

COMMUNICATION WEEK: Making Music Together

Humans, just like many of our animal friends, generate sounds to communicate. And, from the beginning of time, music has allowed us to communicate a wide range of things—ideas, emotions and even cultural heritage. Plus, making music provides kids with a form of creative self-expression from a very early age.

This week is all about choosing a song that your extended family knows and loves and using the whole week of play to bring that song to life. Each day, we provide a new set of activities that lead up to a celebratory family concert on Friday. This “concert” can happen in-person or via video call with family and friends all over the world!

MORE ABOUT COMMUNICATION

In order to communicate effectively, kids must learn to understand what they want to get across, then decide on how to convey their messages, working to coordinate the mind and body to do so. They also need to learn to anticipate how the message will be received. This is rather elegant and requires a symphony of physical, cognitive and social capabilities. The more children can practice, the better!

To find out more:

[Sing the Tinkergarten Songs at Home this Summer](#)

[Make Music Like Wee Wild Things \(DIY activity\)](#)



– THIS WEEK IN MUSIC! –

SUNDAY	Pick your song and schedule your concert
MONDAY	Listening walk
TUESDAY	Making sounds
WEDNESDAY	Making instruments
THURSDAY	Band practice
FRIDAY	Family concert

COMMUNICATION WEEK:

Making Music Together

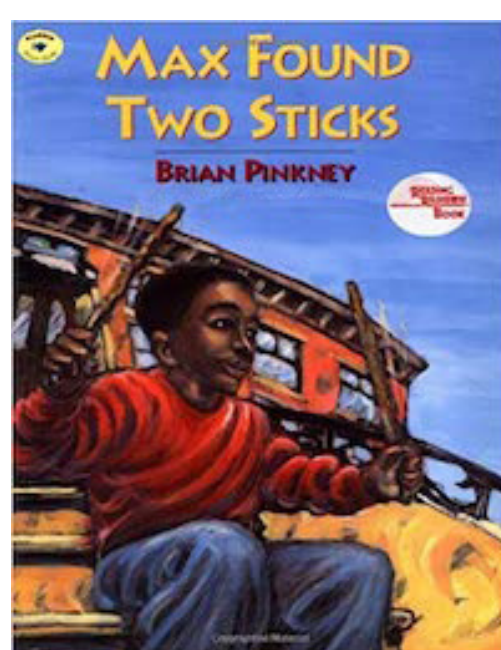


FIRST THINGS FIRST: PICK YOUR SONG

Before the week gets underway, choose a song that is meaningful to your family.

Maybe there is a song that is already a family favorite and you know all the words. Or maybe there are some grandparents or other older relatives who have songs from when they were kids that you can learn. Reach out and see. And then make sure family and friends can join you in a sing and play along on Friday!

You can also choose another small family or friend group and have them come up with a song to perform, too. Then you can both perform for each other, either online or in person.



AALIYAH READS!

This week, our fantastic nine-year-old summer reader, Aaliyah, will read ***Max Found Two Sticks*** by Brian Pinkney.

Watch and listen [here](#)! You can also purchase this book for your home library [here](#).

Want Inspiration?!

The idea for a family “concert” was sparked, in part, by the wonderful online jam sessions by Jimmy Fallon and the Roots. If you haven’t yet, check out their recent performance of [Helpless](#) from the Musical Hamilton.



SPREAD THE KINDNESS! Help us to create a Tinkergarten Camp Songbook! Post photos of **instrument making and performing** this week using #tinkergarten and #outdoorsall4 or in our free [#OutdoorsAll4 Facebook group](#).

ABOUT TINKERGARTEN Tinkergarten® is your guide to purposeful outdoor play—the kind of play that helps kids become healthy, capable and confident learners.

To kick off your family's week of music making, tune up your child's listening skills with a listening walk. A listening walk can be a hike in the woods, a stroll around your neighborhood or even just a step outside your front door. What makes it a "listening" walk is that you slow down and pay extra attention to the sounds. What sounds are the elements, other creatures and even your own movement making? When you tune in, you'll be amazed at the symphony of sounds around you.

Invite your kids to lie down with you on the ground either inside or outside. Challenge yourselves to take a minute and just listen. Try closing eyes, too. After the minute is over, ask kids about the sounds they heard. Which could they identify? Were any of them surprising? Discuss how much more you're able to take in when you are just quiet and still for a bit. Ask them if they'd like to try the same thing, but this time while walking.



