



A Curriculum  
Framework for  
Preschool Education  
in Singapore

**EDUCATORS’  
GUIDE FOR  
AESTHETICS  
AND CREATIVE  
EXPRESSION**



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- My First Skool at 50 Sengkang West Way
- My First Skool at 6 Segar Road
- The Schoolhouse by Busy Bees, Sembawang Country Club

# OVERVIEW OF EDUCATORS' GUIDES

*Nurturing Early Learners – A Curriculum Framework for Preschool Education in Singapore* or NEL Framework was updated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2022. It provides broad principles to guide preschool centres in planning and implementing a quality curriculum for children aged four to six (i.e., Nursery 2, Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2).

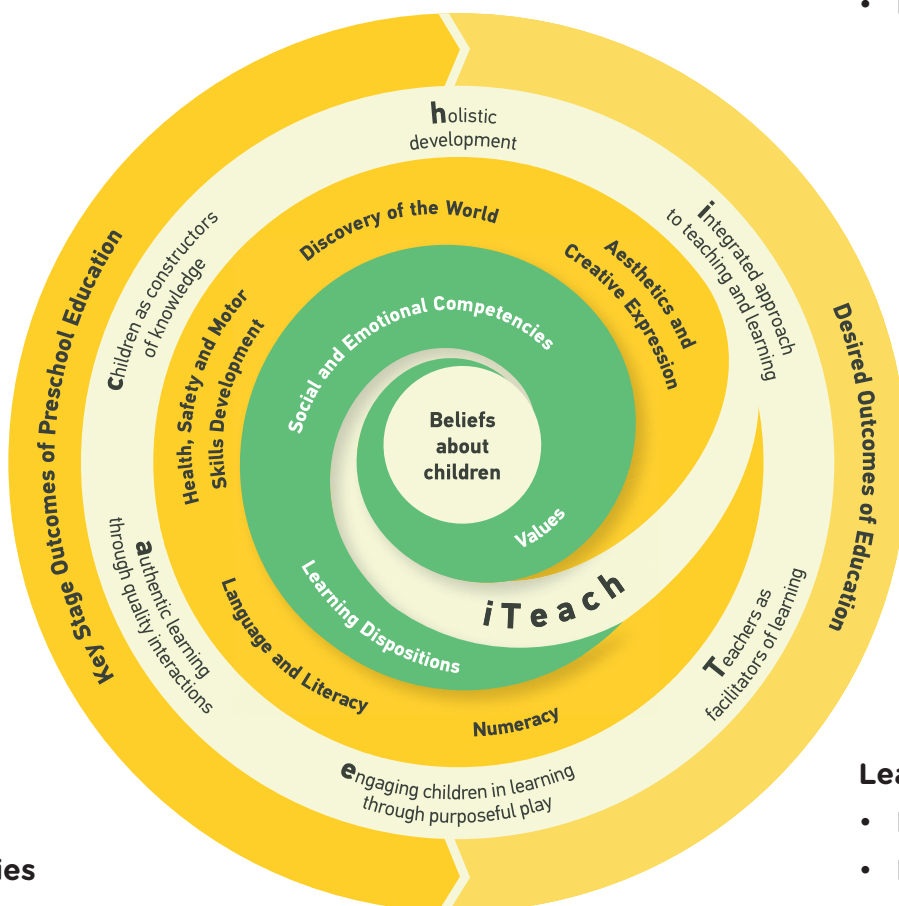
**Figure 1: Key Concepts of NEL Framework**

## Beliefs about Children

- Children are joyful, curious, active and competent learners.
- Children play, learn and grow with others in a diverse and multi-cultural community.

## Values

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Care
- Honesty



## Social and Emotional Competencies

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management
- Responsible decision-making

## Learning Dispositions

- Perseverance
- Reflectiveness
- Appreciation
- Inventiveness
- Sense of wonder and curiosity
- Engagement

At the centre of the NEL Framework is our beliefs about children. It emphasises the importance of holistic development and nurturing the joy of learning in our children. The NEL Framework places an increased importance on the key aspects of children's learning and development, which include inculcating values, developing social and emotional competencies and fostering learning dispositions. These cut across all learning areas and should be intentionally and consistently incorporated across children's learning experiences as they serve as the foundation for character building, lifelong learning and learning to live harmoniously with others. The NEL Framework also states the key knowledge, skills and dispositions of five learning areas to support children's holistic development.

Teachers play a critical role in stimulating and deepening children's learning based on their understanding of how children develop and learn. The six *iTeach* principles serve to guide preschool teachers in planning, designing and facilitating joyful and meaningful learning experiences which will lay a strong foundation to help children achieve the Key Stage Outcomes of Preschool Education and the Desired Outcomes of Education in Singapore.

## PURPOSE OF THE EDUCATORS' GUIDES

The NEL Educators' Guides seek to help teachers translate the NEL Framework into quality teaching and learning experiences for children. The nine volumes of Educators' Guides provide teaching and learning strategies; examples of learning activities; ways of organising the learning environment; and considerations for observation and assessment of children's learning and development. Each Educators' Guide takes close reference to the principles and learning goals of the NEL Framework. The examples in each Educators' Guide illustrate one or several of the following:



Values



Social and Emotional Competencies



Learning Dispositions



Executive Functioning Skills

1. Nurturing values, social and emotional competencies, learning dispositions and executive functioning skills across learning experiences
2. Promoting learning in, about and through the outdoors
3. Using technology meaningfully and appropriately

The Educators' Guide for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* provides ideas for teachers to create and facilitate appropriate and meaningful learning experiences for children through examples and suggestions. Teachers may adapt and modify these examples and suggestions to cater to the interests, needs and abilities of their children.

# Chapter 1

## AESTHETICS AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION IN THE EARLY YEARS



*Aesthetics and Creative Expression* involves the love and pursuit of beauty as found in art and music and movement. **The open-endedness and playful qualities of the art and music and movement activities encourage self-expression, reasoning, imagination, communication and build self-confidence.** With the promotion of children's creativity and imagination through art and music experiences, children are better able to engage in problem-solving and creative thinking. **Building children's self-confidence will also help them feel secure and more ready to adapt and participate in a new environment.**

Art and music and movement experiences also provide children with opportunities to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas. Therefore, it is important that **children participate in art and music and movement activities and enjoy themselves in the process of exploring, expressing, and creating.**



Children enjoy themselves in the process of exploring, expressing and creating during the learning experiences in *Aesthetics and Creative Expression*.

The focus of *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* is on children's positive learning experiences such that they enjoy the process and are confident in what they can produce. Children should be given ample time and space to enjoy art and music and movement such that they feel comfortable to respond spontaneously. Observations of children at play show that they readily engage with the arts and are easily motivated to express themselves, imagine and create without any inhibition. This in turn encourages them to be open to sharing their creations with others.



Some common learning experiences in *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* include:

- **Art**

Children enjoy art experiences in a variety of contexts. They experiment with a variety of art materials and learn how to express themselves creatively as they explore the elements of art, such as colours, lines, shapes and textures through different art media and techniques.

- **Music and Movement**

Children experience the elements of music as they listen and move to a variety of music, sing songs of different genres and improvise on musical instruments. As more opportunities are provided for them to talk about their ideas and feelings about the music they hear and express them through art, dramatisation and body movement, they will gain a better sense of self and be more confident to create and innovate.

Hence, children should be provided with **varied opportunities to experience art and music and movement as these foster the development of the whole child, including their creativity, as well as the cognitive, physical, and social and emotional domains.**



Children should be given ample opportunities to experiment with a variety of art materials, tools and techniques to express their thoughts and ideas.

Teachers can provide a range of stimuli, ideas and opportunities for children to draw, paint, print, create collages, construct three-dimensional (3-D) structures, sing with actions and movement, and play musical instruments. As children need time to work on their ideas and creations, sufficient time and space should be given for them to enjoy and engage with a repertoire of art and music experiences. These can be conducted as individual activities, in a small and/or large group so that children can have opportunities to create art and experience music and movement individually, as well as collaboratively. Exploring different ways of art- and music-making and expression through movement can also take place spontaneously and through planned opportunities.

**Art and music and movement in the early years revolve around children's enjoyment and expression.** Teachers' theoretical understanding of children's development in art and music and movement should be seen as guides for observing and understanding children, and not end-goals in themselves. **Intentional teaching in art and music and movement should not be about filling perceived gaps in knowledge and skills.** Instead, when planning experiences in the arts, teachers should respect children's expressions and provide them with ample opportunities to communicate their thoughts and ideas through varied means of expression.

## ART IN THE EARLY YEARS

**Children's art represents how they view and understand the world.** Valuing their artwork as insights into their ideas, thoughts and feelings should be the primary objective of any art experience for young children. As children grow and develop, their understanding of the world and how they seek to represent it may change.



**Art has the role in education of helping children become like themselves instead of more like everyone else.**

Sydney Guerwitz Clemens



Children's development in art can be understood in terms of the relationships among these three aspects (Kindler & Darras, 1997; Louis, 2013):

- **Intent and communication**

What is the intent of the child's artwork? What is the child trying to convey?

- **Psychomotor and social development**

How does the child's psychomotor development and social interactions influence his/her art-making?

- **Knowledge and skills in art**

How does the child understand and make use of the elements of art, techniques and medium to express him/herself?

