

# A Playful Approach to Teaching Preschool and Kindergarten Music

Dr. Heather Nelson Shouldice (she/her)  
Eastern Michigan University – [hshouldi@emich.edu](mailto:hshouldi@emich.edu)  
[www.everydaymusicality.com](http://www.everydaymusicality.com)

## I. Introduction

### Are You Happy?

In swing style

Beth Bolton

Hel - lo - - - - ev-ry-bo-dy, are you hap-py? Tell me now. \_\_\_ Are you hap-py?

Hel - lo - - - - ev-ry-bo-dy, are you hap-py? Tell me now! \_\_\_

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## II. Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

- Based on how young children develop and learn.
- Involves meeting young children where they are
- Learning through play!

## III. Audiation...

- means the hearing and comprehension of music in the mind.
- involves a sense of tonal/rhythm syntax.
- is the ability to think in music.
- involves prediction.

## IV. Importance of Sequential Learning

- Music/Language learning = Parallel processes!
- Five vocabularies: Listening, Speaking, Thinking/Conversing, Reading, Writing

## V. Informal Guidance (vs. Formal Instruction)

- Creating an environment for musical interactions
- Music play!
- No expectations of "correctness"

## Helping Students Develop Musical Listening Vocabulary

- Model & move! (Sing/chant for your students, not with your students!)
  - Don't "teach"; Guide and play!
  - Songs and chants without words
  - Variety of tonalities and meters
    - We learn what something is by learning what it is not!
  - LOTS of flow movement (help students feel the space between the beats)
  - Help students develop a sense of "home"/resting tone (singing 5-1 at the end of songs, leaving out the last note periodically, singing directions on R.T.)
- Amy (Experimental Songs & Chants)
    - slow flow vs. bouncy beat with body parts, informal tonal patterns

### Amy

Edwin E. Gordon

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- Loving Lydian/Chop, Chop, Chippety Chop
  - pretend to stir soup with flow, chop ingredients to beat

### Loving Lydian?

Heather Nelson Shouldice

D       E       D       A       D       E       D       A       D

- The Grasshopper and the Elephant (Jump Right In Bk. 1)/In the Tub (MP)
  - pretend to paint (flow, +pulse), informal rhy. patterns, strong/gentle movement

### The Grasshopper and the Elephant

Doug Nichol

Way down south where ba - na - nas grow, A grass - hop - per stepped on an el - e - phant's toe. The  
el - e - phant said with tears in his eyes, "Pick on some - bo - dy your own size."

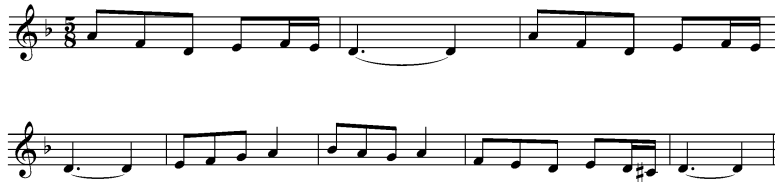
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- Bumble Bee/Buggy Ride (Music Play)
  - continuous flow, informal tonal patterns, bee puppet+resting tone

- Winter Day (Experimental Songs & Chants)
  - flow, "audiate" tonal patterns, freeze + resting tone on bell/tonebar

### Winter Day

Edwin E. Gordon

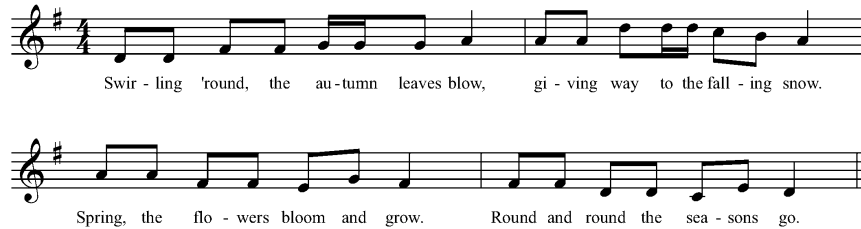


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- Go and Stop (MP)
  - flow, beat, body awareness (also "Move and Freeze", "Shake It")
- Seasons Round
  - "sleeping game"—echo "yoo-hoo" (voice exploration OR 5-1)

### Seasons Round

Heather N. Shouldice



- Butterfly (BB)
  - flow with die-cuts, bound/free movement, RT w/puppet, Individual RT?

