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Announcements

- Performance Week is Mon. May 16 -Sat. May 21. Please check with your teacher to see if there is class that week.
- Summer session is open for enrollment. We will be offering both in person and online classes. Space is limited so register today!

Questions or comments? Please feel free to contact us.

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Featured Family Concert



NSO Family Concert: Philharmonia Fantastique

Where: Kennedy Center | Foggy Bottom, DC

When: May 15

Tickets: \$18-20

Dynamic concerto meets animated film! Through a mesmerizing hybrid of animated and live action film-ing, follow a magical Sprite as it embarks on a musical journey through the inner workings of an orchestra. Violin strings vibrate, brass valves slice air, and drum heads resonate like you've never seen before—all set to live music from members of the NSO. By the film's end, the orchestra comes together in a spectacular finale! Recommended for all ages.

We're Outside!

In last year's May newsletter I wrote,

This has no doubt been a lemon of a year and we have managed to make (and enjoy) lots and lots of lemonade. We have adjusted (and maintained) like we have never had to before. From abrupt shut downs to virtual...everything, there is now a dim light at the end of the tunnel.

Although I may have spoken too soon, this pandemic has put us through the ringer and maybe it is finally safe to say that the light at the end of the proverbial tunnel is shining brightly. After 2 years of endless screen time with Zoom, Google Meets and the like, masks are slowly coming off and indoor activities are beginning to open. However, May brings with it warmer weather, blooming flowers, and my least favorite, flying insects (at least we will not be seeing the monster cicadas we encountered last year). And while I am elated to be back to teaching and living life in-person and indoors, I have a new and profound appreciation for the outdoors, flying bugs and all...well, maybe I won't go *that* far.

Research indicates that outdoor environments and surroundings act as a rich stimulus for creativity and sensory development, creating opportunities for enquiry and critical thinking. Therefore, when we have the opportunity to do ANYTHING outdoors with children, we should. And making music should not be an exception. Fresh air, sunshine and a cool breeze provide the perfect accompaniment to music making. If you have taken our classes outside, you have experienced this enticing recipe first hand, with the guidance of our wonderful teachers. However, why should your children's outdoor musical experiences be limited to Levine's beautiful grounds? Below are a few ideas to take your music time beyond our instruction and into your own outdoor spaces.

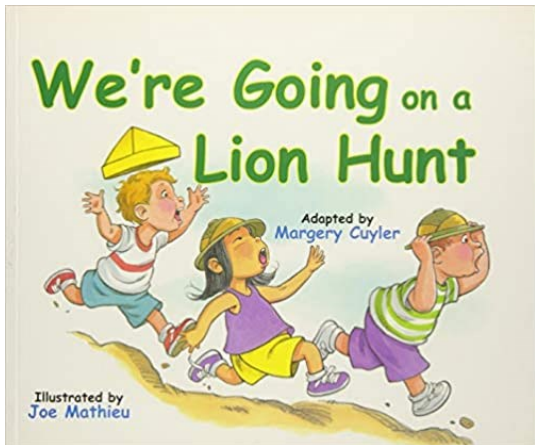
- Drum outdoors: explore outside with a kitchen utensil or stick and discover the different sounds that can be made on different objects outside by hitting and scraping
- Music focused play dates: gather with other children and their families to sing and play together
- Create a music wall in your backyard
- Have a bag of musical instruments (bought or created) handy for field trips to the park
- Find objects in nature to use as musical instruments (sticks, rocks, etc.)
- Play games to identify sounds in nature from birds chirping to wailing sirens

Children need access to an assortment of different spaces inside and outside, chockfull of open-ended opportunities for discovery. Outdoor music resources and discovery foster independence and also rhythmic, sound and movement exploration. So, as the indoor options open, do not throw the outdoors to the side. Take some time to smell the roses, take a walk in the park and perhaps more importantly, make music!

- Cierra Staton



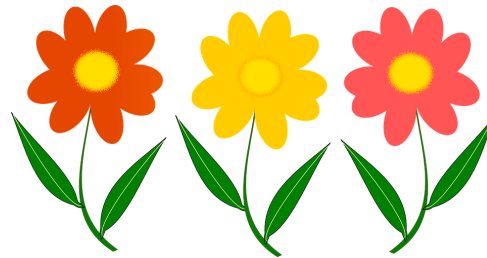
Musical Book



We're Going on a Lion Hunt

by Margery Cuyler

A favorite of mine and my students, "We're Going On a Lion Hunt" sparks imagination as children are led through the tall grass and up the trees of the safari in pursuit of a lion resting in his cave. You don't have to be outdoors to enjoy sloshing through the mud and splashing through the river, although it is so much more fun to pretend while outdoors. Tap a drum (or whatever outdoor found sound) while reading and have your child perform the movements to the beat!



Digital Sources



Familiar characters guide children through movement, singing and instrument games.

www.pbskids.org