

🎵 Sing into Reading! 🎵

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Visit www.Nancymusic.com for free song downloads and information, or to order Nancy's recordings.

Why sing? Quite simply, children *need* music to fully develop, and these days children have fewer and fewer opportunities for singing in their lives. Singing simple early childhood songs, such as nursery rhymes, involve even the youngest children in language.

- **Music Powers the Brain:** Simply singing with a child connects neuropathways, and increases the ability to retain information. It builds a strong sense of rhythm, which in turn leads to a better ability to understand and produce language.
- **Music Influences Us:** Advertisers know this! That's why they spend millions of dollars on jingles. You can use music to influence children in positive ways. Using music, you can change a mood, stimulate creativity, and direct energy toward movement or stillness.
- **Music Connects Us:** Music can bring together a diverse group of people, and by simply singing together, give them a shared experience.
- **Music Transports Us:** Music transports us in time and emotion. It can take us to far away lands, or back into our own childhoods. As we sing and do finger plays, we are brought into the child's world, where everything is newly discovered.
- **Music Comforts Us:** Repeating the same songs in story time give children security, and memories that can be called on to comfort for a lifetime. Starting your story time with a theme song, singing a lullaby, and using an ending song are just some of the ways you can provide this musical comfort.

“Advanced brain-scan technology reveals that when children participate in music, the brain ‘lights up like a Christmas tree’ in many different areas.”

- *Young Children*, March 2006

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What Are The Six Early Reading Skills?

- Vocabulary- Knowing the names of things
- Print motivation- Being interested in and enjoying books
- Print awareness- Noticing print, how to handle a book, how to follow words on a page
- Letter knowledge- Knowing letters are different from each other, knowing their names and sounds
- Narrative Skills- Being able to describe things and events and tell stories
- Phonological awareness- Being able to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words

How Does Singing Help Teach Children These Skills?

- Our brains are uniquely wired to respond to music, from *before* the time we are born.
- Because singing is interactive, it involves even the youngest children in language.
- Children learn language through repetition, and as songs are repeated the rhythm of the words is internalized.
- Singing brings a natural awareness of words, as each syllable or sound in a word gets a different note.
- Nursery rhymes and finger plays present a wide vocabulary, and teach sentence structure, story concepts and comprehension.
- The only things we remember word-for-word from our childhoods, are childhood songs and some rhymes!
- Children learn oral language before written language, and the more experience they have with oral language, the better prepared they will be for interpreting written words.
- Active participation in music (singing) increases retention, builds memory, and actually helps grow the brain in young children!
- Because children naturally love to sing, there is no “teaching,” just doing!

How Can I Help Children Build Early Literacy Skills Through Singing?

This is the fun part! You are probably already involved in activities that will lay the foundation for early literacy. So just sing and have fun!

- Sing throughout your day. Research shows that the more music a child experiences, the greater the benefits.
- Play “complex” music in the classroom. Examples of complex music are classical music or singing rounds. There are some wonderful classical recordings available just for young children.
- Make up songs, or sing familiar songs like “The Wheels on the Bus” using children’s names.
- Make up songs about the foods as you prepare them. Emphasize and exaggerate the letter sounds.
- Collect or make rhythm instruments, and use them to reinforce syllables and keep a steady beat as you sing. The same can be done with clapping.
- Use “books that sing” often as a daily part of your circle time (suggested titles on resource page). Ask your children's librarian to help you find them in the picture book section.
- Sing traditional folk songs with your children, as they bring with them a knowledge of our culture and language. Expand on them. For example, if you sing a song from another land, get out a map or globe and show children where the song comes from. Ask questions, and use the opportunity to build those narrative skills!

🎵 The Music and Early Literacy Connection 🎵

Language Acquisition to Early Literacy

Role of Music

Babies develop sense of hearing while still in the womb



Babies hear and respond to music, which is their first language

Babies are drawn to oral language through rhythm, repetition, and rhyme.



Songs have rhythm, repetition, and rhyme built in.

Babies and young children retain language based on repetition. Finger plays teach vocabulary



Songs have repetition built in
Finger plays sung invite children to join in, vocabulary is better retained.

