

A-Z of teaching young learners: Music

What and why?

Music can have a very beneficial role in teaching young learners. It can help to establish a classroom 'atmosphere', it can make learning more memorable and it can give a sense of security and comfort to the children. Songs and chants, in particular, are very useful in developing confidence in English and giving practice, but instrumental music can also be used to great effect in the classroom.

Practical ideas

- If you play music when you are starting a lesson, you can help the children to ease into their English class and make the 'psychological switch' from what they were doing immediately before.
- Different types of music can be used to affect the pace that the students are working at. If, for example, they are working on a craft activity, you could play some soft classical music, which will encourage them to work with care. If you want them to work more quickly, you can choose faster, more rhythmic music.
- You can choose a variety of music as a background – for example, classical music, pop music, South American pipe music, Indian music. You could just briefly tell the children the name of the music and where it comes from.
- You could select different types of music from English-speaking countries: classical music, folk music, pop music, old music, modern music, etc.
- You could ask the students to suggest music.