As children grow, they learn and develop an increasing range of strategies to represent their thoughts and ideas through art which they apply according to the perceived needs and functions of their art and depending on the context in which their art is produced (Wolf & Perry, 1988). The teacher's role, in line with Vygotsky's conceptualisation of children's development, is to provide them with the social interactions to stimulate and respond to their art explorations, ultimately expanding children's repertoire to express themselves (Kindler, 1999).

Therefore, to adequately support children's expression of themselves through art, teachers need to be familiar with the relationships between children's intent and communication, their physical and social development, and their knowledge and skills in art. In the preschool years, teachers often encounter different types of mark- and art-making, all of which point to different relationships between the marks produced and the meaning accorded to them (Kindler & Darras, 1997).

The pictures in the following pages are examples of children's progression in mark- and art-making. These pictures do not indicate a linear progression in children's development.

**Children's artistic expression may vary between these types, depending on their intent, preferences, and familiarity with new techniques, tools and medium.**

## Exploration

Children explore and begin to understand mark-making, that is, the translation of actions into different lines, textures, shapes and forms. They are curious about the marks they make and try to replicate their actions and marks, or experiment with different movements.

In this mode, children's artworks are often random and uncontrolled. They frequently explore with art materials in playful ways. Besides developing eye-hand coordination, the physical motions bring joy to children, which will lead them to further exploration and discovery.



Children can explore mark-making using different tools (e.g., coloured pencils, crayons, markers).



Children can explore mixing colours on canvas.



Children can explore texture and shape using molding clay.

## Predictability and Regularity

Children begin to recognise the correspondence between certain actions and the resultant marks. This leads to the production of more regular and predictable marks and the emergence of beginning shapes.

In this mode, children are beginning to intentionally manipulate art materials to create artwork that represents their thoughts and ideas.



Children start making more predictable marks and regular shapes in their artwork (e.g., drawing a person).



Children begin to create artwork to represent their thoughts and ideas (e.g., rolling a piece of molding clay to represent a large cookie).



## Symbolic and Representative

In this mode, children's mark- and art-making are deliberate, both in the choice of materials and their creations. We see this type of art-making when children are motivated to express themselves and are familiar with the material/s.

Often, these artworks represent people, objects or stories, and are sometimes accompanied by vocal and gestural manifestations.

The artworks children create are intentional expressions of their thoughts and ideas and may or may not be easily decoded by others.



Children begin to represent people, objects or stories in their artwork (e.g., drawing of chickens running free in a chicken farm).



Children start to experiment by combining different pieces of molding clay to create an animal model.

Children's development in art depends on the opportunities they have to (Kindler, 2010):

- Enjoy exploring and experimenting with art materials and tools.
- Become sensitive to the visual environment and to various works of art.
- Express their personal views of the world around them.

Hence, teachers need to observe children's attitudes towards art and their art-making experiences and follow up with opportunities to extend children's exploration and expression accordingly.

**Children's art-making should not be merely a demonstration of the knowledge and skills they have acquired or a reflection of their accuracy in representing the environment around them.** Ultimately, teachers should continue to value children's art more as an expression of their personal thoughts and ideas. Such an understanding is crucial to fostering children's creativity and expression and supports their long-term development in art.

## ELEMENTS OF ART

For every art-related learning experience to be meaningful and enjoyable, it is important for teachers to understand the elements of art. This will enable them to facilitate art-related learning experiences and help children develop an understanding of the art vocabulary they need in order to respond to or interpret the visual world around them, and more importantly, to express their own thoughts and ideas. Being able to effectively express themselves in ways that others around them can understand and respond to them also heightens their enjoyment and engagement in art.

Therefore, learning experiences in art should not just focus on introducing the basic elements of art, such as line, colour, shape, texture and form. Teachers will need to help children to explore and understand how these elements may be useful for them to communicate their thoughts and feelings through art.



Children explored the use of colours, textures and natural materials to create these pieces of artwork to show their ideas and thoughts about global warming and deforestation.

## Line

A line is defined as a continuation of a dot or a continuous mark that suggests to the viewers a certain direction. It implies movement and expresses a degree of energy (e.g., thick and strong lines). This can be made using implements, such as pencils, markers, crayons and sticks. A line can also be created by the edge of an object or by the folds of a piece of paper or fabric.

Teachers can introduce words to children that are used to describe lines (e.g., long, short, thick, thin, horizontal, vertical, diagonal, smooth, continuous, zigzag, broken) to enable them to talk about their artwork more meaningfully. Teachers can be more sensitive to daily opportunities where children can demonstrate their understanding of the elements of art.



Visual prompts can be used to encourage children to explore different kinds of lines in their artwork.



Teachers can observe children's awareness and use of the elements of art in their daily experiences.



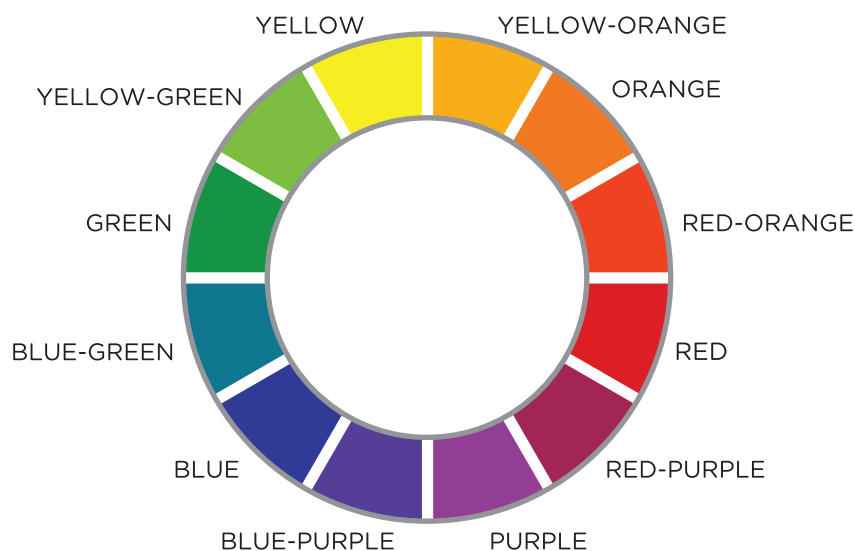
## Colour

Colour is produced when light is reflected to the eye upon striking an object and has the following characteristics:

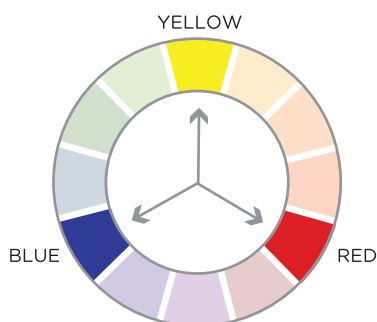
- It is used to attract attention or camouflage.
- It can make us feel relaxed or excited.
- It can be used to create areas of brightness and dullness, lightness and darkness, warmth and coolness in an artwork.

The colour wheel below, which shows the primary, secondary, intermediate and complementary colours, helps us understand the use of colours in art.

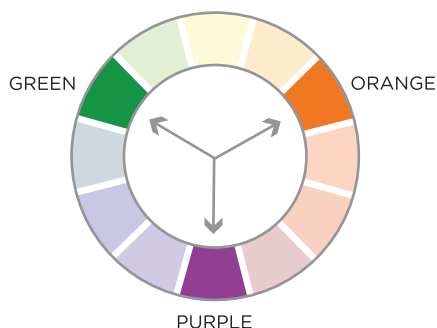
**Colour Wheel**



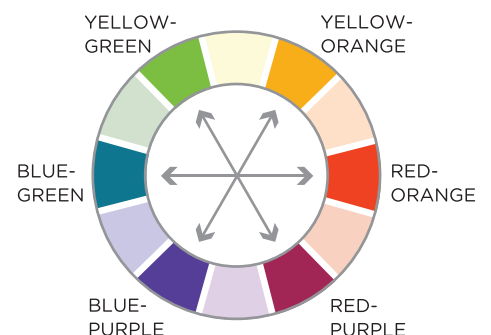
**Primary Colours**



**Secondary Colours**



**Intermediate Colours**



**The three primary colours are red, blue and yellow.** They are used in varying amounts to produce other colours. Mixing two primary colours in equal amounts results in a secondary colour. For example:

- Yellow + Red = Orange
- Yellow + Blue = Green



Besides getting children to mix paints, teachers can also provide opportunities for them to explore mixing colours using other forms such as dough.

Mixing a primary and an adjacent secondary colour in equal amounts results in an intermediate colour. The intermediate colours are found between the primary and secondary colours on the colour wheel. For example:

- Red + Orange = Red-Orange
- Yellow + Green = Yellow-Green

Complementary colours are opposite each other on the colour wheel. They provide a dramatic visual contrast (e.g., blue and orange, green and red). Teachers can create awareness about these categories of colours and have children observe shades of these colours. Through printing and painting activities, children learn words that can be used to describe colours (e.g., warm, cool, bright, dull, light, pale, dark). The lightness and darkness of colours is known as its value.

## Shape

Shape is defined as the area of an object or picture. Shape in art is defined as an enclosed space which has length and width. The shape is outlined by other elements, such as lines, colours and textures. Shapes can also be created without lines, for example, by using a mass of colour.

