

## Let's start at the beginning: Pitch and rhythm games for Early Childhood

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This early childhood/elementary clinic will demonstrate hands-on activities that go from pitch matching to beginning music reading skills and from steady beat to being beat competent. Many of the games and activities lend themselves to individual assessment opportunities.

**Pitch matching:** Balloons, sirens, snakes, bouncing balls and the elevator/slide game, Mr. Potatohead matching game.  
Sing the shape, create the shape.  
"Oh John the Rabbit" (singing or playing on resonator bells)

Oh, John the Rab - bit, Yes ma'am, Got a  
might - y hab - it, Yes ma'am, Jump-in in my gar - den,  
Yes ma'am, cut-tin down my cab - bage, Yes ma'am, My  
sweet po-ta - toes, Yes ma'am, My fresh to-ma - toes,  
Yes, ma'am, And if I live, — Yes ma'am, To  
see next fall, — Yes ma'am, I ain't gon-na have, —  
Yes, ma'am, No cot-ton at all, Yes ma'am.

Source: Seeger (1948). *American Folk Songs for Children*, p. 100.

**Activities:**

- teacher sings the call, students sing the response ("yes ma'am").
- children play response on instruments of their choice.
- teacher asks students to suggest other things to plant in the garden and sings song with these suggestions.

### High and low:

Felt board games: Fall leaves on the ground for low and on the tree for high. Build a garden with high and low in the spring. Any season—birds in the air, birds on the ground.

“Ordinary clappsies, roly polly backsies, HIGH LOW the heel and toe, clip clop and away we go” –Grace Nash

“People” composition for high and low to sing or play. Sorting resonator bells game.

Up the hill and down the hill John Feierabend fingerplay.

Books—“Buzz and Ollie’s High Low Adventure” by Donna Sloan Thorne and Marilyn Sloan Felts ISBN 0-9724147-0-3

“Horrace and Morris Join the Chorus (But what about Dolores?) by James Howe ISBN 1-4169-0616-9

Move to “The Elephant” from Carnival of the Animals for low sounds.

### Going up and going down.

Xylophone or bell set on the book “Mortimer” for going up the stairs or down the stairs

“Eency Weencie Spider” Use the arrangement in the American Orff Schulwerk Pre-school book or make your own: Add a xylophone stepping up the whole instrument after “goes up the water spout” Glissando down on “Down came the rain” Link to “The Itsy Bitsy Spider” book by Iza Trapani ISBN:0-590-69821-4

Orff instrument bar sorting game from low to high (or resonator bells)

Stair-step game. Explore the piano keyboard game, using 2 and 3 black keys.

Glissandos up and down. Link to movement to “The Aviary” or “Introduction and Royal March of the Lions” from Carnival of the Animals

Composition with a playground slide. Use slide whistles?

Sing the shape of the floating scarf or parachute

### Favorite Sol and mi songs:

## Starlight, Star Bright

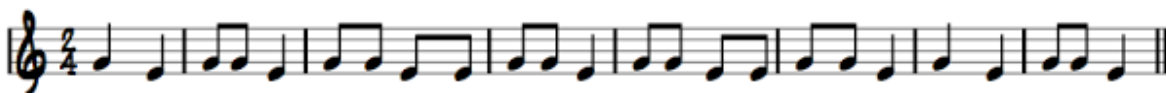
Folk song



Star-light, Star bright, First star I see to-night, Wish I may, wish I might, have the wish I wish to-night.

## Rain, Rain

Folk song



Rain, rain, go a-way, Come a-gain some oth-er day. Lit tle John-ny wants to play, Rain, rain, go a-way.

# Cuckoo

Folk songs

Leader  
Cuck-oo, Who are you? Do you sing? Sing, then!

Students Echo  
Cuck-oo, I'm a bird. Yes, I do. Cuck-oo,

## See Saw Up And Down

See saw up and down, in the air and on the ground.

