

CIRCLE OF SONG

32 Songs, Games, and Dances for Music Class

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Introduction

Circle games have been popular for generations, studied by sociologists and musicologists, and have played an important role in childhood culture. The circle structure provides an inclusive space and a valuable opportunity for students to interact with each other while taking part in a shared musical activity. Whether sitting or standing, remaining in place or performing movements, these simple melodies and lyrics have a lasting impact.

Circle of Song invites students to learn musical concepts and express themselves through songs, games, and planned movements. Using traditional melodies taught by rote, the activities include passing on the beat, working with partners, hiding/finding items, folk dances, circle choreography, guessing games, and more (see below for an index of activity types).

Use these mini-lessons as primary instruction, practice, extension, and/or retention of curricular objectives. From a social-emotional learning perspective, circle activities address social awareness and relationship skills.

Circle of Song will encourage students to:

- **Develop spatial awareness**
- **Engage in social interaction**
- **Respond to music through movement**
- **Practice motor skills**
- **Understand the social aspect of music-making**
- **Communicate with others**
- **Build confidence**
- **Cooperate**
- **Be creative**
- **Smile**

After learning these fun singing games, students will ask for them over and over again, and remember them for years to come.

Activity Types

Folk Dance

Hava Nagila
I Let Her Go!
La Raspa
Old Brass Wagon

Game

Button! Button!
Here We Sit in a Ring
Paw Paw Patch
Rain Is Falling Down

Round

Make New Friends
The More We Get Together
Sally Go 'Round the Sun

Passing on the Beat

Apple Tree
Deedle, Deedle Dumpling
Cobbler! Cobbler!
Hickety Pickety Bumblebee
Old Mister Rabbit
Paw Paw Patch

Solo Singing or Movement

Charlie Over the Ocean
Make New Friends
Hickety Pickety Bumblebee
Pulcinella
Rig a Jig Jig!

Planned Movements

The Bear Went Over the Mountain
Bluebird
Bow Wow Wow
Did You Ever See a Lassie/Laddie?
Did You Ever Watch a Dancer?
Hickory Dickory Dock
Little Red Caboose
Love Somebody, Yes I Do!
The More We Get Together
Sarasponda
Snail, Snail
Tideo!



Apple Tree

Learning Targets

- I can sing with others.
- I can sign *la, sol, mi, and do*.
- I can feel the steady beat.
- I can recognize the home tone, *do*.

Resources Needed

- Real or plastic apple
- Classroom rhythm instruments

Instructions

1. Teach the song with the hand signs for *la, sol, mi, and do* pitches.



la



sol



mi



do

2. Point out that the last pitch makes the song sound final or completed. This pitch is *do*, or the “home tone.”
3. Instruct students to form a seated circle.
4. Sing the song while passing the apple around the circle on the beat.
5. The student holding the apple on the last word of the song will leave the circle and select a rhythm instrument to play on the steady beat.
6. Repeat until one player remains.

Ap - ple tree, ap - ple tree, will your ap - ple fall on me?
I won't cry, I won't shout, if your ap - ple knocks me out.



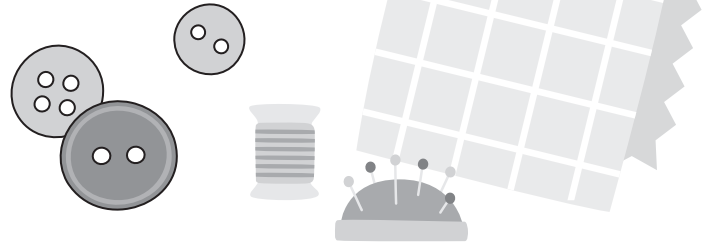
Button! Button!

Learning Targets

I can sing alone and with others.

Resources Needed

One large button



Instructions

1. Teach the song.
2. Instruct students to form a standing circle, then place their hands in a cupped formation behind their back.
3. Assign one student to walk around the outside of the circle and drop the button into one of the student's hands. No fair peeking!
4. Designate another student to stand in the center of the circle, sing the song, and point to whoever they think has the button at the conclusion of the song.
5. If their guess is correct, they remain in the middle of the circle until they make an incorrect guess or several times have passed. If their guess is incorrect, they trade places with that student.
6. Select a different person to hide the button each time.

Folk Song, alt.