Three-dimensional shapes (e.g., pyramids, spheres, cubes) are known as forms. A two-dimensional (2-D) shape can be made to look three-dimensional (3-D) by adjusting the degree of light/shade, e.g., using highlights, shadows. Teachers can introduce words to children that are used to describe shapes and forms (e.g., round, oval, triangle, rectangular, circular, broad, narrow) to help them understand the concepts better.

Besides exploring creating 2-D shapes using different media, children can be given opportunities to create 3-D representations of things they see using clay, dough, blocks, sandpaper and scrap materials, such as boxes and bottles.



Children can explore using different shape cut-outs to create a collage.

## Texture

Texture refers to the tactile quality of objects. It can either be authentic (i.e., real-life) or simulated by using a combination of art elements in a picture (e.g., lines can be used to depict rough surfaces, broad paint strokes to simulate smooth surfaces).

Children may use objects of different textures to create a picture. They can be guided to describe the texture observed in a picture/painting using words, such as rough, smooth, furry, prickly, slippery, hard and soft.



Children represent their ideas about flowers through the use of natural and found materials of different textures in their artwork.

## MUSIC AND MOVEMENT IN THE EARLY YEARS

Learning experiences in music and movement encourage children to **listen and respond through creative movements or expressions which provide them with the opportunity to communicate their thoughts and feelings and express their creativity without requiring words.** In addition, these experiences nurture children to think creatively and apply knowledge in innovative ways. Children engage in creative thought processes when they use their bodies to express a variety of movements that they observe in real life. For example, they can pretend to be creepy crawlies in the garden or raindrops landing on the ground, representing physical states of being light, gentle, slow, strong and fast.



**... [M]usic activates multiple brain networks during music listening, responding and performance.**

Sarah J. Wilson



When planning learning experiences in music and movement for children, it is important for teachers to have an understanding of children's development and how children respond and move to sounds and music. Children's musical awareness is characterised by their:

- Ability to be comforted by calming sounds and music.
- Curiosity about sounds – high, low, loud, soft sounds produced by musical instruments.
- Sing-song exchanges that they initiate during play.





As children move to the music, they learn about different elements of music, such as tempo, dynamics and rhythm.

Bruner's (1966) three modes of representation for children's cognitive development is a useful guide for teachers to consider when making decisions about how they want to introduce the elements of music to children. These three modes of representation are:

- Enactive (action-based)
- Iconic (image-based)
- Symbolic (language-based)

Based on these three modes of representation, teachers would first provide opportunities for children to experience music with their whole body before progressing to the next mode, when teachers encourage children to use objects and drawings to represent their ideas and imagination in response to music. The third mode of representation requires children to use language to describe their experience or symbols to represent the elements of music.

**In the early years, more emphasis is given to the enactive and iconic modes as children enjoy, move and respond to a variety of songs and movement.** The symbolic mode is where children are familiar with some elements of music and use some music vocabulary that is appropriately pitched to their understanding to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings about the music and movement that they experience.

Various approaches have been adopted to guide teachers in planning music and movement experiences for children. Of these approaches, three have been particularly useful for application in the preschool setting:

- **The Dalcroze Approach**

Developed by Jaques-Dalcroze (1865 – 1950), this approach encourages learning through multiple senses, such as tactile, kinesthetic, aural and visual senses.

- **The Kodály Approach**

Besides focusing on movement, Zoltan Kodály (1882 – 1967), a Hungarian composer, recommended this approach to stress the importance of listening and the ability to sing in tune.

- **Orff-Schulwerk Approach**

Carl Orff (1895 – 1982), on the other hand, emphasised the use of speech patterns and percussion instruments to express, improvise and compose.

**When the concepts and ideas of these approaches are integrated into music and movement-related learning experiences, children become active participants as they are given opportunities to:**

- Explore the elements of music first-hand using their entire body.
- Express the elements of music and their imagination using their voice, body and musical instruments.
- Improvise and create their own rhythms and melodies using their voice, body and musical instruments.
- Think creatively as they seek to communicate what they hear and how they feel with their body and musical instruments.

Teachers should introduce the elements of music in a natural manner and invite children's active participation. Good modelling and careful scaffolding after observing children in action will enable teachers to plan music and movement experiences that are enjoyable and meaningful. As more opportunities are provided for children to explore and experience these elements with their voice, body and musical instruments, they will be able to use the elements of music appropriately to describe the sounds and music that they hear.

## ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

The elements of music that teachers can integrate into children's music and movement experiences include:

- Dynamics
- Tempo
- Pitch and Melody
- Rhythm and Beat
- Timbre
- Form

Music and movement activities at the preschool level commonly promote the learning of the first four elements, i.e., dynamics, tempo, pitch and melody, and rhythm and beat. Teachers can engage children in discussions about timbre and form when children compare sounds of musical instruments or move to more structured dance steps.

### Dynamics

**Dynamics in music refers to how softly or loudly a piece of music is played.** Dynamics are usually used to convey feelings, moods and images. For example, children can stretch their body widely for loud sounds, and curl up their body for quiet sounds. For sounds that are getting louder (crescendo) or softer (decrescendo), they could do these movements in slow-motion.



Children pretend to be lion dancers and move to the dynamics of the music.

## Tempo

**Tempo refers to the speed of a piece of music, i.e., fast or slow, getting faster or getting slower.** For example, rhymes/songs, such as “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” and “Rock-a-Bye Baby” are usually sung at a slow tempo while “Jingle Bells” and “If You’re Happy and You Know It” are usually sung at a fast tempo.



As children listen and respond to music through body movements, they learn that music and songs have different tempos.

## Pitch and Melody

**Pitch refers to the high and low sounds that make up a piece of music.** A series of different pitches with one following the other makes up its melody. When different pitches are played together, harmony is created.

**When introducing pitch to children, teachers can plan the following experiences:**

- Get them to think of things which make sounds and describe the sound. Then ask them to name something else and say whether it is higher or lower than the first sound.
- Play sounds of two different pitches and have children compare and identify which is the high-pitched sound and which is the low-pitched sound.
- Create a song that consists of only two pitches, one high and the other low. Have children sing the song and use body movements or hand signals to indicate the pitches. For example, stretching up high in the air or pointing up for the high-pitched sound, and crouching down to the ground or touching their toes for the low-pitched sound.



As children become more sensitive in differentiating the pitches, teachers can add in sounds that vary in between the high-pitched and the low-pitched sounds or narrow the gap between the high and low-pitched sounds.

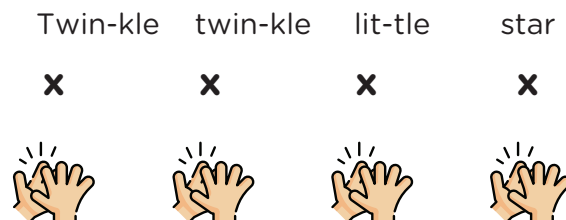
### Other variations of experiences for children include:

- Using the body to demonstrate melodies that are gradually getting higher or lower
- Tracing the movement of the melody in the air with a finger as children sing a song
- Drawing the movement of the melody on a piece of paper by getting children to draw lines or use dots or shapes to depict the melodic line

## Rhythm and Beat

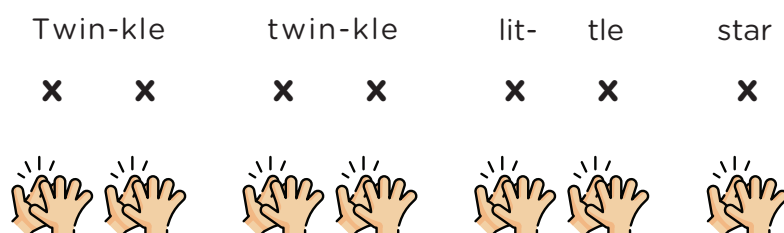
Rhythm and beat are foundational concepts in music learning. **Rhythm is the pattern of regular or irregular pulses in music while beat refers to the underlying steady pulse in a piece of music, like a heartbeat.** For example, the beat of a piece of music can be identified by clapping to each “X” when singing the song, “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”:

### Beat:



**Rhythm is different from beat. Where the beat stays the same, the rhythm changes.** The rhythm of a song or the melody of a piece of instrumental music is likely to be irregular. It consists of long and short sounds, as well as silences. In a song, the rhythm is the pattern that the words make. For example, clapping every syllable of the words while singing the song, “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”:

### Rhythm:





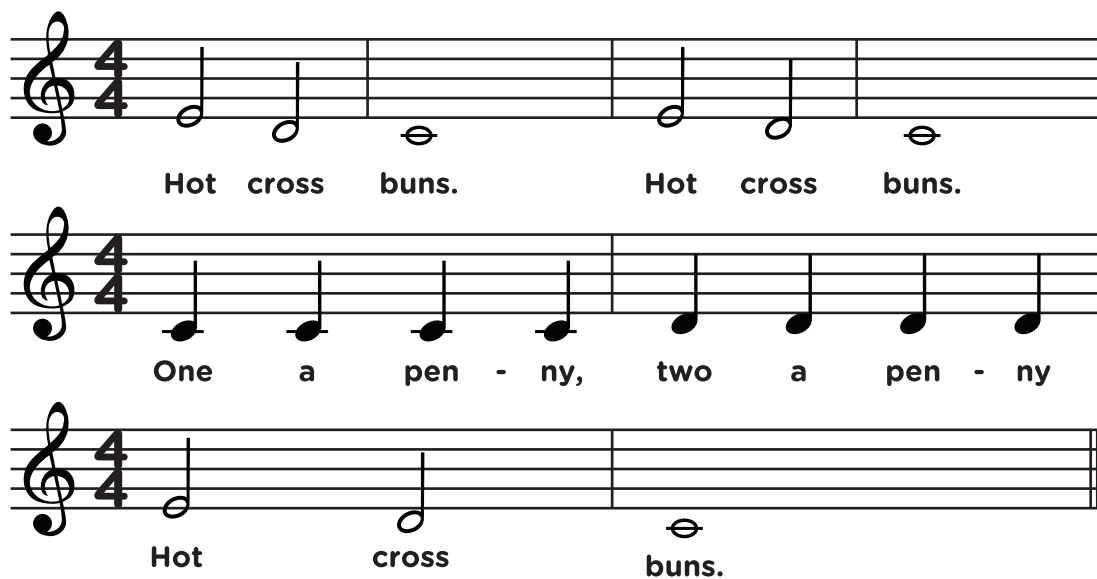
Children explore and learn about rhythm and beat as they use drums to accompany a piece of music.

