

TUNE IN TO MUSIC IN THE OUTDOORS

Whose spirits cannot be lifted by the sound of music, resist moving one's body or tapping feet and fingers or singing along to well-known lyrics?

Children love inventing and creating musical instruments which may be as simple as touching a pair of sticks together, filling containers with seeds and shaking them or drumming on empty tins or boxes.

Nature abounds with sounds and music. Natural settings are rich in sounds and everything in nature, once moved or touched, can make a sound. In order to really listen to the sounds in nature one needs to tune in to gain a richer experience of your surroundings. When this happens one finds one is more aware of what is happening in the neighbourhood.

A good method of listening to sounds outdoors is to cup ones hands behind ones ears and face into the direction of the sound you want to hear more clearly. Listen for high and low sounds, loud and soft, close and faraway, rising and falling sounds.

Everyone is a music maker as there is music in each one of us – the rhythm of our heart beat, clapping of hands, singing, dancing and stomping. A world without music would be dull and dreary. From your head to your toes your body is a music making machine and no instruments are required for an outdoor musical experience. Brains organise sound, ears to hear, voice box to hum or sing, mouth, lips and tongue for pitch and volume, hands to clap, slap, bang and tap, feet for stomping, dancing, tapping, lungs for singing, arms for waving and swaying, eyes for imagination, legs for dancing and stepping and toes to keep the rhythm of the beat.

Here is a fun way to make music. Have you ever tried lip bibbling? This is how it is done – use the index finger and move it up and down across the lips from nose to chin while making a sound. By humming at the same time you could lip bibble an entire song!

Over time musical instruments developed into percussion, string and wind instruments. Of these percussion is most applicable to the outdoor environment. Music has a definite place in the outdoor bag of tricks and is an invitation to a healthy group experience.

Through an outdoor music programme children will learn both the sound and structure of music and that music has its roots in the world around them. Music is as important as any discipline or subject that is included in the outdoor programme. Three of the most important aspects of life are self-expression, creativity and communication and music makes a great contribution to these.

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