**So-me books!** These are a delightful set of 12 books from New Zealand by Stuart Manins. The 12 books explore pitch and a number of other musical concepts. The books are: So-me goes missing ISBN: 0 582 87733 4; So-me and the Spider; So-me meets the Boss; So-me..Oh and Romeo; So-me at the Pole; So-me in Space; So-me and the Dance; So-me and his Secret; So-me goes to the Party; So-me and the Monster; So-me finds 'Dough'; and So-me and the Princess; You can get the set of 12 books through West Music, it is a little hard to find them through other dealers, since they are from New Zealand and are a specialty market. There is also a teacher's manual/guide available.

### GAMES:

- People composition for sol mi;
- Body solfege;
- Curwin hand sign game;
- Sol-mi conversation game

Adding "La" Ball bouncing game: Use "flat" tennis balls for each student, OR one playground ball for the class. The ball should hit the ground on the beat and be caught on the next beat. This can be tricky but is lots of fun. If you are using one ball for the class, it is easiest if the teacher is in the middle and bounces to alternating students. A little trickier is to have the students bounce the ball to the person next to them. Even trickier is to have the students bounce the ball across the circle. A modification for young learners or special learners is to roll the ball instead of bouncing.

## Bounce High Bounce Low

Folk song

Bounce high, bounce low, Bounce the ball to Shi - loh.

### Pitch matching games:

Who has the pen - ny? I have the pen - ny.

Who has the pin? I have the pin.

You can make this a Money integration lesson by changing the text to “Who has the Penny... Who has the dime” and adding a verse “Who has the nickel... Who has the quarter”

NOTE: For Doggie Doggie, I change “Stole” to “Took”

### Doggie Doggie

Folk song

Dog - gie, dog - gie, where's your bone? Some - bod - y stole it

Doggie: Student with bone:  
from your home. Who has my bone? I have your bone.

#### Game:

1. One student is the "doggie" in a chair facing away from the rest of the class.
2. Students sing song while teacher hands one student a bone.
3. "Doggie" sings "Who has my bone?" Student with the bone answers.
4. "Doggie" has 3 guesses to figure out who sang.
5. I choose 2 different students for the next round, no matter if the "doggie" guessed correctly or not.

### Steps and Skips

“Mother May I” (sing a step, sing a skip) game adapted for ear training  
Jumping game for ear-training using hula hoops (steps and skips);

### Beginning the staff

Lines and spaces game using floor tiles;  
Beanbag toss for ID of line or space, flash card game  
Do clef

**The treble clef**—it’s not just Every Good Boy Does Fine;

The ABCs of learning it alphabetically,

The staff hand and games with the staff hand

Spelling bee—what words can you spell using A B C D E F and G?

Staff game using staff rug or lines on the floor  
 (like twister OR as a “race” between two or three teams),  
 Sing and say—say and sing;  
 The resonator bells or Orff instrument matching game for individual pitches  
 Flash card games  
 Paper staves and round noteheads for manipulatives  
 Cookie sheet with electrical tape for the staff—magnets on bingo chips for note heads

## Beat, Rhythm and Tempo

### Steady beat games and activities (Steady beat is the heart beat of the music)

RED LIGHT-GREEN LIGHT. Stoptlight game for responding to the beat (also good for “end of song” concept)

COPYCAT—Let’s play copy cat just for fun, let’s copy \_\_\_\_\_ s/he’s the one, whatever s/he does we’ll do the same, that’s how we play the copy cat game” –Grace Nash. Steady beat in different places

VISUALS—Old Silver Burdett “Reaching the Special Learner through Music” Charts (or make your own). Pick-up sticks pictures for beat/no beat...others show meter in 2 and meter in 3.

BEAN BAGS beat games to pass on the beat, using your favorite recorded music or children’s song. Variations: hand-to-hand; one person behind the circle tapping each shoulder; everyone in the circle and taps from one knee to the other. TOSSING on the beat to the next person, tossing on the beat to someone across the circle, make it more interesting by having several bean bags going at once.

BALL BOUNCING games—use kind of flat tennis balls for the best results

Oliver Twist

Folk Song

O - li - ver Twist you can't do this, So what's the use of try - ing?