## Timbre

**Timbre is the quality of a musical sound.** Words that are used to describe timbre include sharp, bright, brassy, windy and dull. Children can begin by comparing different types of sounds they hear in the environment before talking about the sound qualities of different musical instruments. Timbre should be described without reference to other elements of music to avoid confusion with sounds that are high/low (i.e., pitch) or loud/soft (i.e., dynamics) and so on.

## Form

One of the most important aspects of early music appreciation is the understanding of musical form. Early exposure enhances children's listening experiences. This element can be described as music being divided into different parts and some of those parts sound the same or similar to each other. For example, the song, "Hot Cross Buns" is made up of two parts. The first two lines and the last line sound the same, but the third line "One a penny, two a penny" sounds different from the rest. Teachers can explain that this song has an A A B A pattern. Children can add movements to these two parts of the rhyme, giving similar movement to first, second and last lines.

**Song: “Hot Cross Buns”**

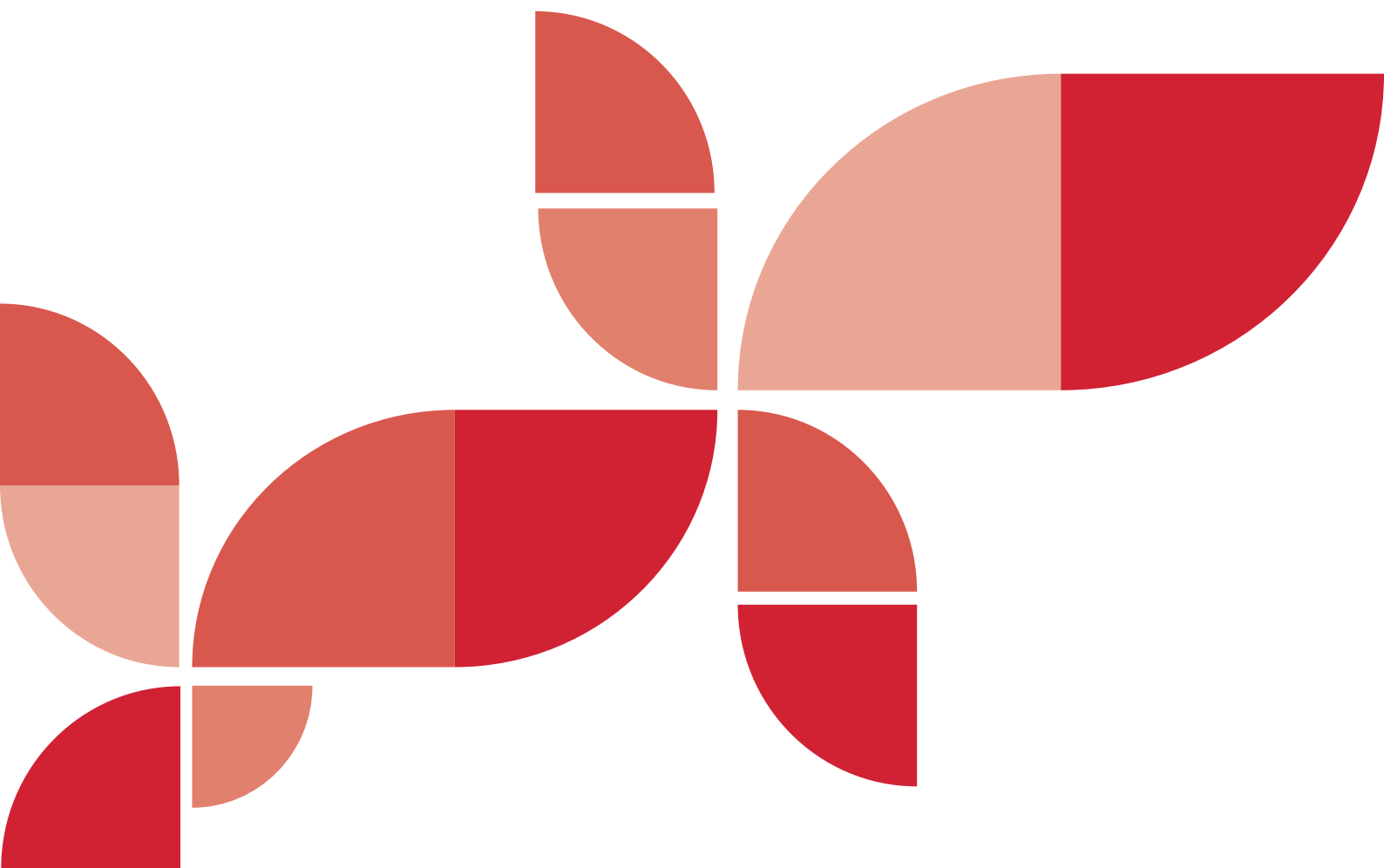
Some examples of music and movement experiences that enhance children’s understanding of the elements of music and encourage creative movements and expressions are provided in the table below.

Listening	Singing	Moving	Playing Musical Instruments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify familiar rhythms and tunes in music via humming, singing, listening to instruments and recordings</li> <li>Use body movements (e.g., walking, running, marching, swaying) to express different aspects of music</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sing songs and make a variety of sounds using voice</li> <li>Sing songs with accompanying body percussion, a percussion instrument or an instrumental music (i.e., music without vocals)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen and move to music of different rhythm, dynamics, tempo and pitch</li> <li>Explore using different body movements to express ideas and feelings, or tell a story in response to music</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen and differentiate between the pitch and timbre of sounds in the environment and those performed on musical instruments</li> <li>Express ideas or moods using instruments or other sound-making materials</li> </ul>

- Use words to describe music/sounds heard (e.g., loud, soft, slow, fast, high, low) and movements (e.g., light, heavy, sudden, free, winding)
  - Talk about what they like or not like about the music (e.g., *"I like/do not like this music because..."*)
- Differentiate between singing voice and speaking voice
  - Create new lyrics for familiar songs
  - Make up simple songs during play
- Create body movements to express ideas after listening to a piece of music
  - Perform simple dances and talk about the musical form of the music
  - Make up simple dance steps to accompany a piece of music
- Play and improvise simple rhythms on a variety of percussion instruments, such as woodblock, cymbals, tambourine, rhythm sticks and guiro
  - Use musical instruments to create music or sound effects to accompany songs, chants or stories
  - Listen to and play musical instruments rhythmically to accompany a piece of music
  - Play a variety of rhythms using musical instruments or sound-making materials

# Chapter 2

## LEARNING GOALS FOR AESTHETICS AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION



It is important for children to participate in art and music and movement experiences because the open-endedness and playful qualities of the arts promote children's creativity and imagination. The learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* require teachers to guide children to enjoy exploring and experimenting with a variety of art materials and techniques, and sounds and movements, to expressing their ideas and thoughts through art and music and movement.

The examples in this chapter illustrate how teachers can provide opportunities for children to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions of the learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression*.

## LEARNING GOAL 1

### Enjoy participating in art and music and movement activities

**Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions (KSD):**  
*Provide opportunities for children to...*

1.1 Develop an interest in art and music and movement activities

*Children's learning and development could be observed, for example\*, when they...*

- Participate actively in a range of art and music and movement activities
- Respond spontaneously to various art and music and movement stimuli
- Choose to engage in art and music and movement activities at the learning centres
- Exercise creativity and imagination in art and music and movement activities
- Enjoy singing and dancing

*\*The examples are not age-specific or exhaustive. Teachers may provide other appropriate learning experiences/activities based on children's developmental needs and interests.*

Diverse art and music and movement experiences, such as exploring a variety of art materials and musical instruments, and exposure to a wide range of art and music and movement opportunities, should be provided. This will stimulate children's interest and promote enjoyment and understanding of the arts.

Furthermore, art and music and movement activities can be avenues that allow choice as children choose and decide how they want to express their thoughts and ideas through their artistic creations. This gives children a feeling of success and competency and supports their autonomy. In the long run, children will develop an interest and initiate art and music and movement activities as they grow in enjoyment, understanding, and confidence.

