

Summer Music Activities - Raising Musical Kids

Cut into strips of paper and put in a jar. Whenever you want to do a fun musical activity, have your child pull a strip from the jar! Make music-making a tradition and a joy in your family.

Play superhero! Use sheets or blankets as superhero capes and "fly" around with your child saving people while listening to Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries."



Listen to the classical radio station while driving in the car with your kids.

Fill up water glasses or glass soda bottles to different depths and line them up on the table. Use a spoon or other utensil to "play" the water glasses! See if you can arrange them from high to low or low to high. See if you can make all of the notes of the scale! For more fun, put a different color of food coloring in each glass!



Listen to the different movements of Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" and draw a picture with your child for each song in the set!

Do a musical scavenger hunt while driving in the car by listening to the radio and trying to hear all of the following types of musical instruments: piano, violin, cello, trumpet, harpsichord, organ, guitar, banjo, drums, recorder, flute, oboe, clarinet, bass guitar, saxophone, trombone, French horn.



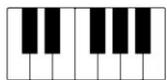
Turn on your favorite music and have a dance party!

Learn about a famous composer! Visit http://www.makingmusicfun.net/html/mmf_music_library_meet_the_composer_index.htm, choose a composer to learn about and print off the brief biography as well as any coloring or activity pages that go along with that composer. Have fun!



Attend a classical music concert with your child (who is old enough to enjoy it and not disturb the performance :)). Many universities give free or inexpensive recitals and concerts of all types.

Start a tradition of either playing the piano quietly at bedtime for your children (lullabies, quiet classical favorites, hymns or other religious songs, etc.) or listening to some soothing music together at bedtime.



Download the free "Giant Piano Puzzle" from <http://theteachingstudio.blogspot.com/p/printables-downloads.html>. Print it out and put it together with your child!

Visit <http://www.classicalkusc.org/kids/> and learn about different types of music - symphonies, choral music, solo instrumental music and more. Try out some of their fun games and activities!

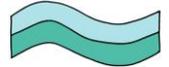


Make a homemade kazoo using a toilet paper tube, some wax paper and a rubber band.

If you don't already own one, buy an inexpensive recorder for your child and visit <http://www.joytunes.com/master/>, where they can learn how to play the recorder using a super fun computer game! Your computer must have a microphone. This is awesome, check it out!

Check out some books about music from your local library! Some good choices are "The Composer is Dead" by Lemony Snicket, "A Winter Concert" by Yuko Takao, "Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin" by Lloyd Moss, or "The Story of the Orchestra" by Robert Levine (and there are many, many more!).

Explore and learn all about WATER! Visit <http://www.classicalkusc.org/kids/familylistening/index.asp> and listen to and learn about many classical pieces about water. Then go outside and run through the sprinklers, throw some water balloons or play another fun water game!



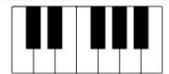
Make a homemade drum out of an empty oatmeal container or large can. Try using different things as drumsticks - different types of spoons, your hands, etc. How many different sounds can you make?



Does anyone in your family play an instrument, or do you own any instruments in your home? Have a family music night where everyone picks an instrument and "plays" songs together! If you don't have real instruments, you can always use household objects to make a huge variety of sounds! There are also many instruments you can get for children that you may have around your home, such as a xylophone, triangle, tambourine, rhythm sticks, etc.

Go online to learn about famous composers! Check out the Composers' Gallery on <http://www.nyphilkids.org/gallery/main.phtml>!

Compose your own piano song online at <http://www.poissonrouge.com/piano/>!



Place mats, fabric squares, or printed pictures of any type on the floor in a circle and turn on some music! Walk around from square to square until the music stops, see what picture you land on! Try moving to the music in different fun ways (hopping, jumping, skipping, buzzing like a bee, crab walking, etc.).



Learn about impressionism! Find online some impressionistic paintings (such as paintings by Monet) and notice how, when you look at them closely, they don't look like much (other than lots of little brush strokes or dots or colors), but when viewed as a whole it makes a beautiful painting! While listening to an impressionistic piano piece (I recommend Ravel's "Jeux d'eau" or Debussy's "Reflets dans l'eau") try making an "impressionistic" painting of your own using small dots or strokes of watercolors!



Sing together in the car while driving around town or going on a road trip!

