Greatest Hits: Kid-tested Songs & Activities

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Sample Lesson Plan Outline

for a self-contained special education class

*note: many strategies and activities can be used with typical learners

1. steady-beat routine
2. greeting song
3. rhythm activity
4. song with instruments
5. action song (or two or three)
6. book-based song
7. language reinforcing song
8. songs that reinforce early academic skills
   (numbers, letters, colors, shapes, etc.)
9. sensory activity
10. dancing—add streamers, shakers, flags, scarves...
11. listening/relaxing activity

**Key words:**

Number 1 goal is FUN.

STRUCTURE, PREDICTABILITY, CONSISTENCY

Think music 'experience' vs. 'education.'

Celebrate as much as possible.
Give a Clap, Give a Cheer

SKI, lyrics by Robin Johnson

Voice:

\[\text{Give a clap! (clap clap) Give a cheer! (woo hoo) Wave hel-lo! (wave) John is here!}\]

(clap) (clap)
Hey, Hey, Whaddya Say?

Dr. Camilla Horne

Voice

Hey, Hey! Wha-d-ya say? Music time is now! Hey, Hey! Wha-d-ya say? And

I will show you how. Reach up high. Touch your toes. Wiggle your hips. Around the world we go.

FORM:

chorus mm 1-4
verse mm 5-8
Sing chorus/verse/chorus/verse/chorus
Last time, m 4, substitute: "And that's the end of the song (sit down)."

Movement:

mm 1-4: clap hands
m 5-7: do as you sing
m 8: turn around full circle

On each repetition of the verse, mm 5-7, do different actions: a high action with the high C; a low action with the middle C; a middle action on the G; m 8 is always "Around the world we go."

Once children know the song, and have a action/movement vocabulary, ask for volunteers to instruct the movement on the verses.
Itsy-Bitsy Spider

Oh the itsy-bitsy spider climbed up the water spout
(spicier or shaker climbs up child)

Down came the rain and washed the spider out.
(water bottle on mist setting)

Out came the sun and dried off all the rain
(large cardboard cut-out of sun fans children)

and the itsy-bitsy spider climbed up the spout again.
(spicier climbs up child)
Sensory Stimulation:

Sing the song, "I'm Singing in the Rain" or use a recording.
Use a spray bottle of water on the mist setting to 'rain' above the students' heads.

Substitute the word rain with leaves.
Bring in a bag of autumn leaves to throw around, smell, touch, feel... 

Substitute the word rain with wind.
Use a stiff file folder or tag board to fan the students' faces.

SENSORY DRUMS

Turn a hand drum upside down and fill each with a different media such as:
rice, lentils, beans, cotton, water, etc.
Use a mallet or stick and keep the beat on the drum head underneath.

In this way, the student can SEE the beat, EXPERIENCE accented notes, and also FEEL the beat through his desired choice of media (rice, beans, etc.)

*Important NOTE: Do not ever force a child to touch anything that he does NOT want to touch. He/She may have an aversive reaction as strong as vomiting to certain sensory stimulation. Think about how you yourself are aversely affected by the sound of nails on a chalkboard, or the blare of a car alarm in the middle of the night.
Flying Machine

*Good movement activity using scarves and body.*
*“out of sight” -- put scarf behind back or cover child’s face up*

The strangest sight I’ve ever seen
was a funny old man on a flying machine.

The man flew high

The man flew low

the man flew fast

the man flew slow

the man flew up

the man flew down

He circled all around the town.

Then turning left

and turning right

He disappeared,

out of sight.
Joy Joy Joy

I got that Joy, joy, joy, joy, here in my heart,
here in my heart, here in my heart. I got that Joy, joy, joy, joy,
here in my heart, here in my heart to stay!

Materials: pom-poms for each student

Procedure: Students are encouraged to pounce their pom-pom on their heart.
Each verse, teacher or student chooses a different body part.
(I got that joy joy joy here on my knees.)
Last verse: I got that joy joy joy joy all over me!
It Rained

C
F

1. It rained, it poured for forty days. It

C
F
C

rained, it poured for forty days. Rise and shine and

F
C
G7
C

syncopa ti ti ti ti children of the world.

2. Frogs croaked and croaked...
3. It thundered and lighteninged...
4. It rained, it poured...

m. 6: "syncopa ti ti ti ti" can be sung "sing along with me"

add rain sticks, frog instruments or guiros, thunder-tubes (or wiggle a large sheet of tag-board)
Alligator Alarm!
from Alphabet Action Songs, book and CD #470
Denise Gagne

Al - li - ga - tor a - larm! AH! Al - li - ga - tor a - larm! AH! Al - li - ga - tor Al's a - wake and look - ing for my arm! (leg, hand, head, etc.)