## Example: “Splat!” Outdoor Art

### Learning Objective/s

N2 children are given opportunities to:

- Create artwork on a large surface in the outdoors.
- Strengthen their hand muscles and develop fine motor skills as they explore squeezing spray and squirt bottles of paint to create their artwork.

### Learning Activity

- Set up a large working area in an outdoor open space for the children to create an artwork together.
- Place a large sheet of paper on the ground. Provide the children with poster paint and a variety of tools, e.g., balloons, spray and squirt bottles, sponges, paint brushes, pom poms.
- Let the children explore painting by using the different tools provided.
- Highlight the children’s experimentation with elements of art by saying:
  - *The way you sprayed the paint from the bottle made this splatter pattern.*
  - *When you press the balloon here, it leaves a red print. When some parts of the red print mix with the orange print that is already on the paper, the orange has taken on a darker shade.*

### DID YOU KNOW?

The outdoors is great for creative and expressive activities as the children are relatively free from constraints of noise levels and space that they would otherwise be subject to in an indoor environment.





- Display what the children have created in the preschool centre to affirm their effort and build their sense of ownership for learning. The children's artwork can be used as a curtain or the backdrop for the bulletin board in the classroom.

### DID YOU KNOW?



Putting up children's artwork in the environment shows that you value their creativity and expression. This helps to build a positive self-concept in children (SEC 1, KSD 1.2).

## Example: Let's Move with the Music

### Learning Objective/s

K1 children are given opportunities to:

- Listen attentively to and sing a song.
- Respond spontaneously to a song using props, such as scarves, ribbons and pom poms or any soft materials that are appropriate for the children to hold and move to the song.

### Learning Activity

- Sing the song, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" and encourage the children to sing along.
- Sing the song at various tempos (e.g., normal pace, fast, slow, getting faster, getting slower). Invite the children to sing along.
- Allow the children to choose one of the props provided and encourage them to move in any way that they think the movement shows the mood of the music as they sing along, depending on the tempo.

### DID YOU KNOW?



As the children explore creative ways to move to the music, they have opportunities to develop the learning disposition, "inventiveness" as they generate new ways of expressing their thoughts and ideas.



- Have the children listen to the recording of Mozart's "Ah, Vous Dirai-je, Maman", Variation 1 (i.e., tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"). Invite them to talk about the music by asking them:
  - *How do you feel when listening to the music?*
  - *How would you like to move to the music?*
- Move to the music together with the children. Encourage them to come up with movements with and without using props, that are different from their friends and the teacher.

### DID YOU KNOW?



Teachers role-model the value, "respect" when they invite and accept the children's interpretation of the music. As the children observe this, they learn to respect and appreciate views and decisions of others that may be different from their own.

## Example: We are Sea Creatures

### Learning Objective/s

K2 children are given opportunities to:

- Listen attentively to and sing a song.
- Use body percussion to keep to the beat of the song.
- Create their own body movements to accompany a song.

### Learning Activity

- Have the children hum along as they listen to a song about the ocean.
- Sing the song and add soft body percussion (i.e., gentle and muted movements) for the beat of the song. Some suggested soft body percussion include: finger taps, hand waves, tap one or two fingers on the shoulder.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Getting the children to hum along promotes more attentive listening and minimises distractions, thus enabling those who are not familiar with the song to learn the melody more readily.

- Sing the song and replace the body percussion with non-locomotor gross motor movements, e.g., clap hands, stamp feet, pat laps or knees.
- Use picture cards of sea creatures mentioned in the song to ask questions and invite the children to talk about the different types of sea creatures and how each creature moves in the water. Have them take turns to create and demonstrate the movements of these sea creatures. Remind the children to listen to their friends' ideas. Invite them to share what they think about their friends' movements and suggest ways to enhance the movements, if any.
- Have the children vote for the sea creature movements that they would like to perform as a class.
- Let them pretend to be the sea creatures mentioned in the song and move in response to the song as they listen to or sing the song.

### DID YOU KNOW?



Using body percussion to accompany listening improves concentration and helps the children focus on identifying the beat. As the children are encouraged to keep to the beat, they are required to use their working memory and inhibitory control.

### DID YOU KNOW?



Encouraging the children to listen to and share what they think about their friends' ideas helps to foster the learning disposition, "appreciation" as they learn to appreciate their friends' ideas and views and begin to learn from each other.

### Note

*This activity can be modified accordingly, depending on the topic of the song.*



## Example: Responding to Music Through Art

### Learning Objective/s

K2 children are given opportunities to:

- Respond to music through creative body movements and art.

### Learning Activity

- Get the children to listen to the music, “Flight of the Bumble Bee” written by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov with their eyes closed.
- Without revealing the title of the music, get them to talk about the tempo, dynamics, pitch and mood of the music. Suggested prompts/questions:
  - *Is this a slow piece of music? Why do you say that?*
  - *Does the music sound like someone running very fast or slow? Why do you say that?*
  - *Does the music make you want to jump up high or curl up and sleep in your bed? What makes you say that?*
  - *How does the music make you feel?*
- Invite the children to share what they think the music composer was thinking about when he wrote the music and what was the story he was trying to tell us. Suggested prompts/questions:
  - *Do you think everyone who hears the music would like or dislike it? Why do you think so?*
  - *What do you think was in the mind of the person who wrote this music? What was he thinking at that time?*
  - *Do you think he was trying to tell us a story? What do you think the story is about?*
- Invite them to demonstrate their ideas about what the story of the music is about by using locomotor and non-locomotor body movements.
- Play the music again and have them express their ideas through body movements.

- Ask them if they were to draw/paint while listening to the music, how their drawing/painting would look like. Suggested prompts/questions:
  - *What pictures do you imagine/think of when you listen to the music? What makes you say that?*
  - *What thing or place does the music remind you of? Why does it remind you of that thing or place?*
- Allow the children to decide on what art materials they want to use to represent their ideas about the music through art.
- Display the children's artwork in the preschool centre.

### DID YOU KNOW?



Allowing the children to choose and use the materials of their choice for their artwork enables them to gain a sense of control over what they want to do and be aware of the consequences of their choice. This helps them develop decision-making skills (SEC 1, KSD 1.2.4 and SEC 5, KSD 5.1, 5.2).

### DID YOU KNOW?



This learning activity encourages the children to consider the perspective of others and be aware of how music can be expressed in more than one way and used to represent different thoughts and ideas. This helps to build and improve the children's cognitive flexibility as they consider different perspectives and learn to approach a situation in more than one way. In this case, they learn that music can be used to tell a story.

## LEARNING GOAL 2

### Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement

**Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions (KSD):**  
*Provide opportunities for children to...*

*Children's learning and development could be observed, for example\*, when they...*

#### Art

2.1 Develop an awareness of the following elements of art:

2.1.1 lines (e.g., straight, wavy, zigzag, dotted, spiral, thick, thin)

2.1.2 colours (e.g., primary and secondary colours)

2.1.3 shapes (e.g., regular and irregular shapes)

2.1.4 textures (e.g., smooth, rough, hard, soft, hairy, prickly)

2.2 Explore and use elements of art to represent ideas and feelings in creating their artworks

2.3 Explore creating two- and three-dimensional art using a variety of:

2.3.1 media (e.g., crayon, paint, play dough)

2.3.2 tools (e.g., roller, sponge, paint brush)

2.3.3 techniques (e.g., crayon etching, cotton-bud painting, splatter painting, collage, finger printing)

2.3.4 processes (e.g., observation, inspiration, imagination, experimentation, collaboration)

- Talk about changes in colour as they mix paint
- Notice and discuss lines in artwork, nature and the environment (e.g., leaves, tree trunks, roads, flats, roofs, bridges)
- Use different shapes to create patterns
- Use materials of different textures to create a collage
- Explore and use unconventional tools in art-making (e.g., cutlery, leaves, found objects, wires)
- Construct three-dimensional structures using a variety of objects (e.g., bottle caps, paper, cardboard, boxes, bottles)
- Experiment with malleable materials, such as dough, starch, clay and wet sand to create artworks
- Create artworks in response to a stimulus (e.g., paint a picture to reflect the mood of a piece of music, imagine and draw a new scene/character after listening to a story, sketch a favourite item)
- Work together with their friends to create a collaborative artwork (e.g., mural, class sculpture)

## Music and Movement

2.4 Develop an awareness of the following elements of music:

2.4.1 Dynamics (i.e., loud and soft)

2.4.2 Tempo (i.e., fast and slow)

2.4.3 Pitch (i.e., high and low)

2.4.4 Rhythm (i.e., long and short sounds)

2.5 Explore and use environmental sounds, vocal sounds, body percussion and/or simple percussion instruments to demonstrate awareness of the elements of music

2.6 Keep a steady beat using body movements (e.g., clapping, tapping, marching) when listening or moving to music

2.7 Create music or sound effects using vocal sounds, body percussion and/or percussion instruments in response to a stimulus (e.g., music, song, story, rhyme, sounds in the environment)

2.8 Explore and use different body movements to express ideas and feelings in response to a stimulus (e.g., music, song, story, rhyme)