Young children begin to learn that words are made up of smaller sounds



Melodies divide words into smaller parts, and present language in patterns that make sense to the brain example: Alphabet makes no sense until presented in a song where the letters are learned and retained in a pattern

Young Children notice print, understand it links to words they hear; follow print to learned nursery rhymes and songs to connect the two.



Children already know melodies to nursery rhymes, and can participate in "reading"
*example: children are more likely to sing *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*, than say the words if simply read from a book

Children learn sounds of letters and phonemes in preparation for learning to read



Songs naturally divide words into syllables and sounds, so they are internalized. The built in repetition and rhyme increase understanding and retention.

Songs from
Plant A Little Seed CD
by Nancy Stewart

18. Dem Bones

pat thighs in rhythm and hold up a picture of a dinosaur after each verse

DEM BONES, DEM BONES, DEM DINOSAUR BONES (3 times)
PUT 'EM ALTOGETHER AND THIS IS WHAT YOU GET!

19. Plant a Little Seed

PLANT A LITTLE SEED (one hand makes a loose fist for pot, other hand moves down through pot in three movements in time with music)
WATCH IT GROW (hand comes back through pot in three movements with music)
SOON WE WILL HAVE A VEGETABLE (move fist over fist upward in time with the music)
* you can either have pictures of vegetables and simply show, or with older children, give a hint and have them guess.

Other versions for fruit or fruit *and* vegetables:

Variation 1: PLANT A LITTLE SEED, WATCH IT ROOT,
SOON WE WILL HAVE A PIECE OF FRUIT

Variation 2: PLANT A LITTLE SEED, WATCH IT SPROUT,
LET'S ALL TRY TO FIGURE IT OUT.

20. Fruit Song

by Marylee Sunseri, used by permission

(sing to melody of army chant)

MAMA, MAMA, CAN I EAT THIS JUICY FRUIT IN FRONT OF ME

slap a rhythm on thighs, and hold up a picture of a fruit after each verse. two year-olds can just say the name of the fruit. Older children can clap and then count the syllables. You can also give a hint before showing the picture. Children love this song, and can sing it *many* times!

21. I'll Drive a Dump Truck

Hold up pictures of trucks and substitute names of each one,
as you keep a rhythm by slapping thighs

I'LL DRIVE A DUMP TRUCK, DUMP TRUCK, DUMP TRUCK
I'LL DRIVE A DUMP TRUCK, ALL DAY LONG

Numbers before song titles above refer to track number on workshop CD, (not Plant a Little Seed CD)

22. My Aunt Came Back

traditional

AGE: 3-8

INSTRUCTIONS: Teacher sings each line, and children echo. Actions are accumulative. So as each new verse is sung, the new actions is added to the others. This makes for a very silly and fun song! When singing with younger children, limit actions (verses) to three, or how ever many the children can do without becoming frustrated.

Oh my aunt came back (children echo)
From old Japan (children echo)
And she brought me back (children echo)
A paper fan (children echo) right hand open, fanning back and forth

Oh my aunt came back (children echo)
From old Algiers (children echo)
And she brought me back (children echo)
A pair of shears (children echo) left hand makes scissors that open and close

Oh my aunt came back (children echo)
From Holland too(children echo)
And she brought me back (children echo)
A wooden shoe (children echo)

Oh my aunt came back from Old Chile
And she brought me back (children echo)
An itchy flea (scratch various places while continuing to do other motions)

Oh my aunt came back (children echo)
From the county fair (children echo)
And she brought me back (children ehco)
A rocking chair (lean forward and back as if rocking)

Oh my aunt came back (children echo)
From the city zoo (children echo)
And she brought me back (children echo)
A monkey like you (children echo) point to children

I Have A Cat- a chant (spoken, not on a CD)

teacher says each line, and children echo and copy movements

I have a cat (cross arms in front of body)
My cat is fat (arms rounded in front of body)
I have a cat (cross arms in front of body)
My cat wears a hat (hands form hat above head)
I have a cat (cross arms in front of body)
My cat caught a bat (fingers make wings that flutter)
I have a cat (cross arms in front of body)
Meow!

Repeat with other voices, low, high, robot)

www.Nancymusic.com Website Overview

Below is a summary of the activities available to you on my website. That means they are free to you, 24 hours a day, to use as often as you want. You can print out as many activities, make as many CD's of the songs, and use these materials in your classroom or story time as much as you want. If you don't have access to a computer, just go to your local library. What a deal!