Use a stuffed alligator for Alligator Al.
The teacher or student can decide where Al will bite them.

Good for teaching body part identification as well as the letter A and the Ah sound.
Little Bear Cub Song

Romanian

Lit - tle bear cub learned to sing, pleased him more than

an - y-thing. Ever - y day this song he'd roar: mor mor mor mor

mor mor mor

Use a teddy bear to sing the song and play with the children.

After several repetitions, leave off the last 'mor' and see if the child sings it.

Then leave off the final three 'mors' and see if the child sings it.

Then leave off all the 'mors' and see if the child can sing all of them..
Take my Little Car (Car Song)
From *Musicplay for Kindergarten* and also in *We Love to Move*

**ORIGINAL Gagne lyrics**

1. I'm gonna take my little car for a drive
   I'm gonna take my little car for a drive
   Gonna' take it for a drive
   ➔ Won't you step inside?
   Gonna' take my little car for a drive.

2. I'm gonna turn the wipers on in my car
   I'm gonna turn the wipers on in my car
   Gonna' turn the wipers on
   ➔ **We're having so much fun.**
   Gonna' turn the wipers on in my car.

3. I'm gonna honk the little horn in my car
   I'm gonna honk the little horn in my car
   Gonna honk the little horn
   ➔ Til it gets all worn,
   Gonna honk the little horn in my car.

4. I'm gonna slam the little door in my car
   I'm gonna slam the little door in my car
   Gonna slam the little door
   ➔ Til it falls on the floor
   Gonna slam the little door in my car.

5. I'm gonna step on the brakes in my car
   I'm gonna step on the brakes in my car
   Gonna step on the brakes
   ➔ To see what sound it makes
   Gonna step on the brakes in my car.

6. I'm gonna drive really fast in my car
   I'm gonna drive really fast in my car
   Gonna drive really fast
   ➔ 'Cuz I stepped on the gas
   Gonna drive really fast in my car

Speak: "Yes, Officer?"
"Could you please slow down?"

7. I'm gonna drive really slow in my car
   I'm gonna drive really slow in my car
   Gonna drive really slow
   ➔ That's the way I have to go
   Gonna drive really slow in my car

**Iseminger:** Siren sounds decrescendo, then speak in low voice: The police officer says, "SLOW DOWN!"

Denise Gagne
www.musicplay.ca

#See Iseminger's adaptations on next page.
Take My Little Car
Musicplay for Kindergarten  (Also in "We Love to Move"

I'm gonna take my little car for a drive
I'm going to take my little car for a drive
Gonna take it for a drive, we're having so much fun.
Gonna take my little car for a drive.

2. I'm gonna turn the wipers on in my car...
3. I'm gonna honk the little horn in my car
4. I'm gonna slam the little door in my car
5. I'm gonna step on the brakes in my car
6. I'm gonna drive really fast in my car
   "Yes Officer" Big deep voice: *Sloooow Down!*
7. I'm gonna drive really slow in my car

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ORIGINAL BROADWAY VERSION:
Black BOLD words were changed in my CHOIR version next page

1. Something has changed within me
   Something is not the same
   I'm through with playing by the rules
   Of someone else's game
   Too late for second-guessing
   Too late to go back to sleep
   It's time to trust my instincts
   Close my eyes: and leap!

CHORUS: It's time to try
Defying gravity
I think I'll try
Defying gravity
And you can't pull me down!

2. I'm through accepting limits
   'Cuz someone says they're so
   Some things I cannot change
   But till I try, I'll never know!
   Too long I've been afraid of
   Losing love I guess I've lost
   Well, if that's love
   It comes at much too high a cost!

CHORUS: I'd sooner buy
Defying gravity
Kiss me goodbye
I'm defying gravity
And you can't pull me down:

3. So if you care to find me
   Look to the western sky!
   As someone told me lately:
   "Ev'ryone deserves the chance to fly!"
   And if I'm flying solo
   At least I'm flying free
   To those who'd ground me
   Take a message back from me
   Tell them how I am

CHORUS: Defying gravity
I'm flying high
Defying gravity
And soon I'll match them in renown
And nobody in all of Oz
No Wizard that there is or was
Is ever gonna bring me down!
Words in BLACK type show the repetition needed to modify original on previous page

1. Something has changed within me
   Something is not the same
   I'm through with playing by the rules
   Of someone else's game.
   Too late for second-guessing
   Too late to go back to sleep
   It's time to trust my instincts
   Close my eyes: and lea---------p!

   chorus: It's time to try----
   Defy------ing gravity
   I think I'll try-----
   Defy------ing gravity
   And you can't pull me down!

