



## *Introduction to the Universal Language of Music*

Virtual Conference Library  
Virginia Montessori Association  
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### RESOURCES

Harvard study, *Universality and diversity in human song*. 2019  
<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/366/6468/eaax0868>

*Kid Songs Around the World*. Lisa Yannucci. 2016. [www.MamaLisa.com](http://www.MamaLisa.com)

*The Advanced Montessori Method – II. pp. 341-365*. Maria Montessori. The Netherlands: Montessori-Pierson Publ. Co. 2007.

Website video <https://www.montessoriorffmusic.com/>

### **Stories and music to encourage song, rhythm, movement, and play** (check Spotify and iTunes)

*The Loud Book* or *The Quiet Book*. Deborah Underwood, Renata Liwska.

*Up, Down, and Around*. Katherine Ayres, Nadine Bernard Westcott. Candlewick Press. 2008.

A read-aloud about nature, with opportunities for expressing the concept of high/low/around through gestures, movement, and pitch discrimination on the bells.

*In the Tall, Tall, Grass*. Denise Fleming. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 1991.

A read-aloud with many verbs to imitate in gestures and movement, or create string of rhythmic speech.

*From Head to Toe*. Eric Carle. Harper Collins. 1997.

*Jazz Baby*. Lisa Wheeler and R. Gregory Christie. Harcourt, Inc. 2007.

An interactive read-aloud book for introducing Jazz.

*I Got the Rhythm*. Connie S. Morrison. Bloomsbury. 2014

*Rainbow Crow*. Nancy Van Laan, Beatriz Vidal. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1989.

A read-aloud of a Native American legend, with text, songs, and repetitive chants.

*The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse*. Charlie Mackesy.

For choosing words and phrases for rhythmic speech.

*I'm Growing Up: Fingerplays, Action Songs, Singing Games, and Stories for Young Children*.

CDs and companion book. [www.dancingmasters.com](http://www.dancingmasters.com).

*Music for Creative Dance: Contrast and Continuum, Volume I*. Eric Chapelle.

CD <https://www.amazon.com/Music-Creative-Dance-Contrast-Continuum/dp/B0058W17PW>

*Chimes of Dunkirk: Great Dances for Children*. CD and companion book. New England Dance Masters.

2010. [www.dancingmasters.com](http://www.dancingmasters.com).

For children of all ages. Clear instructions and fun music.

AOSA, American Orff-Schulwerk Association [www.aosa.org](http://www.aosa.org) and world-wide regional chapters.



## SAMPLE LESSONS: Melody-Rhythm-Movement

### The five-note pentatonic scale

**Objective:** To provide an elemental tone pattern for singing and improvising

**Materials:** Song selections, instrument for bordun

**Age:** Any age

NOTE: Without the two half notes of the diatonic major scale, the pentatonic scale has no harmonic shifts. Therefore, the scale lends itself to improvisation and accompaniment and will always sound "right." The pentatonic pattern is common to many folk music traditions.

#### Process:

- These are pentatonic scales in the child's voice range. The high tonic is added as a repetition of the low tonic.

|               |          |    |    |          |    |          |   |   |
|---------------|----------|----|----|----------|----|----------|---|---|
|               | 1        | 2  | 3  | 4        | 5  |          |   |   |
| C pentatonic: | <u>c</u> | d  | e  | g        | a  | <u>c</u> |   |   |
|               | do       | re | mi | so       | la | do       |   |   |
| F pentatonic: |          |    |    | <u>f</u> | g  | a        | c | d |
| G pentatonic: |          |    |    | <u>g</u> | a  | b        | d |   |

- **Sing *Hot Cross Buns*** as a model song for the first three notes of a pentatonic scale.

e d c  
II: *Hot cross buns!* :||  
c c c c d d d d  
*One a penny, two a penny,*  
e d c  
*Hot cross buns!*

- Improve with **Question and Answer**.

c d e e d c e c e e—e d c  
*Where are you? Here I am. Can you hop? Yes, I can hop!*

- Sing songs with **five-tone** pentatonic melodies.

