

## *Music and Children's Literature: A New Dimension of Storytelling*

Session notes for the California All-State Music Education Conference

February 2, 2024

Sacramento, CA

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### Overview of Activities

*\*Muncha, Muncha, Muncha*

by Candance Fleming

Grade 1

MU:Cn11.0.2a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

MU:Pr6.1.2a Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy

1. Ask: “Who has a garden in their yard that either has vegetables or flowers?” (answers will vary)
2. Show a variety of garden images and have students describe what they see.
3. Create a list of the flowers or vegetable terms they recall (you will revisit this list after the music activity).
4. Introduce the story *Muncha, Muncha, Muncha* along with the Rabbit’s Feast song.
5. Ask students to describe the change in the song as the story unfolds (the song gets longer). Encourage students to sing along when the rabbit song appears in the text.
6. Using the PowerPoint, review the rhythms of the song.
7. Have students identify the rhythm of the song to its notation.
8. Allow students to identify the rhythm of the flowers and vegetables on the list and create various 4 to 8 beat patterns.
9. Perform the patterns on pitched or unpitched instruments as an accompaniment to the song Rabbit’s Feast.

# Rabbit's Feast

Suzanne Hall



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## *Rap a Tap Tap*

by Leo and Diane Dillon

Grade 2

MU:Pr4.2.2b. Perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation.  
MU:Re7.2.2a Describe how specific music concepts are used to support a specific purpose in music.  
MU:Cn11.0.2a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

1. Explain to students that like composers, authors use specific devices to demonstrate expression in the story.
2. Ask students to identify devices used in the story that indicate changes in text expression (i.e., bold, italics, etc.).
3. Ask students to determine musical devices that could be used to reflect or enhance the literary devices used in the storybook (i.e., use a louder voice for bold words, etc.)?
4. Read *Mortimer* and have students provide sound effects to the story by incorporating various dynamics.
5. Transfer the rhythm of “Rap a Tap Tap—Think of That” to body percussion and/or instruments:
  - a. Example: Divide students into two groups, where one group performs the rhythm of “Rap a Tap Tap” and the other group performs the rhythm of “Think of That.” Add the performance to the reading of the story.

6. Discuss the historical contributions of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson. A link to his bio is included here: Biography by the National Portrait Gallery (Smithsonian Institution) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byBxfRmlb2Y>
7. Discuss the various timbres involved in tap (e.g., in addition to the tapping of shoes, one can also hear the tip of the shoe, or a shuffle as shown in the video clip, Christopher Rice and friends) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4FYNF02yEM>
8. Discuss the percussive and rhythmic nature of tap dancing. Have students create an 8-count rhythm pattern to accompany the story using eighth and quarter notes and quarter note rests. Replace the “Rap a Tap Tap” section of the text to the new rhythm(s) the students create.
9. Link each 8-count pattern to create the classroom version of Bojangles tap dancing that can be performed at the end of the story.

*\*Leon and Bob*  
by Simon James  
Grade 2

MU:Re7.2.2a Describe how specific music concepts are used to support a specific purpose in music.

MU:Cr1.1.2b Generate musical patterns and ideas within the context of a given tonality (such as major or minor) and meter (such as duple and triple).

Note: Leon and Bob is a wonderful story to discuss hidden curriculum topics of kindness and friendship, Leon and Bob presents a story of a little boy who is new to a community. His “friend” Bob ultimately becomes the new neighbor.

Score

## My Best Friend, Bob

Suzanne Hall

Walk - ing a long and sing - ing our song It's a good time,  
such a good time. Out in the sun \_ and hav - ing some fun \_ with my best frined  
Bob.

### *Giraffes Can't Dance*

by Giles Andreae  
Grade 5

MU:Cn10.0.5a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

MU:Re7.2.5a Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how responses to music are informed by the structure, the use of the elements of music, and context (such as social, cultural, and historical).

#### Music selections:

Ghanaian: Two Tribes (Emmanuel Nii Okai Tagoe)

Waltz: Minute Waltz (Chopin)

Rock: I Love Rock and Roll (Joan Jett & the Blackhearts)

Latin: Cha-cha on the Rocks (Cesar Manalili)

Tango: La Cumparsita (Experience Tango Orchestra)

Scottish: Duke of Perth (Jim MacLeod & His Band)

Gerald's Song: Song from a Secret Garden (Secret Garden)

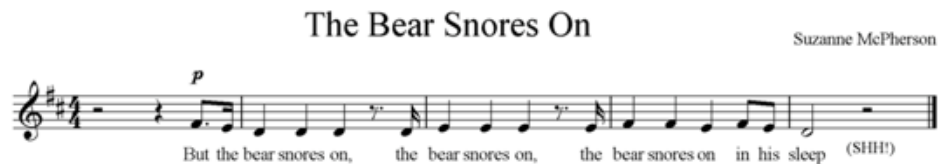
1. Read text with assigned musical accompaniment.
2. Have students recall the various genres of music used in the text.
3. Allow students to identify one of their favorite pieces and describe, using flip grid, what about the enjoy. Encourage students to be specific (i.e. I enjoy the words, the instruments, the melody).
4. Categorize student music responses in genres.

*Bear Snores On*  
By Karma Wilson  
Grade 1

MU:Pr4.2.Ka With guidance, explore and demonstrate awareness of music contrasts (such as high/low, loud/soft, same/different) in a variety of music selected for performance.

Procedure:

1. Review the repeated phrase in *Bear Snores On* (“But the bear snores on”). Each time the phrase appears in the book it is larger in print. This is the phrase that the students will speak or sing as you read through the story. The students should adjust their dynamics according to the size of print.
2. Sing the song after “the bear snores on” is read.
3. Students can add a simple bordun as an accompaniment.



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Activities for the following texts are detailed in the article linked below:

The Other Side (Jaqueline Woodson)

Dancing Hands (Margarita Engle)

[Using Picture books as a Tool for Creating a Culturally Inclusive Elementary Music Classroom Suzanne Hall \(GMT\).pdf](#)

\*Additional details and resources for this activity can be found in a forthcoming text released by Alfred Music (Spring 2024).

<b>Parallels Between Music and Language Arts</b>	
<b>English/Language Arts</b>	<b>Music</b>
Left to right progression	Left to right progression

Sound component (Phonological distinction/phonemic awareness)	Sound component (tonal distinction)
Symbolic Process	Symbolic Process
Coding/Decoding Process	Coding/Decoding Process
Fluency (rate + accuracy + expression)	Fluency (rate + accuracy + expression)
Use of vocabulary	Use of vocabulary
Comprehension	Comprehension
Performance	Performance
Intent of author is for reader to read the entire literary work	Intent of composer is for listener to listen to the entire musical work
Language	Music
Use of analysis to understand and organize text	Use of analysis to understand and organize music
Use of elaboration (i.e., creative writing)	Use of elaboration (i.e., ornamentation)
May contain inferences by use of illustrations or text	May contain inferences by use of pitch, timbre, chord structure, and other musical elements
Contains a variety of genres	Contains a variety of genres
Use of imagery	Use of imagery
Writing	Composing
<b>Source:</b> Robinson, N., Hall, S. & Spano, F. (2011). Teaching General Robinson. <i>Teaching Elementary Music: Integrative Strategies between Music and Other Subjects</i> . Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt.	