2. I'm through accepting limits
   'cuz someone says they're so
   Some things I cannot change
   But till I try, I'll never know!
   Too late for second-guessing
   Too late to go back to sleep
   It's time to trust my instincts
   Close my eyes: and lea--------p! chorus

3. So if you care to find me
   Look to the western sky!
   As someone told me lately:
   Everyone deserves the chance to fly!
   Too late for second-guessing
   Too late to go back to sleep
   It's time to trust my instincts
   Close my eyes: and lea-------p! chorus

   coda: And nobody in all of Oz
   No Wizard that there is or was
   Is ever gonna bring me down!
Instrument Song

Iseminger

D

1. these are my sand-blocks scratch scratch scratch! These are my sand-blocks

A7

scratch scratch scratch! These are my sand-blocks scratch scratch scratch and my

A7

sand-blocks scratch scratch scratch!

2. These are my sandblocks, clap clap clap.
3. This is my tambourine shake shake shake.
4. This is my tambourine tap tap tap (tap on hand, knee, foot)
5. These are my shakers (or maracas) shake shake shake
6. This is my guiro scratch scratch scratch.
7. etc.

Application for a classroom of students with Developmental Delays:
Allow exploration for the first couple times with a new instrument. They may have to touch it completely all over, smell it, put it to their lips. Exploration is necessary before we learn the 'correct' way to use the instrument. Model how to play for the students as much as possible.

Do one instrument for two to three weeks if the class meets twice per week. Repeat to remember; remember to repeat.

One-handed instruments are good; if both hands are doing the same action such as shaking a shaker-egg in each hand is less difficult. If one hand does a different motion (mallet to drum or stick to guiro) it will be more challenging.

You may be able to teach some students to play only on the three quarter notes (m. 2 etc.) which would be a good stepping stone to learning about beat and notation.

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Castanets Song

Iseminger

Eat your veggies! Eat your veggies!

Crun-cha' mun-cha' crun-cha' mun-cha'. Eat your veggies!

Don't bite your finger!

Castanets take a certain amount of fine motor skill, but it can be developed. Sometimes it's easier with two hands closing the castanets together. Or the child can simply hold the string and shake them.
Clatterpillar Song

Clatterpillar, clatterpillar, up and down.

Clatterpillar, clatterpillar back and forth.

Clatterpillar, clatterpillar up and down. Watch me play the clatterpillar!
Grizzly Bear

Grizzly Bear a Grizzly Bear is sleeping in a cave. Please be very quiet, very, very quiet. If you wake him, if you shake him, poco cresc. he cresc. gets very MAD! crash!

After 'MAD!' clap together two cymbals
Poor Peanut

A peanut sat on a railroad track, his heart was all a-flutter!

Round the bed, a train came! Toot, toot! Peanut butter! SQUISH!

"Squish" - loud cymbal crash
I Like to Laugh

Iseminger

D

Oh I like to laugh! ha ha ha! Oh I like to laugh!

A7

4

ha ha ha! Oh I like to laugh! ha ha ha!

7

Laughing is fun for me!

2. Oh I like to sneeze! Ah Chew!
3. Oh I like to cheer! Wa-hoo!
4. Oh I'm getting tired. (yawn)
5. I like to be quiet. Shhhhh...
6. I whinny like a horse. Neigh...
7. Oh I blow a kiss...
8. Oh I like to tell secrets! pss pss pss
9. Oh I love Santa Claus! Ho ho ho!
10. I buzz like a bee. Bzzz bzzz bzzz
11. I warm up my voice. Mee mee mee mee.
12. I hiss like a snake. Ssss Ssss Ssss
13. O I like to think. Hmmm...

Lesson: Children make the sounds of each verse, as they are able. Add motions to each verse. Always begin and end with verse 1 (laughing) so the children know when the song is finished.

Adaptation: If you know a sound a non-verbal CAN make, sing a verse about it.

Extension: Have the students come up with their own verses.
AH-AH-AH

Kathleen Coleman, MMT, MT-BC

When I got home from school one day, I thought I heard my mother say, "Ah, Ah, Ah! Take off your shoes. Don't track mud on the nice clean floor! Ah, Ah, Ah! Take off your shoes. Don't track mud on the floor."