How to Use these Songs

1. You may use these songs in any way you like, as long as it's not for profit.
2. Make play lists and CD's to fit your needs.
3. Copy CD's and distribute to parents, teachers, or librarians.
4. Make CD's and give as door prizes or for raffles in fundraisers
5. For teachers or librarians: Let parents know which songs you are using, and give website so parents can use to reinforce skills at home. Repetition build early literacy skills!

Song of the Month

- Listen to a new song every month, and save it to a file or CD. Print out the sheet music, lyrics, and guitar chords.
- Print out the activity sheets, patterns, and prop patterns to go with the songs.
- Visit the related links (example: on one song, Los Animales, there is a link to a translation site where you can get instant translations to words or phrases you type in).
- Access all of the past songs of the month. As of 9/09, there are over 100 songs.

Rhythm Instruments

- Instructions for making kid and teacher-tested homemade instruments that actually sound good!
- List of songs and activities for use with specific rhythm instruments
- Ways to incorporate rhythm instruments into your story times.
- General tips on making and using rhythm instruments.
- Instructions for having your own Music Box Makeover Party (a fun teacher event).

Activities

- Companion activities for Nancy's other recordings
- Printable activity sheets related to concert topics
- General information for teachers and parents

Links

Links to other helpful websites with lots of free ideas for your children's art and music. I have specifically tried to find websites that offer free printable materials and activities.

Internet Help

My site is loaded with general website know-how which will help you when navigating other websites. Step-by-step instructions will tell you how to:

- Save the songs to your computer
- Write the songs to CD's if you have a CD writer in your computer
- Print out the pages so they look good with your printer

www.Nancymusic.com Songs of the Month January 2001 – September 2009

Fingerplays & Misc.	Fingerplays & misc. (cont.)	Instruments	Languages & Letters	Activities	Seasonal & Holidays	Movement
5 Coyotes Flower Song Scallop Song 2 Big Crows Valentine Song Nocturnal Animals Little Cat Gung Hay Far Choy Trees Wheels Thread A Needle Five Pretty Gourds Humpty Dumpty Make a Bit of Butter When Ducks get Up in the Morning Five Little Dragons Tingalayo The Gift In Our Solar System Felt Board Train Song Thinking Cap There Was a Tree Rocks in the Crust of the Earth Circle Round Easy Habits Five Little Snowmen One Little Dragonfly Little Bitty Bug Easy habits One, Two	Bluebird Through My window A hunting We Will Go Fishies To Market, To Market I Like Sandwiches Keeping the Germs Away	Listen to the Drum Egg Shaking Song Make A Little Rhythm Shake Your Apples The Birthday Train	Little Cat (ASL) Los Animales Gung Hay Fat Choy Bonjour, mon ami I Love You, Mom (ASL) Apple and An Ant Just :Like Me (ASL) Colors of Winter (ASL) Father's Day Song (ASL) Es Un Dia Hello My Friends (ASL)	Let's Go to the Market Fuzzy Slippers Nocturnal Animals Backyard Detective Rhyme Time Row Your Boat and Things That Go Apple Tasting Fun Bears Shapes Humpty Dumpty Ladybug Spots Can You Sit in a Circle Clapping in the Castle Cows are in the Castle Five Little Dragons Who Would Like to Buy My Flowers? Hey There/ What are you Thankful For Take A Walk Around The Room Singin' the Color Blues Easy Habits Who Has a Penny? Lots of Cars Four Little Paper Dolls Henry the Dog	Who Will Be My Valentine? Valentine Song Hee Na Nee Na Our Thanksgiving Day Ramadan Winter Dance Gung Hay fat Choy Nocturnal Animals Limbo Under the Spider's Web Two Big Crows (Big Black Crow) Celebrate Eid Colors of Winter Leprechauns and Shamrocks Pumpkin Farm Summer and Winter What are You Thankful For? Star Shine Bright A Season for Singing Mother's Day Song Father's Day Song Pass the Potato January's Here See the Baby Jesus Celebrating Holi Birthday Train I Have a Little Box I Am A Camel Five Little Snowmen	Can You Nod Your Head? Sea Life Dance Winter Dance I'm hopping like a Bunny Limbo under the Spider's Web Listen to the Drum Sticky Bubblegum Can You Sit in a Circle Dancing Rainbow Colors Clapping in the Castle Dinosaurs in Cars Fly Little Bird Elbow Room Take a Walk Around the Room January's Here Dancing Pajamas When I Hear the Music Ants in Your Pants Dinosaur Dance Floor

