

Play is the most powerful way young children learn.

Every time you play, sing or read with young children they are learning about language.

The following activities have been designed for early childhood professionals to use as a starting point for developing children's early literacy skills through play.

Please feel free to adapt them for the home and with children of different ages.

Don't forget to record your own ideas, activities that worked really well, relevant songs and rhymes etc in the Notes section opposite.

Visit our website www.thelittlebigbookclub.com for more fun printable activities based on this book.

Engaging with Language and Literacy

Before reading the story with the children look carefully at the cover and ask the children what they think the book might be about.

It would be helpful if the children had an understanding of what an orchestra is before they hear the story.

- Look at posters and pictures of orchestras.
- Do any parents play a musical instrument? Invite them to share the instrument with the children.

Experience An Orchestra

- If possible invite the local high school orchestra to come and play for you.
- Involve the children in writing the invitation.
- Send thank you letters after the visit.
- Take photos while the orchestra is playing and use them to make a book recounting the experience.

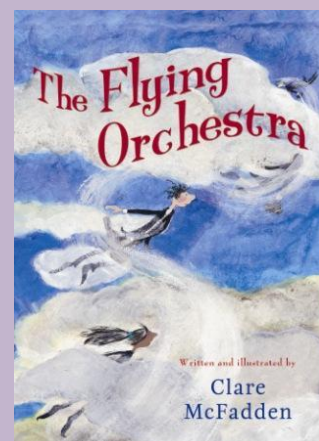
Musical Treasure Hunt

- After reading the story send the children on a musical treasure hunt.
- What objects can they find in the room or outside that will make music by being tapped, banged, blown etc...
- Go outside and find musical instruments provided by nature.

Discovering Through Play

Explore Music

- After listening to the story play different types of music to the children, eg, jazz, classical, popular etc..
- Parents, your local library and the internet can be a great resource for finding music.
- After listening to the music encourage the children to think about when would be an appropriate time to hear that particular music, eg, when a baby is born, when someone has a cold, cooing dinner, riding a bike etc....



The Flying Orchestra Clare McFadden

Notes

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- Explore the musical vocabulary in the book:
 - What is a sonata, a concerto etc...

Exploring Our World

Musical Instruments

Look carefully at the different instruments illustrated in the book

- Help the children make simple instruments to play.
- Use recycled materials.
- Have books, pictures and real instruments to help you.

Musical Notation

- Show children examples of musical notation.
- Talk about what it means and represents.
- Provide paper and black textas for children to record their own musical notation.
- Provide instruments so children can play a tune and then record it.

Orchestral Music

- Look at the illustrations of the orchestra.
- Find out about different types of instruments with the children, for example, brass, strings etc...
- Use books, posters, videos, the internet and personal experiences as resources.
- Play different types of music and let the children move and dance to each one.
- Talk about which types of music/dance they liked and why.

In the early years children are learning the foundations of language. Providing them with endless opportunities to hear patterns, sounds and the rhythm of language will help them develop their language skills.

Clapping Songs

- Let the children explore the parts of their body that can be an instrument, for example, stamping feet, clicking fingers, clapping hands, voices etc...
- Learn partner clapping songs with the children.
The traditional pattern goes:
 - Hands together (own)
 - Right palms clap (partner)
 - Hands together (own)
 - Left palms clap (partner)
 - Hands together (own)
 - Both palms clap (partner)
 - Repeat

Related Lesson Plans:

The Animal Undie Ball By Ruth Paul

Buffy: An Adventure Story By Bob Graham

Useful Websites and Links:

For Printable Activities:

www.thelittlebigbookclub.com

For interactive information and games:

www.nyphilkids.org

(New York Philharmonic Orchestra)

This pattern can be adapted to be as simple or complex as you like, eg,

- Clap own hands
- Clap partners hands
- Clap own hands etc...
- Try first clapping to well know songs and rhymes before introducing new songs.
- Songs with a steady, simple beat work best. Try:
 - B I N G O
 - Humpty Dumpty
 - Row Row Row Your Boat
- When the children have mastered the clapping pattern you might want to try some songs from different cultures, eg, African folk songs

Enjoying Imaginative Play

Musical Concerts

Set up a stage area inside or outside where the children can 'perform'.

You may want to:

- Use chalk or masking tape on the ground to outline an area to be used as a stage.
- Provide chairs or cushions for the audience to sit on.
- Make a ticket booth. Let the children make tickets for people to buy. Provide money, a cash register and a telephone for phone bookings.
- Get the children to make posters advertising their upcoming performances.
- Provide dress ups for the children to use.
- Make microphones out of cardboard tubes.
- Let the children 'play' instruments they have made.
- Play music for the children to perform to or let them create their own.

To help children know when it is their turn on the stage you could try this idea:

- Draw large letters (or numbers) on pieces of cardboard.
- Attach each letter to a piece of ribbon so it can be worn around the neck.
- Give one alphabet necklace to each child.
- The teacher can then introduce the children to perform on stage, eg, "Ladies and Gentlemen please welcome Miss A and Mr B..."
- As the letters are announced the child or children have their turn on the stage.
- At the end of their performance the teacher can thank them, the audience can clap and new children can be introduced.

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