This song is excellent for encouraging the imitation of a vowel--the 'ah-ah-ah' sound. If possible, student can shake his/her finger while saying, 'ah-ah-ah.'
Sing to the music, la la la.
Sing to the music, la la la.
Sing to the music, la la la.

2. Wave hello, la la la.
3. Shake hands hello, la la la
4. High-five to Susie...
5. Pat your knees...
6. Tap your toes...
7. Clap your hands...
8. Laughing to the music, Ha Ha Ha...
Tony Chestnut

traditional

Tony Chestnut knows I love you. Tony knows,

Tony knows. Tony Chestnut knows I love you.

That's what Tony knows!

materials
chart with Boardmaker pictures to point to each body part/action:

toe knee chest nut (head) nose eyes heart or sign for love letter 'U' or pointing out

actions:
standing or sitting
To- touch toes
Ny- touch knees
Chest- touch chest
Nut- touch head
knows- touch nose
I- point to eyes
love- cross arms
you- point out or to a friend

Repeat, each time getting faster!
Mama Don' Allow

G

Mama don't 'low no guitar playin' round here.

D

Mama don't 'low no guitar playin' round here. Well,

G

I don't care what Mama don't 'low, gonna play my guitar any-how.

5

C

7

G

D7

G

Mama don't 'low no guitar playin' round here!

2. Mama don't 'low no clapping hands 'round here... 
3. knee slappin'
4. toe tappin'
5. high fives
6. secrets (whisper in friend's ear)
7. hip hip hooray!
8. hushing, sshhhh
9. whooping, woo-hoo
10. hissing, sssssss
11. back-rubs
12. wave hello
13. blow a kiss
14. thumbs up, good job!
A Sailor Went to Sea Sea Sea Sea

1. A - sai - lor went to sea sea sea to see what he could see see see, but all that he could see see see was the bottom of the deep blue sea sea sea sea!

1. [on 'sea' and 'see' put flat hand up to eyes like looking out to sea]

2. A sailor went to chop chop chop [clap clap clap]

3. A sailor went to knee knee knee [patch knees]

4. A sailor went to toe toe toe [touch toes]

5. A sailor went to ooh wishy washy! [shimmy and shake]

6. A sailor went to see, chop, knee, toe, ooh wishy washy! [do all the actions]

7. repeat 6 faster!
Foxy Roxy

to the tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Foxy Roxy was a fox
Who lived in a cardboard box.
She collected rocks and clocks
Kept them in her dirty socks.
She played on her xylophone
Until she began to moan.

Roxy had some itchy spots
So she called up Dr. Cox.
Dr. Cox was in dismay,
“We must take a quick x-ray!”
Dr. Cox was a wise old ox;
He cried, “Oh no, it’s chicken pox!” [tickle tickle]

The children respond to a dramatic “Oh no!” at the end.
FAMILY SONG

My father is a garbage man, a garbage man, a garbage man! My father is a garbage man, and it goes something like this!

1. My father is a garbage man, a garbage man, a garbage man!
   My father is a garbage man, and it goes something like this! *speak: PEE YOO!* [squeeze nose]

2. My mother is a baker . . . .
   *YUM! YUM!* [rub tummy]

3. My brother is a cowboy . .
   *YEE HAW!* [swing lasso]

4. My sister is a movie star . .
   *WHOOP-DI-DOO!* [hand on hip, fluff hair]

5. My grandpa is a train engineer . .
   *CHOO CHOO!* [pull whistle]

6. My grandma is a tickler!
   laugher of course [tickles]
I Woke Up in the Morning

chant, actions

I woke up in the morning (stretch)

and I jumped out of bed! (jump)

Put some clothes on my body (toes to top)

and a hat on my head. (pat head)

I leapt to the kitchen to eat some toast. (jump & hands eat)

Listened to the news from coast to coast. (hands ears, stretch R to L)

I looked out the window to check the sun, (hands over eyes, circle arms)

and ran out the door to have some fun! (motion running, 3 claps on have some fun)
SONG BOOKS

Puff the Magic Dragon
by Peter Yarrow
and Lenny Lipton
illustrated by
Eric Puybaret
Publisher: Sterling

Barnyard Banter
written and illustrated by Denise Fleming
Publisher: Square Fish

Down by the Station
by Will Hillenbrand
Publisher: HBH Books for Young Readers

West Music, WestMusic.com, has an extensive collection of children’s literature to use in the music setting.
Contact Melissa Blum—she’s an expert in children’s literature in music class.

Enlarge preschool mini-books or board books on a color copier and add a tune!