2.9 Sing a variety of songs with or without accompanying actions, body percussion, or percussion instruments

2.10 Perform a simple movement or dance routine

- Listen to songs and recognise elements of music
- Explore the elements of music through singing individually or in a group, playing percussion instruments (e.g., castanets, triangle, chime bars) and body movements
- Echo rhythm patterns and using body percussion (e.g., clapping, tapping) or instruments
- Experiment with using the voice, objects (e.g., tear paper, tap the side of a tin can), different parts of the body (e.g., clap, smack the lips) and percussion instruments to create sounds
- Explore different ways of moving (e.g., straight and zigzag pathways, forward, backward and sideways movements, heavy and light footsteps, move alone, with a partner and in a group)
- Keep to the beat using body movements (e.g., march, clap, tap to a beat)
- Move in various ways to express ideas and/or feelings (e.g., falling leaf, robot, active and happy kitten)
- Use their voice, body movements or percussion instruments to accompany songs, rhymes and stories
- Create actions to familiar nursery rhymes and songs
- Explore moving (e.g., walking, running, galloping) in response to a song or piece of music

- Sing a variety of rhymes and songs alone and with others
- Move intentionally in response to music
- Create dance steps in response to music and combine these in a small group or as a class

*\*The examples are not age-specific or exhaustive. Teachers may provide other appropriate learning experiences/activities based on children's developmental needs and interests.*

Developing an awareness and exploring the elements of art and music enable children to apply these in their everyday inquiry and sense-making. When children recognise the elements of art and music, it enhances their expression of ideas and feelings. Teachers should provide a variety of tools, techniques, instruments and resources for children's experimentation and imagination in creating art and music and movement. Teachers should also provide time and space for experimentation and engagement in artistic processes as it helps children grow to value their own expression and interpretation. This gives them a sense of accomplishment and contributes to their enjoyment and appreciation of art and music and movement.

## Example: Scribbles and Lines

### Learning Objective/s

K1 children are given opportunities to:

- Read a story about lines.
- Experiment using different types of lines in their artwork.

### Learning Activity

- Read a story about different types of lines (e.g., "I'm Not Just a Scribble" by Diane Alber).
- Draw the children's attention to the lines in the illustrations and encourage them to describe the lines. Model the description of the lines for the children, if necessary.
- Provide the children with drawing materials and encourage them to use a variety of lines to create an artwork (e.g., drawing of their family members or their favourite animal).





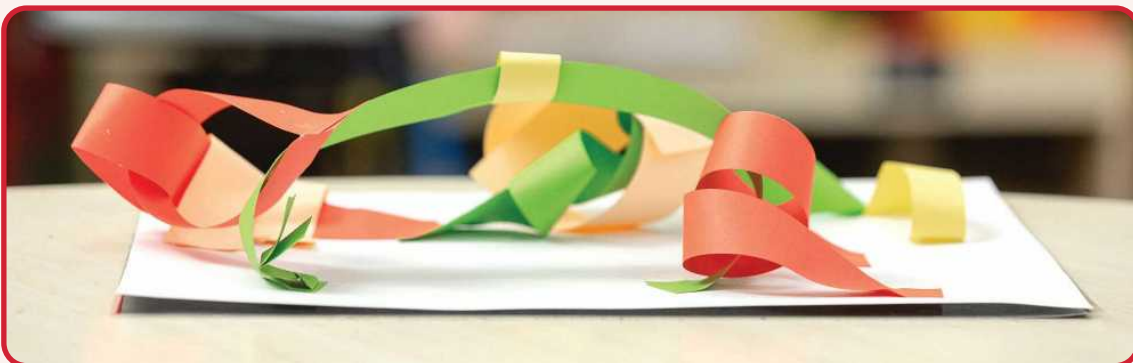
### Possible extension of the learning experience

- Let the children explore creating an artwork using different types of lines in different ways, such as through chalk drawing on the pavement or painting on an easel either individually or collaboratively with their friends.
- Introduce paper sculptures to encourage the children to create 3-D artwork. Have them explore bending and folding strips of paper in different thicknesses, colours and lengths and paste them onto a base in different ways to create a 3-D artwork.

#### Note



*Can you think of other ways to extend the children's learning experience?*





## Example: The Colour Challenge

### Learning Objective/s

K1 children are given opportunities to:

- Mix paint of different colours.
- Observe and talk about how colours change.

### Learning Activity

- Provide the children with paint brushes and water colour paint in the primary colours (i.e., red, yellow and blue), as well as white and black.
- Encourage the children to create as many colours as possible by mixing the water colour paints.
- Provide the children with a recording sheet for the colours created, as well as what paint they used to create those colours.
- Invite the children to share their experience by asking questions like:
  - *How did you create this colour?*
  - *What does this colour remind you of?*
  - *What would you name this colour?*
  - *How can you make the colour lighter or darker?*

#### Note



*Demonstrate how to keep the colours "clean" by rinsing the paint brush between mixing colours to keep their colours "clean".*



**Note**

*There are also ample opportunities for developing numeracy concepts and skills through this activity. Children can count the number of colours they have created and match or sort the colours they have created. The activity can also lead into creating different shades of colours and arranging them in order of shades from lightest to darkest or darkest to lightest.*

**Possible extension of the learning experience**

- Get the children to vote for the class' favourite colours and recreate these colours in large batches for everyone's use at the Art and Craft Centre.
- Provide the children with different media (e.g., crayons, markers, poster paint) and have them experiment creating colours that match the colours of the things that they saw during an outdoor walk (e.g., a flower, an insect, a street sign).

**Example: Shadow Art****Learning Objective/s**

K2 children are given opportunities to:

- Observe light and shadow in their environment.
- Use their inventiveness to create artwork using shadows.

**Learning Activity**

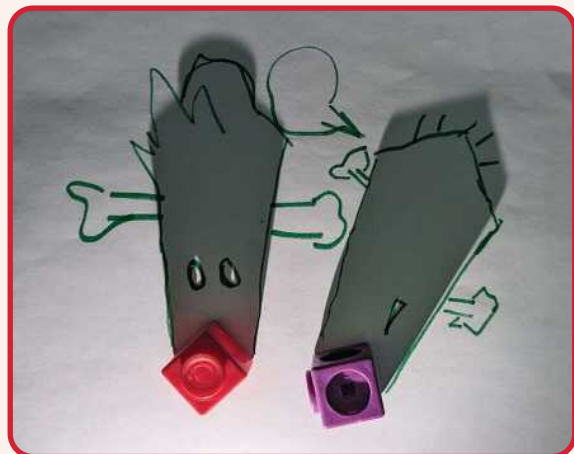
- Bring the children outdoors to look for shadows in the environment. Observe and talk about the shadows together with the children.
- Invite the children to explore making different shadow figures with their body and discover how shadows are formed and how they change in size and shape.

- Have them work in groups to use objects/materials found around them (e.g., leaves, twigs, pebbles, flowers, feather, wood pieces) to create a shadow artwork. Encourage the children to look at the objects and the shadows cast from different angles to discover new possibilities for their own artwork.
- Invite each group to share their experience by asking questions like:
  - *Tell me more about this shadow art your group has created.*
  - *How did you create this?*
  - *What would you name this artwork? Why?*



### Possible extension of the learning experience

- Show artworks that make use of shadow (e.g., wayang kulit, shadow drawings) and talk about how these artworks make use of light and shadows.
- Invite the children to create puppet props for their own shadow puppet play.
- Let the children choose an object (e.g., a small building block/cube, small bottle/container, figurine, seashell) and cast a shadow of the object on a piece of paper. Have them use their imagination and creativity to draw a picture out of the shadow.



## Example: Look at My Crazy Hair

(This is an adapted learning activity from M.Y World @ Tampines Central.)

### Learning Objective/s

N2 children are given opportunities to:

- Experiment using the blow art technique to create an artwork that is inspired by Jackson Pollock.
- Talk about their own artwork and those of their peers.

### Learning Activity

- Show a few splatter artworks by Jackson Pollock and invite the children to share their ideas and feelings about the art pieces.
- Demonstrate how to draw a self-portrait and use the blow art method to create their hair for the self-portrait. Put drops of paint on the drawing and show how to blow at the paint drops through a straw.
- Invite the children to create their “crazy hair” self-portrait.
- Have the children show their completed artwork and invite them to talk about their experience and whether their artwork turned out as they expected, what went well, what difficulties did they face and how they could do it better the next time.
- Encourage them to share what they like about their friends’ artwork.



- Based on the children's reflection and experience with the blow art technique, encourage them to apply what they have learnt and create their "crazy hair" artwork again using new tools (e.g., twigs, feathers, pebbles) and different types of lines to represent their hair.

### Note

*Can you think of other ways to extend the children's learning experience?*



## Example: Nature Printing

### Learning Objective/s

N2 children are given opportunities to:

- Observe shapes and colours in nature.
- Explore printing using natural materials.

### Learning Activity

- Bring the children outdoors and ask them to explore and observe the shapes, lines and colours found in nature.
- Have the children collect some natural materials from the outdoors.
- Introduce them to the technique of printing and invite them to create prints by using the materials they have collected.
- Have the children show their artwork and encourage them to talk about it by asking them questions, such as:
  - *What materials did you use? What colours did you use?*
  - *What kinds of lines do you see in your artwork?*
  - *Why did you choose to print the leaf here? What is it representing?*





- Display the children's artwork in the preschool centre.

