

Kodály in Your Classroom by Dr. Shelly Cooper, University of Arizona

Children enjoy singing songs about animals, so it is not surprising that many folk songs include animals. Take advantage of your students' interest by utilizing songs about animals in your daily lessons. Constantly add new activities and teach new concepts to these traditional songs and reap the benefits of having motivated, engaged, and enthusiastic learners in your classroom.

Below are a few suggested learning opportunities for *Let Us Chase the Squirrel*:

Let Us Chase the Squirrel

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the song 'Let Us Chase the Squirrel'. The first staff is in 2/4 time and contains the melody for the first line of the song: 'Let us chase the squir - rel, up the hick - 'ry down the hick - 'ry.' The second staff is also in 2/4 time and contains the melody for the second line: 'Let us chase the squir - rel up the hick - 'ry tree.' The lyrics are written below the notes.

*Note some versions use “hickory”  rather than “hick’ry”

Grades K-1

♪ Learning a Repertoire (Dictionary) Song

- ◆ Students in circle formation. Teacher sings song while walking around circle. Teacher hands a stuffed “squirrel” to one student on the word “tree.” He/She then walks around the circle and song continues.

♪ Song Review and Beat Practice

- ◆ Chase Game – Students sitting in circle formation. One child walks around the circle carrying an “acorn” (or some type of nut) while the class sings song. The child drops the “nut” in another child’s lap on the word “tree.” Child with nut jumps up to chase the student who dropped it around the circle. Choose a new child to carry the “nut” and the game continues.
- ◆ Have students recite a squirrel poem while patting the steady beat. This strategy inserts beat practice while facilitating a smooth transition from the “chase” to the next student who carries the “nut.”

Little squirrel, little squirrel
High up in the tree.
What a lot of nuts you have
Please share some with me.

(S. Cooper)

Grades 2-3

♪ Song Review and Canon

- ◆ Students divided in two lines with the first student in each line forming an arch. Next two students travel under the arch and then form another arch next to the first. Continue singing so that all students have a turn at forming the “tree trunk.”
- ◆ Divide into 2 groups – play game in canon (2-beat)

♪ Melodic/Rhythmic Icon Cards

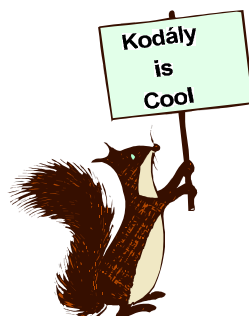
- ◆ Have class assemble large icon cards in correct order (I suggest making 8 ½ X 11 version of each card included in the “song grid” page, and have provided pdf files for your convenience.) Ask students questions that require them to articulate their music knowledge, such as “How did you know it should be that card?” to encourage discussions on **high/low** (noting the squirrel placement on each tree), **fast/slow** (bigger vs. smaller squirrels), and **rest** (acorn signifies no sound).
- ◆ Contest: Using two sets of large icon cards, divide class into small groups have groups assemble w/out teacher assistance.
- ◆ Individual Assessment: Each student receives an envelope with “squirrel” cards to assemble w/out teacher assistance. (Before distributing: Copy, laminate, cut into 8 pieces, place in envelopes)
- ◆ **Reminder: To increase the challenge level always include “*extra*” cards

♪ Melodic/Rhythmic Concepts

- ◆ use song (and/or cards) to determine rhythms, solfa syllables, phrases, etc.

♪ Rhythmic Ostinato

- ◆ Circle Formation
- ◆ While walking in a circle, alternate between the beat/rhythm in hands/feet
- ◆ Teacher claps ostinato | | ▽ | ▽ while students sing song
- ◆ Ask students: “Was I clapping the beat?” (no) “Was it the rhythm of the words?” (no) “Did I clap the same pattern over and over?” (yes) “What do we call a rhythm pattern that we repeat over and over?” (ostinato)
- ◆ ½ class add ostinato (clapping) to Let Us Chase the Squirrel while others sing
- ◆ Have students switch jobs



Grades 4-6

♪ Singing a Partner Song

- ◆ Pair with *Hop Old Squirrel*

Hop Old Squirrel

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the song "Hop Old Squirrel". The music is in 2/4 time and G major. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are: "Hop Old Squirrel Eid - le - dum, Eid - le - dum. Hop Old Squirrel Eid - le - dum dee." The first staff is for the first part of the song, and the second staff is for the second part.

♪ Notation/Dictation of Rhythms (and Solfa Syllables)

- ◆ Using White Boards/Slates – Alternate between “saying” the rhythms and “clapping” the rhythms
- ◆ Using White Boards/Slates/Staff Paper – Write melody on staff