*(Do a repetitive movement on the beat. Then, students think of movements.)*

5  
 Touch your knees, touch your toes, clap your hands and a - way you go.

Then, count 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8.

Students must take 8 steps and be back where they started on 8.

OR Bounce High, Bounce low (see page 3)

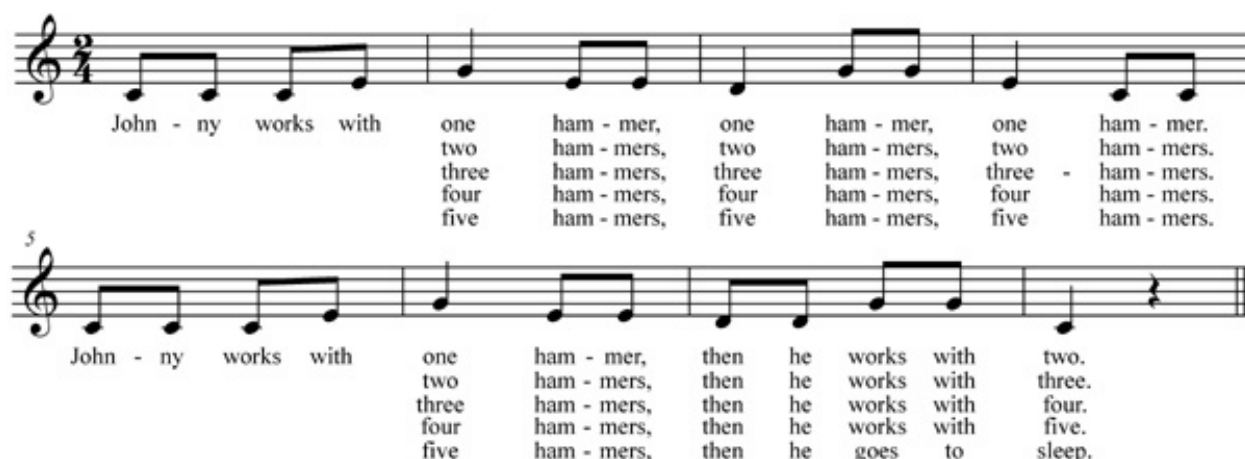
CHOOSING CHANTS—pounding on fists for the beat. See back pages for a collection!

HAND DRUM walking on the beat, stopping on the beat game (can be modified for fast and slow tempo, or for getting faster and getting slower)

WALKING on the beat...”Snail, snail, snail, snail go around and round and round” (sol, mi, sol, mi, sol sol, la la, sol sol, mi)