### Butterfly

Beth Bolton



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# Helping Students Develop Musical "Speaking" Vocabulary

- Importance of singing, chanting, and movement
- Sense of Context! (resting tone, macro/microbeat)
- Patterns = words
  - Tonal and rhythm separately
- Importance of individual response

Tonal Goals: singing voice, sense of resting tone, vocabulary of tonal patterns

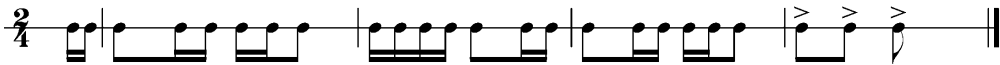
Rhythmic Goals: continuous flow, beat competency, vocabulary of rhythm patterns

## •Follow Me (Experimental Songs & Chants)

- flow + pat, "their part", voice exploration, echo rhythm patterns

### Follow Me!

Edwin E. Gordon



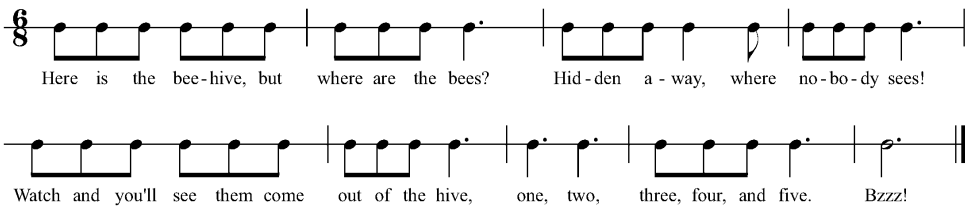
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## •Here is the Beehive (Music Play)

- flow, hand motions, echo rhythm patterns, voice exploration, "audiate"

### Here is the Beehive

Traditional



## •Jumping (Music Play)

- bean bags- flow, drop+resting tone, pulse beat; swing arms+jump, audiate

### Jumping

Edwin E. Gordon



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- Winter Day (Experimental Songs & Chants)
  - resting tone (ideas: button, bubbles, toy toss)

- Old John the Rabbit
  - resting tone ("oh yes")- solos with echo microphone

### Old John the Rabbit

Source Unknown

Old John the Rab - bit, Oh yes. Old John the Rab - bit, Oh yes. Had a  
 migh - ty bad ha - bit, Oh yes. Of get - ting in my gar - den, Oh yes. And  
 eat - ing up my peas, Oh yes. And cut - ting down my cab - bage, Oh yes. He  
 ate to - ma - toes, Oh yes. And sweet po - ta - toes, Oh yes. And if I live, Oh yes. To  
 see next fall, Oh yes. I won't plant, Oh yes. A gar - den at all, Oh yes.

- Hickety Pickety (Music Play)
  - flow w/body parts, rhythm patterns- individuals w/bee

### Hickety Pickety

Traditional

Hick - e - ty pick - e - ty bum - ble bee, can you move your arms with me?  
 (echo a rhythm for me?) (make a rhythm for me?)

- Popcorn (Music Play)
  - big/little beats, move body parts, echo rhythm patterns, play beat on instr.

### Popcorn

Dinah Johnson, Wendy H. Valerio

My feet love the rhy - thm of the pop - corn! Pop, pop - corn, pop, pop - corn! My  
 feet love the rhy - thm of the pop - corn! Pop, pop - corn, pop, pop, pop!

