



Create a Musical Story

Age Range:	Elementary, with modifications for older learners
Learning Objective:	Students will generate and develop original artistic ideas in response to written and verbal prompts.

ENGAGE students

INQUIRE. “Think of your favorite story. Turn to a friend and whisper your favorite book or story.” (*Pause.*) “Now turn to a different friend and whisper your favorite song or kind of music.” (*Pause.*) “Adding music to a story makes it more exciting. Today we will create our own soundtrack for a story to make it exciting and memorable.”

EXPLORE sounds

READ. Select a favorite book to read aloud. While reading, pause after key moments and ask students to brainstorm sound effects (body percussion or vocal sounds) that enhance the story. Establish a “start” and “stop” signal to cue students. (i.e: Book: The boy ran away! Sound Effect: Drum on lap quickly for 5 seconds)

EXPLORE. Gather some classroom instruments or [found objects](#). Read the book again and allow students to explore and improvise sound effects using instruments.

CREATE. Fine-tune the group’s musical choices by adding “story cards” (see examples from *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* on the next page.) Use words or graphics depending on your students’ literacy level.

REFINE. Practice and refine your musical story!

PERFORM. Assign a conductor to start and stop cues. Take turns as the reader/narrator.

EXTEND learning

Choose one or more activities to extend learning.

WATCH. Listen to storybooks that have been commissioned as musical pieces, such as: [Perfect Square](#), [One-Dog Canoe](#), or the classic [Peter and the Wolf](#).

LISTEN. Listen to an episode of [YourClassical Storytime](#). Notice how music helps tell the story.

CREATE. Repeat the lesson with another story, or spend time polishing the performance of the first book, record it, and share it with parents.





Sample Story Cards & Book List

CREATE A MUSICAL STORY

Example One: Text Only

STORY	SOUNDTRACK	STORY	SOUNDTRACK
Once upon a time, Goldilocks went on a walk through the woods.	<u>RHYTHM STICKS</u> : Steady walking beat, 10 counts	She found a house, and the door was open. So she opened the door and went in!	<u>VOICE</u> or <u>RATCHET</u> : Slow, quiet creaking sound

Example Two: Graphic Representation

STORY	SOUNDTRACK	STORY	SOUNDTRACK
	10 times <i>mf</i> 		5 seconds <i>pp</i> 

K-2 Recommended Books

- ✓ *Miss Spider's New Car* by David Kirk
- ✓ *Moo* by David LaRochele
- ✓ *Snail Trail* by Ruth Brown
- ✓ *Mortimer* by Robert Munsch
- ✓ *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury
- ✓ *Shark in the Park* by Nick Sharrat
- ✓ *Max Found Two Sticks* by Brian Pinkey
- ✓ *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* by Eric Carle
- ✓ *Tin Forest* by Helen Ward
- ✓ *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats

3-6 Recommended Books

- ✓ *Skeleton Cat* by Kristyn Crow
- ✓ *The Z was Zapped* by Chris Van Allsburg
- ✓ *Tuesday* by David Wiesner
- ✓ *Be You!* by Peter H. Reynolds
- ✓ *Bee-Bim Bop* by Linda Sue Park
- ✓ *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt De La Pena
- ✓ *Samad in the Forest* by Mohammed Umar
- ✓ *A Different Pond* by Bao Phi

Tips for Selecting Books

Books with a lot of animal sounds work well for vocalization and vocal development. Action-oriented books work well if you have a lot of classroom percussion instruments available.