**Bow, Wow, Wow** Traditional

*Bow, wow, wow, whose dog art thou? Litt-le Tom-my Tin-ker's dog. Bow, wow, wow.*

**La Mariposa** Peruvian Rhyme

La ma-ri-po - sa en la co-ci - na ha-ce cho-co-la - te pa-ra su ve-ci - na.  
Translation: The butterfly in the kitchen is making chocolate for her neighbor.

## Playing a West-African rock-passing game

**Objective:** To strengthen the steady beat with a traditional song of the Akan culture

**Materials:** A rock or paper cup for each child

**Age:** 4 and up

### **Process:**

- Echo the song, pat or clap the beat.
- Practice the lift/put down motion, first in front and then putting down to the right.
- Continue the motion and, one at a time, introduce rock/paper cups.

### Obo Asi Me Nsa

Traditional West Africa

Ob - bwah see me sah, na - na, Oh - bwah see me sah.

Oh - bwah see me sah, na - na, Oh - bwah see me sah.

(Translation: "The rock has crushed my hand, Grandmother.")

### Exploration

- ♪ Change directions, first to the right, then to the left.
- ♪ Repeat in double tempo: pick-up on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> beats, put-down on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> beats).
- ♪ Come up with patterns between passing; include claps, pats, snaps;

## Rhythmic Building Bricks

**Objective:** To establish six speech rhythms as *rhythmic building bricks*

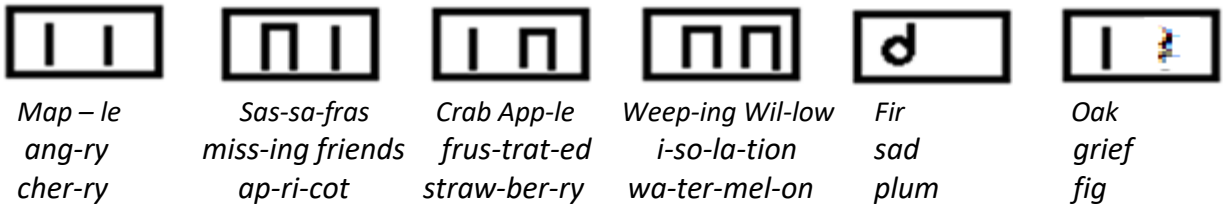
**Age:** 3 and up

### **Process:**

Choose names of various categories: animals, flowers, trees, foods, fruits, feelings and emotions etc.

- Say and clap the rhythm of the word.
- Whisper the word and clap it.
- Think the word and clap its rhythm.

Based on the group's interest or thematic focus, select a six names as rhythmic model words. Use these model words as *rhythmic building bricks* until children are secure in associating words to their respective rhythms.

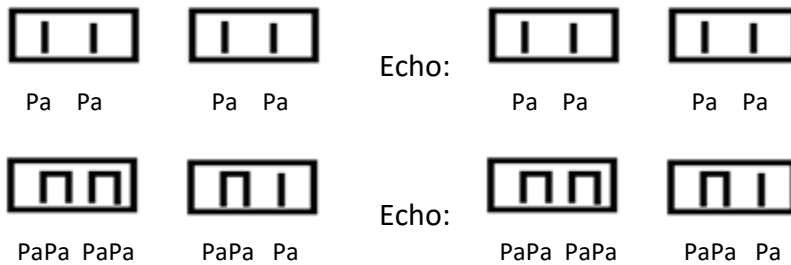


NOTE: These two-beat “bricks” are the cornerstone of elemental music. They derive from natural rhythmic instincts of all people. Words should be spoken clearly, with naturally flowing accents and rhythms, to express a distinct musicality in one’s native language.

## ECHO

### Introducing pat (Pa)

- Begin with **single 2-beat** rhythmic building bricks and progress toward various combinations.



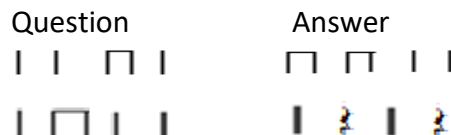
### Question and Answer exploration

**Objective:** To use rhythmic building bricks in guided improvisation

**Age:** 4 and up

**Process:**

- Play it like a game in pairs, small groups, or the entire class.
- Clap two rhythmic building bricks (4 beats), children echo.



