

Movement and Music Group Times

for Infants and Toddlers

Week 1 Learning Unit

Movement and Music Group Times for Infants and Toddlers



Children's cultures are foundational to their identity. Each families' culture should be respected and integrated into the everyday experiences children have in programs. It is important to use a REDI lens as you interact and plan for movement and music experiences for all children.

Week 1 Learning Unit Topics

Introduction to Movement and Music Group Times

- What are group times?
- Types of movement and music group times
- Why are movement and music group times important?
- Applying active learning in movement and music group time
- Integrate children's home cultures as well as other cultures in movement and music experiences
- Sources for movement and music group times



What Are Group Times?

Group Times = Planned Teacher-Initiated Experiences

- The caregiver plans activities based on children's interests and the HighScope Key Developmental Indicators.
- The caregiver starts the group time and encourages the children to use materials or move their bodies in their own way.
- Group times can occur anywhere, be spontaneous, and occur throughout the day.
- Children's actions determine the length of group times.
- Group times are a come-and-go situation.



Infant and Toddler Group-Time Experiences

Two Types of Group Times

Movement and Music

- Songs, fingerplays, nursery rhymes, movement and music.

Requirement: Space for moving freely.

Materials

- Exploring and using materials



About Group Times

In this online course, we are going to focus specifically on movement and music group times.

1. Toddler Group Times with Materials — Small-Group Times
 - These small-group times are primarily for toddlers but older infants can also benefit from these experiences.
 - Adults facilitate group times with one or two infants when possible.
 - Infants and toddlers explore treasure baskets with adult support.



About Group Times (continued)

2. Movement and Music Group Times

- Large-group times include both infants and toddlers.
- Adults consider space and engagement opportunities for mobile and nonmobile children.

In this online course, we are going to focus specifically on movement and music group times.



What do mobile infants and toddlers do during movement and music group times?

Choose

Make choices about how to explore and use materials.

Communicate

Communicate in their own way.

Sing and Move

Make choices about singing, moving their bodies, and responding to music.

Participate

Participate at their own pace.

How can understanding children's home cultures help teachers more appropriately support their choices, communication, singing and movement, and participation during movement and music group times?

The Importance of Group Times

Group Times...

- Allow caregivers to introduce children to new materials, actions, and experiences.
- Allow families to share their cultures and movement and music traditions.
- Allow caregivers to focus on and support important concepts and learning.
- Allow caregivers to scaffold children's interests and individual needs.
- Provide a daily opportunity for children to have shared experiences.
- Allow mobile infants and toddlers to communicate in an intimate social setting.



5 Ingredients of Active Learning

Materials

Manipulation

Choice

**Child
Communication,
Language, and
Thought**

**Adult
Scaffolding**

5 Ingredients of Active Learning (continued)

Materials

- 1. There are abundant, age-appropriate materials all infants and toddlers can use in a variety of ways.**
 - Children explore and play with materials that are rich in sensory appeal.
 - Materials reflect children's home cultures and families' traditions and interests.
 - Children have a safe place to explore and play with materials.
 - Children have time to explore and play with materials.

5 Ingredients of Active Learning (continued)

Manipulation

2. All infants and toddlers use their whole bodies and all of their senses to manipulate materials freely.

- Children explore materials freely with their senses.
- Children experiment with materials to find out what they do and repeat satisfying actions.
- Children use their whole bodies to reach, grasp, roll, sit, crawl, walk, climb, carry, etc.

How does culture play a role in the way children experience movement and music activities? For example, a child whose family values the closeness and carrying of their child will often have a different experience with movement.

5 Ingredients of Active Learning (continued)

Choice

3. All infants and toddlers choose what to do.

- Children make choices and decisions.
- Children express preferences.
- Children follow their own intentions and initiatives.
- Children decide how to explore and what to do with materials.
- Children use materials to imitate actions.

How are all children given opportunities to make choices during movement and music group times?

5 Ingredients of Active Learning (continued)

Child Communication, Language, and Thought

4. All infants and toddlers communicate and use language to convey their needs, discover, learn, and do.

- Children communicate their needs, feelings, discoveries, and ideas in their own individual ways and at their own pace.
- Children initiate contact with caregivers.
- Children string together sounds, gestures, and words in a way that makes sense to them.

In addition to supporting infant's and toddler's language and communication development, how is each child's home language valued, supported, and reflected in the classroom?

5 Ingredients of Active Learning (continued)

Adult Scaffolding

5. All infants and toddlers learn within the context of trusting relationships.

In their interactions with children, caregivers:

- Take interest in each child's play.
- Enjoy each child's actions and explorations.
- Communicate with warmth and respect.
- Acknowledge each child's feelings.
- Provide positive physical contact.
- Give each child their full attention and respond readily.
- Talk with children and tell them what will happen next.

As you reflect on your interactions with children, how are you respecting their culture, home language and abilities during group times?

Active Learning Example

Materials:



Use a variety of movement and music materials, including instruments and music from a variety of cultures, for children to explore and experience.

Manipulation:



Even the youngest children and those of differing abilities can experience movement and music group times.

Active Learning Example (continued)

Choice:



Each child can choose the color and type of scarf they want to use.

Child Communication:



This child shows her excitement to the caregiver about the sounds of instruments in this group time.

Active Learning Example (continued)

Adult Scaffolding:



This caregiver helps these children experience movement in motion.