Download the free "High and Low Game" from <http://theteachingstudio.blogspot.com/p/printables-downloads.html>. Play the game with your child to learn about high sounds and low sounds in music!



Watch a classic movie musical as a family! "The Sound of Music," "The Music Man," "Annie Get Your Gun," and "Oklahoma" are great choices! Check your local library for their selection.

Start a tradition of listening to some classical music at least once a week. Our local classical radio station plays "Sunday Baroque" which we love listening to on our way to church! Find a time during your week to listen to some type of classical music and get started! You may learn that you love it! Or, if you already enjoy it, you may learn about some new great composers or pieces you were unfamiliar with. Plus, your kids will get exposed to some great music!

Go online to learn about musical instruments! Check out the Instrument Storage Room on <http://www.nyphilkids.org/lockerroom/main.phtml> to learn about all of the instruments in the symphony orchestra.

Introduce your kids to some of your favorite "oldies" from when you were growing up! I still fondly remember listening to The Beach Boys while riding in my Dad's convertible on summer evenings, and to entire Beatles albums while he drove me to college.

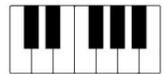


Sing to your child at night before they go to bed. Learn a new lullaby or sing an old favorite!

Learn about your family musical history - talk to your parents, grandparents and other relatives and find out which of your ancestors played musical instruments or were musical in some way! You may want to draw a family tree, write your family members' names and draw or write the name of the instrument they played!



Did you take piano lessons as a child but haven't touched it for ages? Get out your old method books and show them to your child, and see if you still remember how to play!



Make up a silly song together! It could be about doing the dishes, cleaning up, going on a car ride, the members of your family, whatever you want! Use a familiar tune and change the lyrics, or make up your own tune!

Try out a new genre of music with your family! Maybe you've never really listened to classical music - check it out! Try out some jazz, country, classic rock, religious, or show tunes! YouTube, local radio stations or internet radio stations such as Pandora are a great place to start.

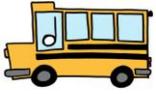
Listen to a recording of Smetana's "The Moldau" and pretend like you are going down a river in a boat! Listen for the rapids, a wedding dance, an old castle, mermaids swimming in the water and a big waterfall! If you'd like, visit <http://theteachingstudio.blogspot.com/p/lesson-plans-for-sale.html> where you can purchase an inexpensive lesson plan that includes printable flannel board pictures to tell the story as well as fun lyrics to the song and other activities.



Your local city may have lots of free or inexpensive concerts in the park during the summer. Take your child to see a live concert!

Check out Little Einstein's "Rocket's Firebird Rescue" DVD from your local library and watch with your child!





Sing with your child! Teach your child a fun classic childhood song to sing - examples are "Five Little Ducks," "There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly," "The Wheels on the Bus," "Five Green and Speckled Frogs" or "Inchworm." Don't worry if you don't think you have a great singing voice - just sing! Your child will gain so much from singing at home regularly.



Listen to Holst's "Jupiter" from "The Planets" and pretend you are flying through outer space in a rocket ship! Fly around the room, visit the moon and the other planets, be creative and have fun!

Listen to Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" with your child and read or tell the story. (You may want to check out the "Peter and the Wolf" book by Janet Schulman with its accompanied fully orchestrated narration on CD!)

Turn on the Finale from Rossini's "William Tell Overture" and with your child try and clean up a room in your house as fast as you can by the time the song is over! Use this as your new "clean-up" song - whenever your child hears it they know it's time for the clean-up game!



Turn on a classical song and have your child draw a picture of what they think the song is about, or how the song makes them feel! (Draw a picture yourself, as well!) Some good ideas: Theme from "Swan Lake" by Tchaikovsky or "Hoedown" from "Rodeo" by Aaron Copland.

Using plastic Easter eggs or other small containers that you can close, make your own "shakers" by filling with different things - salt, rice, beans, pennies, etc. Shake the eggs and use your listening ears - does it make a loud sound? A soft sound? Fill two of each kind and see if your child can match the sounds!



Listen to Camille Saint-Saens' "Carnival of the Animals" - move and dance like the animals in each movement!

Make a do it yourself "guitar" out of a cardboard box with a hole cut in it or a metal can, and rubber bands stretched across the opening. Play and sing! Make your own band.