

Why add music teaching to your Phonics Teaching Toolkit?

It is well documented that musical activity can help to promote many aspects of literacy learning:

- phonological awareness (the ability to hear, say and manipulate sounds)
- listening
- reading
- memory
- sequencing and predicting
- attention and comprehension

Many Early Years and KS1 teachers up and down the country use songs, rhymes and actions to support their phonics teaching.



What can musical activity do for your pupils?

- **Stimulate the brain**
(Schlaug et al.2005)
- **Bring benefits to speech processing**
(Patel,2014)
- **Assist memory recall**
(Parbery-Clark et al. 2009)
- **Help with coordination**
(Slater et al.2013)
- **Improve auditory skills**
Putkinen et al. 2013)
- **Promote imagination**
(Welch et al. 2011)
- **Help build children’s confidence**
(Ofsted. 2012)
- **Help engender a sense of achievement**
(Salimpoor et al. 2013)
- **Encourage social skills**
(Gerry et al. 2012)
- **Increase attention**
(Dewi et al. 2015, Putkinen et al. 2013)
- **Increase ability to detect sound in ‘noise’**
(Slater et al. 2015)

“Speech and music have a number of shared processing systems. Musical experiences, which enhance processing can therefore impact on the perception of language, which in turn impacts on learning to read. Active engagement with music sharpens the brain’s early encoding of linguistic sound...”

Professor Susan Hallam, The Power of Music, Music Education Council 2015

“Listening and engaging in musical activity reinforces children’s awareness of speech segmentation.”

Francoise et al. 2013



Wiltshire Music Connect commissioned an action research project led by Jacki Pattenden working with three Wiltshire Primary Schools and their Year 1 class teachers.

The project demonstrated that teaching specific types of music games and songs as part of a multi-faceted approach to phonics teaching had a positive impact on development of children's literacy and other key skills, particularly in the following key areas:

Phonics teaching

the musical activities and songs promoted key skills including pitch discrimination, fluency, memory, melodic and rhythmic patterning and sequencing. Starting a phonics session with a short musical activity helped to focus pupils' concentration and readiness for learning.

Pupil engagement

case studies, teacher and teaching assistant reviews all showed that pupils enjoyed the songs, activities and games.

Listening skills

schools reported an increase in listening skills as pupils began to understand the concept of pitch-matching their singing voice to others and to listen in a meaningful way to determine the pulse of a song or piece of music.

Self-esteem, well-being and confidence

schools noted the positive effect the songs and activities had in these areas. They reported that the activities promoted the importance of listening to your peers, sharing, turn-taking and cooperation.

Behaviour and classroom management

it was observed that the activities settled classes and had an overall positive impact on the atmosphere within a class.

Impact on wider curriculum

participants increased their use of singing across the curriculum; during maths, in circle time activities, and to manage behaviour at transition times.

Impact on teacher confidence

all three schools reported increased confidence amongst teachers and teaching assistants in delivering music sessions.

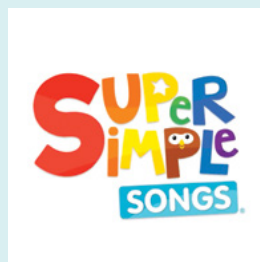


Why not try these resources:

Super Simple Songs
– Apple and Banana Song

**Super Simple
Monsters – Series 1
episode 9**

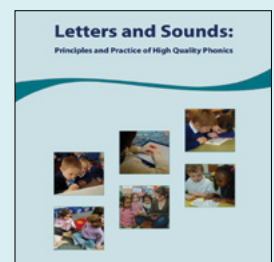
www.bit.ly/applesba



Department for Education and
Skills 2007

Letters and Sounds

[www.bit.ly/
govlettersandsounds](http://www.bit.ly/govlettersandsounds)



Bug Club
Bug Club Phonics
www.bit.ly/bugphonics



Music Express
**Primary Music
Express series**

www.bit.ly/musexpress



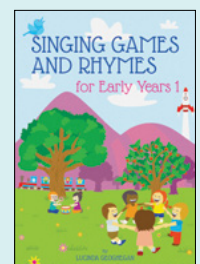
Floppy's Phonics Songs
**Floppy's Phonics
Sounds
and Letters**

www.floppysphonics.com

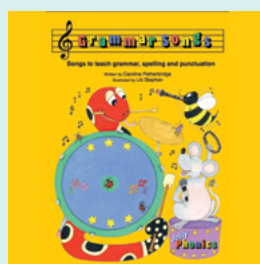


National Youth Choirs of
Scotland publications
**Singing Games and
Rhymes for Early
Years**

www.bit.ly/scotyouthchoirs

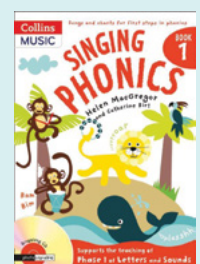


Jolly Phonics
**Jolly Phonics and
grammar songs**
www.bit.ly/jollygrammar

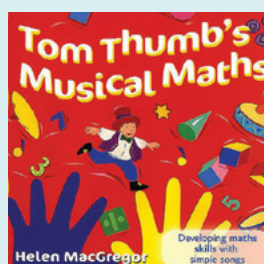


Collins Music
**Singing Phonics
Books 1-3**

www.bit.ly/collinsphonics



Collins Music
**Tom Thumb's
Musical Maths**
www.bit.ly/coltomthumb



Out of the Ark
**Sing your way
to a fabulous
phonics lesson**
www.bit.ly/fabsingphonics



Why not try one or two of the activities used in our project?

Activity:

Pitch and match singing

Jump straight in and sing a question to your class or an individual pupil! Choose a **high, medium** or **low voice**.

Ask your pupils to respond at the same pitch (same level) of the notes you are singing.

Teacher:

He-llo, how are you?



Pupils:

Very well, thank-you!



Think of other questions and responses you could use – at lunch or playground transitions, getting ready to go home...

How does this help?

It develops a child's awareness of pitch discrimination and encourages the child to recognise their singing voice.

Activity:

Name that song!

Tap or clap the rhythm of the first line of a song well-known to the children.

Who can name the song?

Can the children tap or clap the rhythms for others to recognise?

First try tapping and singing at the same time – then try tapping without singing the song line! (Tip – don't forget to count them in!).

Try using classroom percussion instruments as well as clapping or tapping.

1... 2...
3... 4...



How does this help?

It supports the development of the ability to use a 'thinking voice' inside the head.



Activity:
Simple sound, word and beat mapping

Use a 4 x 4 grid on a large whiteboard or flip chart – place initial sounds in some of the boxes, leaving others empty.

To a slow and steady beat, (1,2,3,4) clapped or played on a drum, recite the sounds.

An empty box is a one beat silence. Read from left to right across the grid. (Don't forget to count them in!)

You could fill a grid with whatever graphemes you are teaching at the time or with the tricky or pseudo words you are learning.

Why not read the grid backwards? Why not read the columns going down or up?

s	s		s
t		t	
p	p	p	p
s			s

How does this help?

It helps with initial sound, grapheme or word recognition and develops fluency by reciting to a continuous, steady beat.



This resource was originally devised by Wiltshire Music Connect (Wiltshire Council) during its tenure as the Music Education Hub for Wiltshire.