EXTENDING THE PLAY:

- Night walk. If you can, take a nighttime listening walk along the same path to see how the same place sounds different in the day than it does in the night.
- Bring art supplies on your listening walk and draw how the sounds make you feel. What colors, shapes and marks can your child use to represent what they hear?
- Listen to the song you have chosen to perform at the end of the week. Lie down on the floor and close your eyes together as you listen. Afterwards, talk about what you heard. What instruments could you hear? Was the rhythm the same the whole time or did it change?



INDEPENDENT PLAY:

- Welcome kids to explore the yard or neighborhood in search of sounds. They can record using a phone or use paper and art supplies to make a list or draw the sounds they hear.
- Play nature sounds in the background as your child plays. When you check in, ask about what sounds they hear in "the nature music." Or, give them paper and art supplies to list or draw all of the sounds they hear and their sources. Check out nature sounds apps on Google Play, Apple App Store, search in Spotify, or listen for free online at Calmsounds.
- Help your child sense emotions in music by playing some inspiring 'feeling' songs as they play. Below are some classical songs that can help you get started. If your child knows how, ask your child to search and identify a song that sounds like each emotion, too:
 - Happy: "[Les Toreadors](#)" (Georges Bizet)
 - Sad: "[The Funeral March](#)" (Frédéric Chopin)
 - Angry: "[Allegro con Brio](#)" (Beethoven)



TUESDAY

Making Sounds

Kids love to make noise and this desire to create sound is a terrific way for kids to practice creativity and communication skills. Doesn't matter the age--we're all music makers and instruments are all around us. Today is all about using our voices, bodies and the things around us to play musical games and to make joyful noise!

Hide and Sound

- Have fun making a bunch of different sounds with bodies, voices, and items in nature. Pick a sound to be “yours” or your favorite. .
- The adult hides first, trying to find a spot that is harder than you normally would given your kids’ age(s). Once you are in your spot and your child has counted, make your sound every 20 seconds or so.
- Grab some cloth or a bandana to use as a blindfold and head to an open space. Try to play with the seeker blindfolded. Once unable to rely on sight, a seeker has to listen all the more intently. Note: In this version, another adult or the hider should watch out for the seeker, ready to shout a warning if he or she is wandering off too far or heading for a tree, etc.
- To read more about this game, check out [this post](#).

Max and his two sticks

- Watch Aaliyah read “Max Had Two Sticks.”
- Then, go outside, hand your kiddo two sticks and welcome them to bang away.
- Or, if you need to stay inside, hand them two wooden spoons and welcome them to explore sound making—just make sure you identify any objects that are not open for banging.



Make Music Like Wild Things

- Get some metal containers to bang, drop or plop objects into; rubber bands to stretch between branches and pluck; and canisters with tops (e.g. yogurt, raisin or oatmeal containers) to fill with pebbles, wood chips, acorns, etc.
- Start out by lying down, closing your eyes and listening for the natural sounds around you (this is great, challenging practice with self control). Talk about the many sounds you hear.
- Ask kids, “How many different sounds can we make outdoors?” If they need a jump start, gather pairs of sticks and explore how many ways you can use them to make sounds (e.g. bang them together and on logs, trees, objects from home, rub them against rough bark, shuffle leaves or dirt around).
- As kids play, record new sounds using a digital recorder (like the voice memo app on the iPhone).
- Check out [this post](#) for more info.

Play along

- Listen to the song you have chosen to perform at the end of the week and “play” along using items you find around the house, your bodies and voices

Make Instruments and Play!

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SHAKER

Put rice in a recycled container, secure the lid, and shake! Experiment with different sizes of grains and containers and see what that does to the sound they make.

GUITAR

You'll need a paper towel tube, a rectangular tissue box (if not, any rectangular cardboard box), rubber bands, scissors and tape. Trace a circle end of the paper towel tube onto one of the short sides of the tissue box. Cut out the circle. Stick the tube into the hole far enough that it will stay (use tape if necessary to hold it firmly.) Take five rubber bands and string wrap them around the tissue box so that they all lay across the hole where the tissues come out.



