

MUSICAL PLAY THROUGH FEATHERS

Arts-Integrated Movement

MIM[®]

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MUSEUM

Objectives

- Explore slow, intentional movement with musical accompaniment.
- Identify body parts and improve full-body coordination while utilizing different levels (high, low), directions (forward, backward), and movement prompts (quickly, slowly, on tiptoes, etc.).
- Increase language skills by naming body parts and identifying movement prompts.

Arizona Early Learning Standards Addressed

1. **Physical Development:** Moves with balance and control, demonstrates coordination, and identifies body parts
2. **Fine Arts:** Experiments with a variety of vocal sounds, instruments, and creative movement

Materials

- 1 lightweight feather per child
- Musical accompaniment (sung or prerecorded sound)

Music and Context

Africa | Folk Songs

Within cultural groups in Africa, songs are often passed down orally. Some of the lyrical meanings have been lost; others utilize vocables (a meaningful sound rather than a word). These simple and tuneful melodies are easy to remember and effective at different speeds (tempos) and volumes (dynamics).

Musical Selections

1. "Obwisan" from West Africa
2. "Abiyoyo" from southern Africa

Europe | Classical Music

European classical music—from the Medieval Era (circa 500–1400) to contemporary compositions—provides a variety of accompaniments to promote active listening and intentional movement. Instrumental music enables young learners to listen for different speeds (tempos), volumes (dynamics), and instrumental combinations (textures), which contribute to cognitive development.

Musical Selections

1. The Carnival of the Animals by Camille Saint Saëns
Movement VII: "The Aquarium"
Movement XIII: "The Swan"
2. Cello Suite no. 1 by Johann Sebastian Bach



The lightness of the feather requires prekindergarten students to explore slow, intentional movement.

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Activity

1. Pass out feathers. Ask children to describe their feathers.
“Are they very soft? Are they very light? Are they very colorful?”
2. Raise the feathers high up in the air and let them drift to the ground. After a few repetitions, try to catch them as they fall.
Sing a descending melodic pattern or vocalize descending pitches while the feathers fall.
3. Place a feather in the palm of your hand and move very slowly. Sing a folk song slowly or play slow classical music (see Musical Selections below).
“I have to move very slowly to keep my feather from falling. Can you move slowly, too?”
4. Continue with music; adjust the feathers to different body parts, levels, and movement prompts.
Ask the children to choose where the feather goes next and how to move.

Assessment

1. How children move through the space.
*Are they in control of their bodies?
Are they able to move slowly?
Are they able to utilize different heights and levels with their feathers?*
2. Hand-eye coordination.
Are they able to release and catch their feathers?



Using feathers, prekindergarten students respond to movement prompts and identify body parts, such as the top of the hand.

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TOOL KIT I

Musical Selections, Suggested Videos or Citations, Lyrics (when available)

“Obwisana” from West Africa



Ob-wi-sa-na sa, Na-na, Ob-wi-sa-na sa. Ob-wi-sa-na sa, Na-na, Ob-wi-sa-na sa.

“Abiyoyo” from southern Africa



A - bi - yo- yo, — A - bi - yo- yo. — A - bi - yo- yo, — A - bi - yo- yo. — A - bi

yo - yo, bi yo - yo, bi yo - yo. — A - bi - yo - yo bi yo - yo, bi yo - yo. —



Camille Saint-Saëns. Movement VII: “The Aquarium” in “Complete Recording.” 8:20 of 22:52. International Music Score Library Project. https://imslp.org/images/8/8d/PMLPo6099-Saint-Saens_Carnival.mp3.



Camille Saint-Saëns. Movement XIII, “The Swan.” 2:38. International Music Score Library Project. https://imslp.org/images/8/8d/PMLPo6099-Saint-Saens_Carnival.mp3.



Lemon77UG. “Mischa Maisky plays Bach Cello Suite no. 1 in G (full).” YouTube video, 19:27. Posted [October 2011]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGQLXRTl3Zo>.



Reading Rainbow. “Pete Seeger Reads ‘Abiyoyo’ on Reading Rainbow.” YouTube video, 6:49. Posted [January 2014]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPZtuPyXRfw>.