JUMP ROPE RHYMES See back pages for a sample from my collection

## Johnny Works with One Hammer

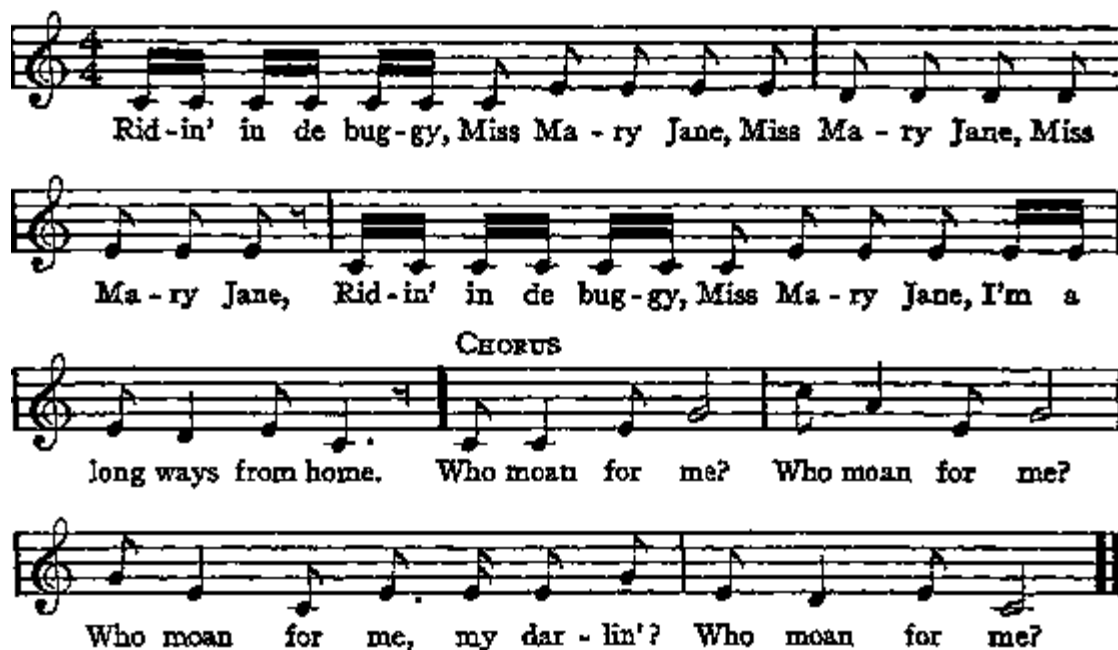


John - ny works with one ham - mer, one ham - mer, one ham - mer.  
two ham - mers, two ham - mers, two ham - mers.  
three ham - mers, three ham - mers, three ham - mers.  
four ham - mers, four ham - mers, four ham - mers.  
five ham - mers, five ham - mers, five ham - mers.

John - ny works with one ham - mer, then he works with two.  
two ham - mers, then he works with three.  
three ham - mers, then he works with four.  
four ham - mers, then he works with five.  
five ham - mers, then he goes to sleep.

**Tempo (The speed of the beat; or fast and slow)**

EASY CHANGING TEMPO GAME –use the verse of this song with transportation magnets to show fast and slow transportation



Rid-in' in de bug-gy, Miss Ma - ry Jane, Miss Ma - ry Jane, Miss Ma - ry Jane, Rid-in' in de bug-gy, Miss Ma - ry Jane, I'm a long ways from home. Who moan for me? Who moan for me? Who moan for me, my dar - lin'? Who moan for me?

JUMP ROPE RHYMES that have “red hot peppers” or like “Blue Bells cockle shells” with the rope not going over are good for tempo. See back pages for a collection.

CUE CARD action game. Hold up cue cards of things that go fast or slow and have the students pantomime the motions OR move that way OR patsch the appropriate beat.

MORE HAND DRUM GAMES. Walk the way the drum goes....fast, slow, getting faster, getting slower

RIDING IN A CAR game. Tell a story about getting into the car and starting it up, going faster and slower, starting and stopping and have the students keeps the beat as the story goes, changing it as the story changes.

GOING ON A BEAR HUNT Action game with fast motions in reverse when the bear is chasing you on the way back.

### **Rhythm (The way the words go; or long and short sounds)**

My favorite way to transition from steady beat to rhythm!

Steady beat activity using counting bears and a chant such as “Cobbler, Cobbler, Mend My Shoe” or “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear”. Have the students keep the steady beat while you put out one bear for each beat. Then you can change to rhythm, introducing “two sounds on a beat” for eighth notes or a bear laying down for a rest.

#### **Teddy Bear**

Teddy bear, Teddy bear, turn around	ti-ti- ta; ti-ti ta; ta, ta, ta, rest
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground	ti-ti- ta; ti-ti ta; ta, ta, ta, rest
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light	ti-ti- ta; ti-ti ta; ta, ti-ti, ta, rest
	[Alternate: ti-ti- ta; ti-ti ta; syn-co-pa, ta rest]
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say good night.	ti-ti- ta; ti-ti ta; ta, ta, ta, rest

#### **Cobbler Cobbler**

Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe	ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti ta
Give it one stitch, give it two	ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti ta
Give it three, give it four	ti-ti, ta, ti-ti ta
If it needs it, give it more!	ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti ta

I use different colors of bears for each phrase, and then the students can discover the form (ABAB for Teddy Bear or AABA for Cobbler Cobbler).