### Exploration

- Same question:** Adult claps two 4-beat phrases to one child. The child answers by echoing the 1<sup>st</sup> phrase, but completing the 2<sup>nd</sup> phrase with a different rhythm pattern.

|       |                        |       |  |
|-------|------------------------|-------|--|
|       | Question               |       | Answer   |
| Adult | □       ○              | Child | □   □ □  |
|       | 1 <sup>st</sup> phrase |       | same 1 <sup>st</sup> phrase    improvised 2 <sup>nd</sup> phrase |

Repeat by giving a **different question** to each child.

**Longer phrases** of 8-beat rhythm patterns with imitated 1<sup>st</sup> phrase:

**Entire answer improvised:**

## Movement skills

**Objective:** To have children experience their movement possibilities  
To develop descriptive language

**Age:** Any age

**Process:**

- With walking as the starting point, integrate and verbalize childlike movement skills as they naturally occur or are introduced.

### Locomotor movements

|        |         |       |       |
|--------|---------|-------|-------|
| walk   | skip    | run   | crawl |
| gallop | hop     | leap  | roll  |
| slide  | slither | creep | march |
| prance | tiptoe  | glide |       |

### Nonlocomotor movements

|         |         |         |          |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| bend    | twist   | stretch | collapse |
| float   | dab     | carve   | melt     |
| flick   | swing   | turn    | burst    |
| wriggle | spin    | slash   | freeze   |
| press   | fall    | push    | lift     |
| bounce  | balance | sway    | curl     |

### Stillness

|       |     |           |     |
|-------|-----|-----------|-----|
| stand | sit | beginning | end |
|-------|-----|-----------|-----|

## Exploration

- ♪ Alternate a **skipping** drum beat with a walking beat; children adjust their movement by listening to the beat. Go back to slow motion walking whenever bubbles are popped.
- ♪ Introduce and alternate other **drum sounds** and invite children to listen and move accordingly: tapping the drum rim with the mallet handle for tip-toeing; making circular scraping sounds on the drum skin with the mallet handle for crawling etc. Each time, when the drum stops, children freeze in a shape.
- ♪ When drum stops, children form a **circle** around the adult who counts to three..
- ♪ **Circle game:** Children sit in a circle and pat the steady beat. One child chooses a movement around the circle (skipping, running, crawling etc.). The child lightly taps another child who begins a different movement skill around the circle.
- ♪ **Mirroring:** Adult faces the group and makes big, slow movements, - lifting one arm above head, stretch the other arm to the side, bending torso to side etc. Children mirror the movements. Silently or to flowing music.
- ♪ **Mirroring in pairs.** Discuss movements suitable for mirroring, - slow, not abrupt; not turning away from each other; choosing levels of high, medium, and low.
- ♪ **Developing jumps:** Stand with feet together, slightly bend the knees, straighten knees, lift heels off the floor, balance on tip-toes, return heels to floor, bending the knees. Increase tempo until it becomes a jump, one at a time, first on both feet, then alternately from right to left foot.

## Circle dance

**Objective:** To learn childlike circle dances

**Age:** 4 and up

### **Process:**

- In circle formation, turn pairs of children to each other as partners.
- Children sing *Pumpkin, Pumpkin*.
- Movement measure 1 and 2: pat-a-cakes R-hands, L-hands, both-hands, both-hands;
- Measure 3: hold hands and make a half turn;
- Measure 3: pat-clap-snap; on count 4, holding hands, make a ½ turn hop around oneself and face new partners.
- Simplify or augment as needed.

**Pumpkin, Pumpkin** I. Sieminski

Pump-kinm pump - kin, round and fat, Turn in - to a jack-o'-lan-tern, just like that.  
Clap, RHs, clap, LHs, clap, BHs, clap, BHs, Hold hands and male ½ turn, pat, clap, snap – HOP!