A MUSICALALA

A struminator? A Zound? Think up an instrument and build it! Use recycled materials you have around the house, in the recycling, or maybe from the art center, and see how inspiration strikes!



KAZOO

You need a cardboard tube, wax paper, a couple rubber bands and something to use to poke holes in the tube. Cover one end of the tube with wax paper and secure it with a rubber band. Poke a few holes along the tube. Put your mouth to the open end and hum.
A kazooist is born!

WEDNESDAY

Make Instruments and Play!

CAMP
tinkergarten

WATER XYLOPHONE:

Use glasses, water, and a metal soup spoon to create an amazing art-meets-science musical experiment! You can use the same glasses but filled with different amounts of water, different glasses with the same amount of water, use different implements to hit the glasses with, the list goes on and on! (Add color for extra fun!)



SOUND WALL

Feeling crafty? Attach an assortment of kitchen and recycled materials (metal bowls, plastic containers, kitchen utensils) to a fence or secured piece of wood. Offer a stick or kitchen utensil and invite your child to explore the sounds they can make.

DRUMS

We know that kids come into the world as natural drummers so channel that energy into the creation of their very own DIY drum... or even drum set! Use a variety of containers and then a variety of sticks to create different timbres and sounds.

- Play favorite songs on them!
- Experiment with all the different sounds/tones they can make!
- Play other family members' instruments to see what they're like!
- Rearrange and reuse the materials to make NEW instruments!



THURSDAY

Band Practice

Now that you have spiffy new instruments, It's time to practice your song! If you are inviting family members to watch you or play along in tomorrow's performance, take a picture of band practice and send them a reminder to join you on the big day!

Fun ideas for practicing the song:

- Experiment with playing the song loudly, softly, slowly, fast, super fast, and then back to loud again. Whatever genre your song falls into, can you try singing and playing it in a completely different style? What would a bluesy rendition sound like? What about one of the verses being rapped instead of sung? How about an operatic version?
- Consider having a 'call and response' element to the show. Are there moments where the audience can sing something back to you? Teach them what to say and have them join in as you perform.

Fun ideas to help prepare for the performance:

- Decide who will play each part and how you want to introduce the show.
- Make posters or invitations and pass out to friends or take a picture and email them to those who will attend. You can include why you picked this song, or some of the lyrics on the invitations, too. (Art Center)
- Make band t-shirts! All bandmates contribute an old t-shirt and use whatever materials you want (fabric markers, fabric with needle and thread, dye/rubber bands) to customize your band shirts. (Art Center)
- Make a playlist of songs that can be playing while you're waiting for people to arrive or log on.
- Are there people in the family who would like to add some dance moves into the mix? If there are kids who are singing but maybe haven't gravitated to a particular instrument, ask if they'd like to choreograph something or just do some spontaneous dancing during the show.



FRIDAY Family Concert!

After a week of listening, exploring and making sounds, the big day has arrived! Now it is time to set up your performance space and bring your family band to life! Be sure to capture the big moment and share photos and video on our free [#OutdoorsAll4 Facebook group](#). Then, enjoy watching other family band performances!

Pick an outfit!

- It's fun to wear something special when you're doing something special. Put together an outfit that you are excited to perform in, or that you think is a good fit with the song you'll be singing.

Decorate the space

- Create a stage/performance space. You could use furniture and other objects from the house, or use butcher paper and other materials from your art center to create a colorful backdrop, or make interesting cardboard sculptures that frame the performance area.
- Maybe you've already established a stage, but what about the rest of the space that people can see? If you'll be performing inside, can you put things up on the walls? If you're outside, can you chalk up a driveway or some trees? If it's a show with folks gathering in-person, what will they sit on or stand near and how can you decorate it? If it's going to be a video call performance, how can you frame the space that the audience will see you in?

All friends are welcome

- Are there some stuffed animal or action figure friends who might want to attend? Gather them together and create a seating area for them.

Snacks!

- Use the mud kitchen (or a real kitchen) to make pretend or real snacks for the performers and the audience.

Appoint a photographer

- Elect someone to be responsible for taking photos--from the audience as well as from the stage. If you're performing for an online crowd, have some of those folks take photos of what their set-up looks like where they're watching you

When the event is over, share photos and videos to [#OutdoorsAll4 Facebook group](#)!