Later the students can make up patterns using counting bears, foam shapes, or people. For people rhythms, the student links with another for Ti-Ti and stands alone for Ta. If you have a rest, the student can sit on the floor or curl up to take a “Z” on the floor. Students have great fun making new rhythms as a class or in groups.

POPSICLE STICKS for notation and composition games. Uses ta, rest and ti-ti.

FLASH CARD games. Have students perform rhythms off of the flash cards you hold. OR put several on the board and mix and match them

Don't forget the old THRESHOLD TO MUSIC charts by Mary Helen Richards. These are great for music literacy skills. Just do a couple every day and your youngest ones will be reading.

PATTERN MATCHING give each student a pattern and then you clap one and the students who have the pattern perform it OR they stand up when everyone echoes it. OR you give students patterns and they have to find the other people with their pattern by clapping it.

WHAT SONG AM I? Clap the rhythm and have the students identify the song! Then they can notate the rhythm or sing the song.

NAME COMPOSITIONS: Make a composition using the rhythm of the names of the students.

OR you can clap the rhythm and have the students with that rhythm in their name stand up.

Take turns clapping the different rhythms.

R-A-T-(rest) T-L-E-(rest) S-N-A-K-E spells RATTLESNAKE. I put each letter on post-it notes and then the students can put them in a line to represent the beats. But when you try to use the post-its as the steady beat it doesn't work. The students discover that they need to have a rest (and that rattle is a pair of 8ths). My favorite way to discover rest.

**PILLOWS** Zzzzzz You can use a pillow with a Z on it as an icon for rest. If you want you can put the symbol for quarter rest on the back. (From Mary Wright, one of my former students and 2007 graduate of SIU Carbondale)

**PEPSI and COKE** Use the bottles or cans of these beverages to represent the steady beat. You can change to stick notation and discover that Pepsi has TWO sounds on a beat. Mix the order of the bottle up and make new patterns to say and write. (From Christopher Ritz, one of my former students from Clarion University)

**HINT**—I never clap the steady beat—I keep the steady beat in fists or patsching and reserve clapping for rhythm. This helps eliminate confusion between the steady beat and the rhythm if you NEVER clap the steady beat...keep it somewhere else.

### Choosing Chants

#### **Ackabacka soda cracker**

Ackabacka soda cracker, ackabacka boo.  
Ackabacka soda cracker, out goes you!

#### **Bee, Bee, Bumblebee**

Bee, Bee, bumblebee,  
Stung a man upon his knee.  
Stung a pig upon his snout,  
I declare that you are out!

#### **Bubble gum**

Bubble gum, Bubble gum in a dish;  
How many pieces do you wish!  
1, 2, 3, etc. and you are not it.

#### **Eenie, meenie**

Eenie meenie minie mo, catch a tiger by the toe.  
If he hollers, let him go, Eenie meenie minie mo.  
(Variants are with “piggie” or “monkey”)

#### **Engine, Engine**

Engine, engine number nine,  
Going down Chicago line  
Do I get my money back?  
Yes, no, maybe so. Toot, toot, toot, toot.

### Jump Rope Rhymes

#### **Bluebells, cockleshells**

Bluebells, cockle shells, Eevie ivy, over;  
I like coffee, I like tea.  
I like the boys and the boys like me.  
Yes, no, maybe so.....

#### **Mabel, Mabel**

Mabel, Mabel, set the table,  
Don't forget the salt and pepper  
(jump double time)

#### **Postman, postman**

Postman, postman, do your duty.  
Send this letter to an American beauty.

Don't you stop and don't delay.  
Get it to her right away.  
(Red hot peppers!)

#### **Teddy Bear**

Teddy bear, teddy bear turn around,  
Teddy bear, Teddy bear, touch the ground.  
Teddy bear, teddy bear shine your shoe,  
Teddy bear teddy bear that will do.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear go upstairs,  
Teddy bear, Teddy bear say your prayers.  
Teddy bear, Teddy bear switch out the light.  
Teddy bear, Teddy bear say "Good-night"  
(G-O-O-D-N-I-G-H-T! Peppers!)