

Music Matters!

Children love music but did you know that music is one of the best ways to help children learn? Research shows that music helps improve brain development by making those important brain connections. Music helps children develop language, math, social, physical and creative skills.

Try these experiences with children to build skills in many ways:

PUT OUT SIMILAR TYPES OF THE SAME INSTRUMENT – different types of bells or drums. Ask children to use each and to notice the sounds. Do they sound alike or different? Talk about the differences – loudness, pitch, etc. and why they might sound differently. Encourage the children to play the different instruments to make their own variations.

Early Learning Foundations: Infants and Toddlers: Discoveries: Sensory Awareness, Cause and Effect; Physical Development and Health: Sensory, Fine Motor;
Preschool: Approaches to Learning: Reasoning and Problem Solving; Mathematics: Measurement; Science: Sensory Awareness, Scientific Inquiry; Creative Expression: Music; Physical Development and Health: Fine Motor

CREATE A MUSIC THEATRE IN THE DRAMATIC PLAY AREA. Put in microphones (from dollar store or make your own from paper towel rolls), fancy dress-up clothes for costumes, tickets, and seats for the audience.

Early Learning Foundations: Infants and Toddlers: Social Emotional: Social Relationships and Attachment; Discoveries: Play
Preschool: Social Emotional: Social Relationships and Cooperation; Creative Expression: Dramatic Play.

USE GLASSES OF WATER TO MAKE MUSIC. Fill several glasses with different amounts of water. You can add a drop of food coloring to help children see the differing levels of water. Provide a small striker and show children how to gently tap each glass to make different notes and play songs.

Early Learning Foundations: Infants and Toddlers: Discoveries: Sensory Awareness, Cause and Effect; Physical Development and Health: Sensory.
Preschool: Approaches to Learning: Reasoning and Problem Solving; Mathematics: Measurement; Science: Sensory Awareness, Scientific Inquiry; Creative Expression: Music.

MAKE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. Make maracas by filling empty and clean soda cans with beans or rice. Securely tape the opening to make sure there are no sharp edges. Shake! Or, make cymbals from old foil pie pans. You can make guitars from shoe boxes by cutting a hole in the center of the top and stretching rubber bands of different widths across the hole. Play different types of music for children to accompany.

Early Learning Foundations: Infants and Toddlers: Discoveries: Sensory Awareness, Cause and Effect; Physical Development and Health: Sensory, Fine Motor; Preschool: Myself, My Community, My World: Places and Spaces-Culture; Creative Expression: Visual Arts, Music; Physical Development and Health: Fine Motor.

DANCE TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF MUSIC USING SCARVES OR PIECES OF FABRIC. Play classical, rock, jazz, children's music and show children how to move and wave their scarf as they "feel the music." Talk about the way each music type sounds and makes them feel. Ask two children to share a scarf and dance.

Early Learning Foundations: Infants and Toddlers: Discoveries: Sensory Awareness, Cause and Effect, Play; Physical Development and Health: Sensory, Gross Motor; Preschool: Social Emotional: Self Concept; Approaches to Learning: Engagement and Persistence; Creative Expression: Music, Movement and Dance; Physical Development and Health: Fine Motor

FILL A SONG SACK. Put small objects in a sack. Children pull out one object and everyone sings a song related to the object. Examples: bus: Wheels on the Bus; bell: Jingle Bells; boat: Row Row Your Boat; monkey: 3 Little Monkeys Swinging in the Tree...

Early Learning Foundations: Infants and Toddlers: Discoveries: Curiosity and Problem Solving, Cause and Effect; Language and Literacy: Expressive and Receptive Language; Preschool: Approaches to Learning: Initiative and Curiosity; Language and Literacy: Expressive and Receptive Communication; Creative Expression: Music.

Tired of singing the same old songs? Check out this website that has TONS of old favorites – with the words and music. There is even a page with "guess that children's song" where you can play a short clip and children can guess the song. <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/games/songs/index.htm>

Here are some books to read:

Quiet Loud by Leslie Patricelli

Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin by Lloyd Moss

Clap Your Hands by Lorinda Bryan Cauley

What a Wonderful World by George David Weiss

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae

Olivia Forms a Band by Ian Falconer