

Storytime Songs Newsletter

www.storytimesongs.com by Shauna Tominey

Fourth Edition

January 2006

Research

Music helps exercise ALL areas of your brain! Researchers at the University of Montreal used various brain imaging techniques to investigate brain activity during musical tasks. They found that sight-reading musical scores (playing music that you are looking at for the first time) and playing music both activate regions in **all four** of the cortex's lobes; and that parts of the cerebellum are also activated during those tasks.

Sergent, J., Zuck, E., Tenial, S., and MacDonall, B. (1992). Distributed neural network underlying musical sight reading and keyboard performance. *Science*, 257, 106-109.

Listening Bingo

Materials:

Tape recorder
Paper and crayons

Directions:

Tape record different sounds around the house (sink running, toilet flushing, door bell, vacuum cleaner, telephone ringing). Play them back and try to identify each of the sounds. Draw pictures of the sounds on paper and cover or cross out each picture when you hear them. Try taping voices of family members and friends and see if your child can identify who they are! This is also a fun classroom activity! Record the voices of each of the children in your classroom and let them guess their friends' voices!

Reader's Challenge

This month's challenge:

Theme: Putting on coats/mittens/hats

Choose the tune of a popular children's song (i.e. ABCs, Old MacDonald) and write your own words about putting on warm clothes. Submit your lyrics and the name of the chosen tune to newsletter@storytimesongs.com. The most creative response will be published in the next newsletter and the winner will receive a free copy of Fairy Tale Favorites: Storytime Songs for Children, a CD of 12 songs inspired by popular children's fairy tales.

Happy New Year!

Copy Cat

Directions: Take turns playing the "leader" and the "copy cat." The leader claps out a pattern. The copy cat tries to clap back the same pattern. As children are first learning this game, you can simplify patterns by counting the number of claps or clapping the syllables in your child's name. This game will help your child learn to hear and mimic different rhythms. It will help develop listening skills, following directions, taking turns, short-term memory skills, and more!

Adapt this game for toddlers:

Take turns making silly sounds. Imitate the sounds that your child makes and encourage them to make the sounds that you make.

Adapt this game for infants:

Imitate the noises and cooing sounds that your infant makes and notice their reaction. As your infant grows and develops, their awareness of the sounds that you make will develop also. They may start to imitate you!

Play I Spy... with your ears!

Music is all around us! You can hear music in birds chirping, the vroom vroom of cars, and even the telephone ringing. On your next outing, help your child identify as many "musical" sounds as you can. If you're feeling especially creative, put the sounds together into your own song (vroom, flush, whoosh-whoosh, tweet!) or use the following example: (Sing to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell"):

The car goes "vroom."

The car goes "vroom."

I hear music all around,

The car goes "vroom."

The phone goes "ring..."

My feet go "stomp..."

New Year's Resolutions

This year, why not resolve to bring more music into your home? Expose your child to many different types of music (rock, country, classical, jazz) and music from other cultures. Visit your local library and check out new CDs every week!

Make a Straw Reed

Materials:

Scissors
Plastic Drinking Straw

Directions:

Flatten two inches at the end of a plastic straw. Snip the tip of the straw to look like a "V." Put the "V" end of the straw in your mouth and press down with your lips (no teeth) so that the ends of the straw can touch and vibrate. Blow gently through the straw. When you are able to make a sound, try cutting the other end of the straw to make it shorter. Notice that the pitch changes when you do this! The shorter the straw, the higher the pitch! This activity will take patience. Good luck!



Guitar



Materials:

Small cardboard box or holiday tin
Paper Towel Tube
Rubber Bands
Tape (packaging, masking, or duct)

Directions:

Stretch the rubber bands across the box or tin. Secure them in place on either end with tape. Attach the paper towel tube to the box or tin with tape to form the neck of the guitar. Use markers or stickers to decorate. Strum away and have fun!

Tip:

Poke wooden chopsticks or dowel rods through the end of the paper towel tube to look like tuners!

Contact Us

Please send questions or comments to shauna@storytimesongs.com or visit www.storytimesongs.com for more information and free activities!