

Singing

Singing in Storytime

Songs and music make storytime a multi-sensory experience. Music supports brain development, math and language development, and social and emotional skills. When children hear words set to music, they are more likely to remember the words. Singing builds children's understanding of repeated patterns and sequencing, which builds early math skills. Moreover, singing slows down language to help children hear the individual sounds of the words. Music and singing are also great ways to make storytime interactive. Include dancing, along with singing, to support gross motor skill development and kinesthetic learning.

Things to try

- Singing can ease storytime transitions. Use the same songs to start and end each storytime to help cue children and build an expected routine into the storytime structure.
- Include movement with singing, when possible.
- With infants, encourage parents to gently bounce their children in their laps in time to songs.
- Use instruments like bells or shaker eggs to allow children to make their own rhythms.
- Action songs build physical awareness. Try songs like "The Hokey Pokey," which name specific body parts.
- Pause while singing to allow children to fill in the rhymes ("Yes sir, yes sir, three bags..." "Full!"). This will build phonological awareness as children learn to recognize words that end in the same sounds.
- Clap the syllables of words as you sing. This helps children break words down into their component parts.

Book Suggestions:

Picture books that can be sung are a great way to get started including music in storytime. Nursery rhymes are another great resource. The rhythms and rare words in nursery rhymes have made them classics for a reason!

- *This Little Piggy*, edited by Jane Yolen
- *I Got the Rhythm* by Connie Schofield-Morrison
- *I Ain't Gonna Paint No More* by Karen Beaumont
- *Vamanos! Let's Go* by Rene Colato Lainez
- *Jazz Baby* by Lisa Wheeler

Getting Started:

- It's okay if you aren't a classically trained opera singer! Children will enjoy your singing regardless of your abilities.
- Print song sheets or write lyrics on a dry erase board so that parents can sing along.
- Don't be afraid to repeat songs from week to week. Repetition helps children learn.
- Mix a song or two in between each story you share.
- Visit www.storyblocks.org for videos demonstrating songs, rhymes, and fingerplays that promote early learning.