Strategies for Incorporating Children's Home Cultures and Other Cultures into Movement and Music Group Times

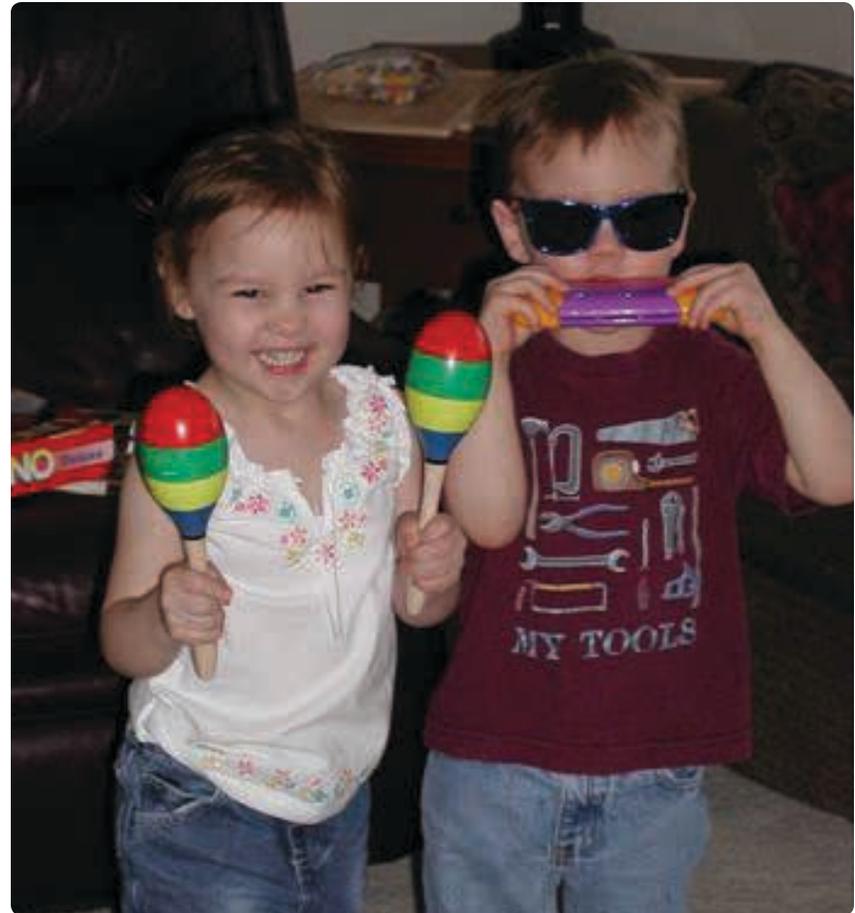
- Survey families home cultures, linguistic backgrounds, and family traditions.
- Use this information to engage families and incorporate into movement and music group times (e.g., parent shares traditional African song and dance, grandparent shares folk stories, parent brings in sitar to play and sing songs).
- Add materials from families home cultures (e.g., instruments — handmade or bought; fabrics for movement)
- Introduce a variety of instrumental music from various cultures (e.g., Reggae, hip hop, Latin, Jazz, Blues, folk, salsa, American folk, etc.).



Four Sources of Ideas for Planning Movement and Music Group Times

Planning around these four sources of ideas will help you stay focused on what's important to children and what's important for their development.

1. Children's interests and development
2. Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs)
3. Types of movement and music experiences
4. Events currently meaningful to children



Four Sources of Ideas for Planning Movement and Music Group Times (continued)

1. Children's interests and development

- Watch how children like to move during different parts of the day (e.g., crawling like dogs, rocking back and forth).
- Observe what kinds of music children enjoy listening or singing to (e.g., you may notice they coo or bounce to music).
- Make note of play experiences that lend themselves to group time with movement and music. (For example, during choice time, children may bark like puppies or dance in front of the mirror.)

How do children's home cultures impact their interests and development?



Children wanted to jump, so this teacher pulled out the carpet steps to jump off of for a spontaneous group time.

Four Sources of Ideas for Planning Movement and Music Group Times (continued)

2. Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs)

- Plan experiences to support a specific KDI (learning goal).
- Introduce the experience but accept when children engage in a different type of learning.
- Note common KDI domains observed during movement and music group times:
 - Creative Arts
 - Physical Development and Health
 - Communication, Language, and Literacy
 - Cognitive Development



This caregiver and child move their bodies like dinosaurs using bells and dinos. KDI 14. Moving with objects and KDI 36. Imitating and Pretending.

Four Sources of Ideas for Planning Movement and Music Group Times (continued)

3. Types of Movement and Music Group-Time Activities

- Easy-to-join activities (use an activity to start each movement and music group time experience)
- Songs, fingerplays, chants, and poems
- Storytelling, nursery rhymes
- Movement activities with or without music or objects

More on these types of activities in Week 2!



This group is singing Row, Row, Row Your Boat using props.

Four Sources of Ideas for Planning Movement and Music Group Times (continued)

4. Events currently meaningful to children.

- Consider home cultures and seasonal or local events that children typically experience.
- Plan group times connected to children’s understanding of and experience with these events.
 - Seasonal holidays or special events.
 - Dance like a snowflake
 - Sing “Happy Birthday”
 - Field Trips (for older toddlers)
 - Moo like a cow
 - Local Traditions
 - County fair sights
 - Parades



This child chooses the Happy Birthday Song from the song book.

Singing “Happy Birthday” in the classroom may not be inclusive to all families. How does knowing about each families’ beliefs, traditions, and observed holidays inform how you plan children’s experiences?

A Peek Ahead

Next week you will explore:

- Basics of easy-to-join activities
- Strategies for singing and engaging children in songs and fingerplays
- Building choice into children's songs
- Tips for storytelling and nursery rhymes
- Guidelines for moving with music and objects
- Identifying children's learning in movement and music group-time experiences