#### Possible extension of the learning experience

Extend the activity by asking the children to explore using the natural materials they have collected to make prints on a piece of paper. Have them use the prints to make a collage or extend the prints into drawings of animals, people or other objects. Invite the children to show and talk about their artwork and encourage the other children to share what they like about their friends' artwork.

## Example: Loud and Soft Sounds in a Song

### Learning Objective/s

N2 children are given opportunities to:

- Sing a song with different dynamics, e.g., loud, soft, getting louder (crescendo), getting softer (decrescendo).
- Use body movements to express changes in dynamics.

### Learning Activity

- Introduce the song, "Come and Taste" and lead the children to sing along.

#### Come and Taste

*(Sung to the tune of "Do You Know the Muffin Man")*

*Lyrics by Melinda Eng*

Come and taste my chicken rice, chicken rice, chicken rice.

Come and taste my chicken rice,

Here in Singapore.

- Once the children are familiar with the song, sing the song in different ways with varying dynamics:
  - Softly
  - Loudly
  - Getting louder (crescendo)
  - Getting softer (decrescendo)

#### Note

*Depending on the children's readiness, focus on two dynamics (e.g., loud and soft) each time.*



- Invite the children to suggest how they can use their body to represent the different dynamics of the song by using the following suggested questions/prompts:

- *What movement should we do when we sing the song softly/loudly?*

- *Do you think tapping with our fingers will make a soft or loud sound? How can we make the sound softer/louder?*

- *If I stamp my feet and march, how should we sing the song? Should we sing it loudly or softly? Why?*

- *If I slowly stretch my arms out like this, how should we sing the song? What makes you say that?*

- *If I slowly bring my arms together, how should we sing the song? Why do you say that?*

- Invite the children to explore some body movements in response to the different dynamics, such as:

- Loud – Jump, open eyes wide, clap loudly, stamp foot

- Soft – Tiptoe, squint eyes, tap finger on palm

- Getting louder – Stand up slowly, move arms away from the chest slowly, stretch out legs from body while seated down

- Getting softer – Slouch or bend down slowly, bring arms closer to the chest slowly, bring legs closer to the body slowly



### Note

*Music has been shown to encourage and enhance movement as it helps the body and the mind to work together, which supports the fine-tuning of brain and body coordination. Take the opportunity for the children to explore and demonstrate some locomotor and non-locomotor skills to improve their gross motor skills development.*

### Possible extension of the learning experience

Extend this activity by getting the children to adapt the lyrics of the song. For example, they can change “chicken rice” to the name of other local dish or food that they like, such as ice kacang, rice dumpling, chapati, curry puff, rainbow cake and hamburger. Have the children explore singing the song in different dynamics and move in response with different body actions.

## Example: We've Got Rhythm

### Learning Objective/s

K1 children are given opportunities to:

- Perform the rhythm of a rhyme with accuracy and confidence.
- Use body movements and percussion instruments to perform a simple rhythm.

### Learning Activity

- Introduce the rhyme, “Peas Porridge Hot” using a chart. Lead the children to sing the rhyme and clap the rhythm of the lyrics.

#### Peas Porridge Hot

Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold.

Peas porridge in the pot, nine days old.

Some like it hot, some like it cold.

Some like it in the pot, nine days old.

- Model using different body percussion to perform the rhythm of the song, such as:

- Clap hands
- Pat the lap
- Stamp feet
- Pat cheeks
- Click fingers

- Give each child a pair of claves or wooden chopsticks/spoons. Demonstrate performing the rhythm of the phrase, “Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold” repeatedly using a pair of claves. Have the children follow by hitting their claves/chopsticks/spoons.

#### Note



- *Use the rhyme to practise rote counting, reciting number names in ascending and descending order, and recognising numbers in numerals and number words.*
- *Consider using images to replace the key words on the rhyme chart, e.g., peas, porridge, hot, cold, and the numeral for “nine” to help the children develop flexible thinking.*

- When most children have a good sense of the rhythm, sing the rhyme and have the children sing along and perform the rhythm using their percussion instrument.
- Guide the children to identify the rhyming words.

**Possible extension of the learning experience**

Extend the learning activity by introducing other familiar rhymes and lead the children to perform the rhythm using body percussion and/or percussion instruments to accompany the rhymes (e.g., “Humpty Dumpty”, “Mary had a Little Lamb”, “Baa Baa Black Sheep”)

**Note**

*Can you think of other ways to extend the children's learning experience?*

**Example: Let's Create a Short Melodic Phrase****Learning Objective/s**

K2 children are given opportunities to:

- Create a short tune of their own.
- Wait and take turns to perform a simple tune.

**Learning Activity**

- Introduce the song, “Hickory Dickory Dock” using a song chart and lead the children to sing the song.

**Hickory Dickory Dock**

Hickory dickory dock.  
The mouse ran up the clock.  
The clock struck one.  
The mouse ran down.  
Hickory dickory dock.  
Tick tock, tick tock.

- Let the children sing the song a few times.

- Show the labelled chime bars for C and G or a xylophone with the labelled keys “C” for “Do” and “G” for “So”.



- Sing the song again but change the recitation of the last line, “Tick tock, tick tock” to playing the tune C (Do) - G (So) - C (Do) - G (So) on the chime bars or xylophone.
- Sing the song a few times. Instead of singing the last line, play the tune on the chime bars/xylophone in any combination suggested below and have the children echo singing “Tick, tock, tick tock”.
  - C (Do) - C (Do) - C (Do) - C (Do)
  - C (Do) - C (Do) - G (So) - G (So)
  - G (So) - C (Do) - G (So) - C (Do)
  - G (So) - G (So) - G (So) - G (So)
- Invite a child to play the tune for “Tick, tock, tick tock” on the chime bars/xylophone for their friends to sing. Allow a few children to try by repeating the song a few times. Encourage the children to play a different tune from their friends.

### **Possible extension of the learning experience**

Display the song chart and place two sets of chime bars and/or two xylophones at the Listening Centre. Let the children visit the learning centre in pairs to create different tunes for the last line of the song for each other to sing. Give them access to an audio-recording device to record their performance of the different tunes. Have other pairs visiting the learning centre to match what they hear in an earlier recording and/or come up with a different tune from their friends’.

## LEARNING GOAL 3

### Appreciate art and music and movement

**Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions (KSD):**  
*Provide opportunities for children to...*

*Children's learning and development could be observed, for example\*, when they...*

#### Art

- 3.1 Observe and develop an awareness of the aesthetics in their immediate environment and experiences
- 3.2 Develop an awareness of different artworks and art forms (e.g., paintings, sculptures, architecture, photographs) from local and global cultures
- 3.3 Share ideas and feelings about their own artwork and those of their peers and others

- Talk about colours, lines, shapes, and textures they encounter in their everyday lives (e.g., murals, posters, building designs, nature)
- Show curiosity and ask questions when immersed in an aesthetically rich environment (e.g., museum, gallery) or when observing artful objects
- Compare different artworks (e.g., two paintings on Singapore, different sculptures from the same artist)
- Ask questions and show an interest in artworks created by artists from Singapore and other parts of the world
- Talk about their own artwork and those of their peers (e.g., what the artwork is about, what they think the lines, shapes and colours represent)

#### Music and Movement

- 3.4 Develop an awareness of sounds in the immediate environment and from a variety of sources
- 3.5 Develop an awareness of different types of music and dance performances (e.g., bhangra, Chinese opera, dikir barat, joget, lion dance, modern dance) from local and global cultures

- Listen to and talk about sounds in the environment (e.g., whistling wind, chirping birds, siren of an ambulance)
- Recognise music and dances from Singapore's diverse cultural heritage
- Listen to a variety of music (e.g., nursery rhymes, children's songs, community songs, short excerpts of music from famous works and/or composers) and talk about these



- Talk about the body movements of the music or dance performers and share what they imagine when they see the body movements
- Share what they like and dislike about a music or dance performance

*\*The examples are not age-specific or exhaustive. Teachers may provide other appropriate learning experiences/activities based on children's developmental needs and interests.*

Teaching children to be aware of and appreciate art and music and movement through everyday experiences and activities develops their aesthetic sense. This helps to enrich their quality of life as they learn to observe their immediate surroundings and begin to recognise and appreciate the beauty of what they see, hear and feel in the natural and built environment around them. When children are provided with opportunities to appreciate art and music and movement, they learn how to communicate their thoughts in verbal, non-verbal, written and visual forms. This further enhances children's creativity, imagination and their enjoyment of art and music and movement activities.

## Example: Appreciating a Famous Artwork

### Learning Objective/s

K1 children are given opportunities to:

- View and share their thoughts and feelings about an artwork by an established artist.

### Learning Activity

- Select an artwork (e.g., painting, sculpture) which caters to the children's interests and needs (e.g., corresponding to the current topic of investigation, showcasing art media or techniques which the children are interested in).
- Conduct an art appreciation session with the children. Use the **"See-Think-Wonder"** thinking routine to encourage them to talk about their thoughts, ideas and feelings about the artwork. Suggested questions:
  - What do you **see**? Tell me about it.
  - What does this artwork make you **think** about?
  - What do you think is happening/going on?