Workshop Songs from www.Nancymusic.com

All lyrics, activities, sheet music and guitar chords, and any prop patterns available on website

*Early literacy skills noted for each song on this sheet

1. Apple and An Ant - printable pictures teach letters, **vocabulary, print awareness**
2. Let's Go to the Market - simple song uses familiar groceries or pantry items, builds **all six early literacy skills!**
3. Egg Shaking Song - lyrics direct children to build rhythm skills and **vocabulary**
4. Dinosaurs in Cars - movement, **phonological awareness**
5. Five Little Dragons - **print awareness, print motivation**, printable 8X10 accordion book with instructions
6. Who Has a Penny? - game builds listening skills, cooperation, problem-solving **vocabulary**
7. Bluebird Through My Window - counting, colors, easy circle game, song variation included good for infants (visual tracking)
8. Bears - printable 8X10 pictures of bears, and words **Letter knowledge, print awareness**
9. Four Little Paper Dolls - printable pattern and instructions can be little folding book, **print awareness**
10. A Hunting We Will Go - patterns for nesting boxes prop or printable pages, **phonological awareness**
11. Colors of Winter - Sign Language song teaches colors. Printable pages for props, instrumental track included
12. Gung Hay Fat Choy - Chinese New Year song finger play. instrumental track included
13. Who Will be My Valentine? - Pairs matching game, can be modified for year-round use, **print awareness**
14. Pass the Potato - St. Patrick's Day song uses printable words and pictures to introduce holiday, simple circle game, **print awareness, vocabulary**
15. Hello My Friends - Simple sign language song great for opening song in story or circle time
16. To Market, To Market - printable 8X10 pages for teacher book, and little books for children, **phonological awareness**
17. One, Two - good song for infants, visual tracking, **vocabulary**

*These are only a few of more than 100 free songs available at www.Nancymusic.com

🎵 Resources 🎵

Books

- *The I Can't Sing Book*, by Jackie Silberg– fun and easy ways to make music at home and just “play “ with music.
- *Baby Rhyming Time*, by Linda Ernst book and CD-Rom includes book ideas, rhymes, songs and music, props, and more that can be used in library programs. Also includes information on latest information on babies’ brain development.
- **Books That Sing**—There are hundreds of beautiful, wonderful, funny and touching picture books based on traditional favorite songs. They are always a hit, and you can check them out from the library. Here are a very few of my favorites. You will find your own!

Old MacDonald’s Farm, by Jessica Sounami

A Hunting We Will Go, by John Langstaff

If You’re Happy and You Know It, by David A. Carter

What Shall We Do When We All Go Out, illustrated by Shari Halpern

The Itsy Bitsy Spider, by Iza Trapani (many other story song books by this author)

The Farmer In the Dell, illustrated by Kathy Parkinson

Go Tell Aunt Rhody, illustrated by Alikei (many others by this illustrator)

Recordings

- Wee Sing series of books and recordings– provide an excellent collection of traditional children's songs
- Nancy Stewart - available at www.Nancymusic.com
- Raffi– Anything by this well-known children’s singer
- Marylee Sunseri - wonderful themed recordings available at CDBaby.com and at www.Nancymusic.com
- Charlotte Diamond
- The Wiggles

Websites

- www.Nancymusic.com free songs and activities to download, instructions for homemade instruments, links to many other useful websites.
- www.Preschoolexpress.com– The legendary Jean Warren has created a wonderful website bursting with pre-school activities including songs, arts and crafts, and ideas. You’ll want to go back again and again!
- Www.EnchantedLearning.com - the BEST site for information and printable materials
- Google the following for information on brain research as it relates to music and early childhood: music brain research babies; Mozart effect; benefits music early childhood development..
- www.Nellieedge.com: Nellie Edge has free little books to download, and links to articles about music and early literacy.

Articles and information on Music and Early Literacy

- <http://www.songsforteaching.com/lb/literacymusic.htm>
- <http://www.menc.org/networks/genmus/litarticles.html>
- <http://www.earlyliterature.ecsd.net/>