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• Clackety Clack (MP)

- CFM, voice exploration, echo rhythm patterns, beat train

## Clackety Clack

Dinah Johnson/Wendy H. Valerio

Clack - e - ty clack, clack - e - ty clack, the train is chug - ging down the track,  
choo, choo, choo, choo, choo, clack - e - ty, clack - e - ty clack!

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Other ideas for helping students feel beat:

- partner row (+ rhythm stick), partner tap (one, other, both), sledding, pirate ship

• Scrunchee: My Mother, Your Mother (MP); Hippopotamus (BB)

- move to big/little beats, echo rhythm/tonal patterns

## My Mother, Your Mother

Traditional

My mother, your mother live a-cross the way. Ev'-ry night they have a chat and this is what they say!

## Hippopotamus

Beth Bolton

I'm a hip-po - pot - a - mus, liv - ing hap - pi - ly in a great big lake. I'm a hip-po -  
pot - a - mus on the bot - tom - us of a lake. All the oth - ers in the jun - gle can - not beat  
sum - mer heat. I'm so glad I'm in the wat - er, ver - y cool, in my pool.

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- Hop Old Squirrel
  - big/little beats, major patterns, play beat on bells/tonebars (I-V)

## Hop Old Squirrel

Traditional

Musical notation for "Hop Old Squirrel" in 2/4 time, featuring a melody with eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are: "Hop old squirrel, ei-dle dum, ei-dle dum. Hop old squirrel, ei-dle dum dum." The second line of music continues with: "Hop old squirrel, ei-dle dum, ei-dle dum. Hop old squirrel, ei-dle dum dee."

- High, High Hill
  - tonal pattern game, model chord roots

## High, High Hill

Source Unknown

Musical notation for "High, High Hill" in 4/4 time, featuring a melody with quarter and eighth notes. Chord roots I, V, and I are indicated above the notes. The lyrics are: "There's some-one stand-ing on a high, high hill. I won-der who it could be. There's some - one stand-ing on a high, high hill who's e - cho - ing me! (sing - ing for me!)"

- Scarves: Pennsylvania Dreaming (MP), Snowflake (ESC), Delibes Pizzicati, Firecracker
  - flow, resting tone; pulse beat, voice exploration; movement

## Pennsylvania Dreamin'

Beth M. Bolton

Musical notation for "Pennsylvania Dreamin'" in 6/8 time, featuring a melody with quarter and eighth notes. The notation consists of two staves.

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- Tarantella (from "Don Gato" album)
  - beat movement, label same/different parts of song

\* "Don Gato," "You Are My Sunshine," and "Simple Gift" CDs available at [www.giamusic.com](http://www.giamusic.com)

## Helping Students Develop Musical “Conversing” Vocabulary

Improvise!

- rhythm patterns
- tonal patterns
- melodies

- Rhythm Conversation

- create rhythm patterns with “Peepers”

- Hickety Pickety

- toss bee to individuals to teach you/class a rhythm pattern

- High, High Hill

- student on the hill creates a tonal pattern for you/class to echo

- Nanny Goat

- big/little beats, hop, echo tonal patterns, instrument expl., make up a song!

## Things to Consider...

### Physical Set-up:

- On the floor!
- In a circle
- Space for movement

### Engaging Students Playfully:

- Movement
- Imagination
- Props
- Games

### Planning the Lesson:

- Variety of tonalities/meters
- Variety of activities
- Pacing
- Individual response

## Resources

Bailey, J. (2002). Sing-to-kids songbook. Self-published on [TeachersPayTeachers.com](http://TeachersPayTeachers.com).

Bluestine, E. (2001). The ways children learn music. Chicago: GIA Publications.

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Early Childhood Music and Movement Association: [www.ecmma.org](http://www.ecmma.org)

National Association for the Education of Young Children: [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Gordon Institute for Music Learning: [www.giml.org](http://www.giml.org)

Alliance for Active Music Making: [www.allianceamm.org](http://www.allianceamm.org)