using the things that they had around them. They made rattles out of nuts or gourds. They blew into bones or reeds to create a whistling sound. Hollow logs were used as drums. Music is a very important part of life in Africa. Children take an active role in making music at an early age and begin making musical instruments at age three or four.

Drum

Drums are an important part of African music. For a long time they also served as a way for people to communicate with others at a distance. Teacher asks students, what if our school did not have bells, phones, or an intercom? How could the principal use drums to communicate with teachers and students in different classrooms?

Materials: Empty coffee cans or oatmeal containers with lids, masking tape, spoons (metal and plastic), pencils with erasers, crayons or markers

1. Secure the lid of can or container with tape.
2. Decorate can or container with crayons or markers.
3. Use the pencil or spoon as a drumstick.
4. Does the sound change when using plastic and metal spoons?
5. Does a coffee can drum make a different sound than an oatmeal container drum?

Maraca

Materials: small juice cans, cardboard tube, foil, rubber bands, tape, dried beans or uncooked macaroni

1. Cover one end of tube or can with foil and secure with a rubber band or tape.
2. Fill the tube with beans or macaroni.
3. Cover other end with foil and secure with rubber band or tape.

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Follow Up Activities cont.:

Making Musical Instruments cont.

Comb Kazoo

Materials: comb, wax paper cut to fit the comb

1. Fold the wax paper in half and place the comb in the fold with the comb's teeth touching the fold.
2. Hold paper and comb with the fold facing up. Place your lips over the fold and hum a tune as you move the comb from side to side.

Flute

Materials: Cardboard tube from toilet paper or paper towels, small pieces of wax paper cut to fit over the opening of the tube, rubber bands, pencils

1. Punch 3 or 4 holes about 1 inch apart in the cardboard tube with a pencil.
2. Cover one end of the tube with wax paper and secure with a rubber band.
3. Hum a tune into the open end while moving fingers over the holes.
4. Explore how the sound changes as holes are covered and uncovered.

Music Bottles

Materials: empty drink bottles (different sizes, at least 3 of each size), pitcher of water

1. Line up the bottles in groups by size.
2. Pour a different amount of water in each bottle within each group.
3. Blow over bottles to create sounds.
4. Explore how different bottles of the same size make different sounds depending on the amount of water in each. Compare different sized bottles. How are the sounds different? How does it sound playing the same song with different bottles? How does it sound when all of the bottles play the same song at the same time?

• Exploration with Instruments

1. Use the instruments created in the previous activity to play songs together.
2. Start playing a tune with just one instrument and add other instruments, one at a time. How does the music change?
3. Play a round with the instruments.
4. Play two different songs at a time with different instruments. Does it sound like noise or music? If it sounds like noise, why? Find a combination of songs that sounds like music rather than noise.

• Sounds are Everywhere

1. Teacher instructs students to close their eyes and listen. What sounds can be heard in the classroom?
2. Repeat activity in several indoor and outdoor locations.
3. Compare and Contrast
Does closing your eyes make it easier to hear the sounds? How are indoor sounds different than outdoor sounds? How might the sounds differ during different times of day? How might they differ during different seasons of the year?

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Follow Up Activities cont.:

- Dance Moves

The monkey liked the music and felt like moving. He swayed back and forth. He danced as the elephant pounded the log. African music is often accompanied by dance.

1. Teacher works with class to show movement and create a vocabulary to describe it. Movement may include: sway, hop, jump, reach, and shimmy. Students may take turns demonstrating a dance action while class brainstorms a name for that movement or action.
2. Each student creates a dance and teaches it to a classmate by demonstration and /or describing the moves using the shared dance vocabulary developed by the class.
3. Consider: Do you remember the sequence of actions better by watching the actions, by recalling the names of the actions, or by combining both modalities?

- Using Your Voice in Different Ways

Crane said, "Someone's arms and legs may be too short to play or dance. But they can use their voices, no matter how different they may sound."

1. Teacher divides students into small groups and instructs each group to form a circle.
2. Students go around the circle and each child says their name.
3. Students continue to go around the circle in turn, saying their name again in different ways (fast, slow, high, low, stressing different syllables, singing or chanting). How many different ways can your group find to say names?

Extensions:

- Mood Music

Materials: paper, crayons, scissors, music CDs or tapes and appropriate player

1. Each student divides his/her paper into 4 equal parts by folding the paper in half horizontally and then in half vertically. Student cuts along the folds so that he/she has 4 rectangular pieces of paper.
2. Students draw one happy face, one sad face, one scared face, and one angry face. Each rectangle has a different face.
3. Teacher asks students to share situations that cause them to feel happy, sad, afraid, or angry.
4. Teacher plays a variety of music that evokes different feelings and asks students to hold up the face that shows how the music makes them feel. Teacher asks students to explain why the music made them feel happy, sad, angry, or afraid.

- Website to explore:

This website contains pictures of animals. Click on the pictures to hear the sounds these animals make.
www.seaworld.org/animal-info/sound-library/index.htm

- Read *Tiger Dances to Turtle's Tune*, page 38, [Sing Me a Story: Song-and-Dance Tales from the Caribbean](#) (Grace Hallworth, August House 2002). Most Caribbean tales originated in Africa. Music is an important element in the plot of this story. A turtle shows that even a small weak creature has something to contribute. Compare and contrast the turtle with the frogs in [The First Music](#).

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Extensions cont.:

- Read *The Big Man Drum*, page 75, Shake-It-Up Tales! Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum, and Act Out (Margaret Read MacDonald, August House 2000). In this folktale from China, monkeys use a man as a drum by socking him in the stomach. There are many opportunities for students to vocalize, drum, and dance as they enjoy this participatory tale.
- Read *The Useless Tree*, page 34, Wisdom Tales from Around the World (Heather Forest, August House 1996). A twisted tree is passed over by woodcutters who think it is useless, but the tree is useful for other things after all. Compare the tree with the frogs in The First Music. How are the story themes similar?
- Treasured Time with Five-to Ten-Year-Olds, pages 84-85, (Jan Brennan, August House 1990). This book has two pages of activities that teach about pond life including a song about a frog and instructions to make a “Hoppy Frog.”