- *Where is the place?*
- *Who are the people in the artwork?*
- *How does this artwork make you feel?*
- *What do you **wonder** about what you see in the artwork? What questions do you have about the artwork?*



- Share information about the artwork with the children. Get the children to imagine themselves as part of the scene in the artwork and/or as the artist. For example, if they are examining the painting, “Bridge over a Pond of Water Lilies” by Monet, use the following suggested questions to prompt the children:
  - *Imagine if you were a frog on a lily pad in the pond. What would you see/hear/smell/feel there?*
  - *What do you think the artist was thinking or feeling when he painted this picture?*
  - *Why do you think he painted this scene?*
  - *If you were Monet and you came to Singapore, what would you draw about the outdoors? Why?*

### DID YOU KNOW?

Artwork is useful for creating immersive environments and stimulating the children's imagination. Getting them to imagine themselves as a part of the scene increases their engagement with the artwork and helps them see things from new perspectives.

- *What kind of bridge would you draw?*
- *What kind of plants or flowers would you draw?*
- *What animals would you add in your drawing?*
- *Are the brush strokes long or short?*
- *Do you think the colours would look the same if you were to use markers to draw? How would the drawing look if it were done with markers?*
- *How can you get the lighter or darker shades of green and red for the drawing?*
- *What can you do to get new colours for your drawing?*

**Note**

*Can you think of other ways to extend the children's learning experience?*



## Example: Art at Public Places

### Learning Objective/s

K2 children are given opportunities to:

- Visit a public place where artworks can be found, such as Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) stations, art galleries, museums or public art trails.
- Observe and talk about the elements of art, i.e., lines, shapes, colours and textures in describing the artworks they observed.
- Talk about what they think and feel about these artworks.

### Learning Activity

- Tell the children that they will be visiting a place to observe some artworks.
- Talk about the venue before the actual visit (e.g., where it is, how they would be travelling there, how it is different from the school environment) and the general expectations of their behaviour and safety practices during the field trip.

- At the location, invite the children to share their thoughts and feelings about the artworks that they see. Use the “See-Think-Wonder” thinking routine to encourage them to make careful observations of the artworks on display in the environment by using the following three simple questions:

- What do you see?
- What does it make you think about?
- What does it make you wonder?

### Note



*Teachers will have to be familiar with the selected artwork or art forms found at the places where they plan to visit with the children. Make a visit to the location before the actual visit by the children to select the various artwork/art form for observation and discussion with the children. Decide in advance what you would like the children to observe and for how long.*



- Back in the classroom, show photographs of the artworks observed by the children. Have them choose to recreate an artwork that they saw or like from their field trip.

### Possible extension of the learning experience

Show pictures of famous people and landmarks in Singapore. Have the children create a 3-D model of the person or landmark of their choice using moulding clay or recycled materials.

## Example: Making Music to “Singapore Town”

### Learning Objective/s

K2 children are given opportunities to:

- Be aware that rhythm and pitch can also be found in sounds they hear in their immediate environment.
- Experiment using their voices to imitate some of the sounds they hear.
- Listen to a song about Singapore and accompany it with vocal sounds.

### Learning Activity

- Bring the children out for a walk to listen for sounds found in their environment. Ask questions to encourage them to identify and describe the sounds in their own words.
- Record some interesting sounds that the children notice.
- Back in the classroom, have the children:
  - Recall the sounds they heard during the walk by playing back the audio recordings.
  - Talk about the quality of the sounds (e.g., soft, loud, high, low, long, short).
  - Create vocal sounds to mimic each of the environmental sounds.
- Introduce the song, “Singapore Town” by The Sidaislers using an audio clip. Invite the children to talk about the song and identify some of the sounds they hear in the song. Suggested questions/prompts:
  - *Have you heard this song before? What do you think of it?*
  - *What do you think this song is about?*
  - *Can you think of other songs that tell you about Singapore?*
  - *What sounds do you hear in the song? Tell me more about the sounds.*
- Get children to vote on their three most favourite sounds. Invite them to share how they will make the sounds.
- Begin counting up to 4, and lead children to mimic each sound at the count of 4.
- Divide the class into three groups. Assign one sound to each group.



- Signal to each group and have them take turns to chant their sounds rhythmically at the count of 4.
- Play the song and signal to each group to make their vocal sounds rhythmically to accompany the different sections of the song they have been assigned to. For example:
  - Group 1 is assigned to Verses 1 and 3.
  - Group 2 is assigned to all choruses.
  - Group 3 is assigned to Verses 2 and 4.

## Example: Let's Tap to the Beat and Rhythm

### Learning Objective/s

N2 children are given opportunities to:

- Make sounds by tapping on different parts of a paper or plastic cup.
- Enjoy tapping to fast and slow beats.
- Take turns to listen and perform rhythm patterns on paper or plastic cups.

### Learning Activity

- Give each child a paper or plastic cup and a wooden craft stick.
- Have the children use the craft stick to tap on different parts of the cups (e.g., bottom, side, rim). Lead them to explore tapping hard and softly on the cup.
- Invite the children to talk about the different sounds produced and how they produced those sounds.
- Let the children listen to the beats of a metronome at different tempo (e.g., 60 bpm, 80 bpm, 100 bpm). Have the children tap on any part of their cups to the beat that they hear on the metronome.
- Give time for the children to practise tapping the beats at different tempo.



- After the children have gained some confidence in tapping the beat, introduce the song, “B-I-N-G-O” and lead the children to sing along.

### **B-I-N-G-O**

There was a farmer who had a dog,  
and Bingo was his name, oh!  
B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O,  
and Bingo was his name, oh!

- Once the children are familiar with the song, have them tap the rhythm of “B-I-N-G-O” on their cups when they sing the letters “B-I-N-G-O”.
- After the children have gained some confidence in tapping the rhythm of “B-I-N-G-O”, introduce a few simple rhythms (see examples below) for the children to learn and perform

•    **X   X   X   -   /   X   X   X   -   //**

•    **X   xx   X   -   /   X   xx   X   -   //**

•    **X   -   X   -   /   X   -   X   -   //**

•    **X   -   xx   -   /   X   -   xx   -   //**

- Invite a few children to lead in creating rhythms for the class to tap in return.

# Chapter 3

## STRATEGIES FOR AESTHETICS AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION





**The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer.**

Elliot W. Eisner



Art and music and movement should be taught in a way that makes the learning experience enjoyable for children, gives them the space to imagine and be creative and curious, and provides opportunities for them to acquire knowledge, skills and dispositions. The strategies selected to facilitate art and music and movement should provide opportunities for children's choice and for their voices to be heard through creative expression during art and music-making and communicating their thoughts and feelings about the arts.

These are some strategies to facilitate art and music and movement learning experiences:

#### **Strategies for art and music and movement**

- Role-modelling and valuing children's expression in the arts
- Using novel and sensory experiences
- Using themes
- Using picture books
- Using thinking routines

#### **Additional strategies for art**

- Using artwork and other art forms
- Using a variety of art materials
- Using games

#### **Additional strategies for music and movement**

- Exploring a variety of music and dances
- Using body percussion, musical instruments and props

With all these strategies, it is important to emphasise the need to provide open-ended, creative arts experiences and not just be product-focused that provides step-by-step guidance in children's art and music and movement experiences. When children's ideas and expressions in art and music and movement are valued, children's creativity, problem-solving skills, positive self-concept and confidence are developed.

## STRATEGIES FOR ART AND MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

### Role-Modelling and Valuing Children's Expression in the Arts

Teachers should be active participants during art and music and movement activities planned for children. When children watch them explore and experiment with materials, sing and play musical instruments or use different art media with eagerness and enthusiasm, they will be more willing and motivated to experiment with different materials and try out ideas they have.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Open-ended experiences in the arts have the following characteristics (Bongiorno, 2014):

- There are no step-by-step instructions although routines (e.g., cleaning up, returning things to where they are) are put in place to nurture children's sense of responsibility.
- There is no sample for children to follow or template to use.
- There is no right or wrong way to explore and create.
- The experience is focused on the exploration of tools, media, techniques, sounds, or movement.
- The experience is unique and original to children.
- The experience is based on children's choice.

As children engaged in more of such open-ended experiences, they might...

#### Say more of:

- *Look! I'm going to do it again!*
- *Listen to this!*
- *Can I have more time?*
- *I want to draw something.*

#### Say less of:

- *I can't do it. I don't know how.*
- *Is this right?*
- *Mine doesn't look/sound like yours.*

Teachers and children need to talk about their own creative work and the processes of exploring art and music and movement. Engage children in discussions to encourage them to articulate their thoughts, talk about what they have imagined, how they have created something, what they like about their creation/expressions and about other ways to do the same thing.



Use questions or prompts to encourage children to talk about why and how they create their artwork.

Teachers can also formulate and use questions or prompts carefully to help children develop and deepen their learning in the area of *Aesthetics and Creative Expression*.

**Examples of questions/prompts teachers can use to invite children to share their thoughts and talk about their actions:**

- *Tell me more about what you're working on.*
- *How did you do it?*
- *What did you use to create this artwork?*
- *I see you're using a lot of ... What might be the reason for it?*

**Examples of questions/prompts teachers can use to develop children's awareness of the elements of art and music:**

- *Look at these wavy lines you're creating!*
- *I see that you have mixed red and white paint to get a lighter shade of red.*
- *Yes, the rhythm you just played sounds like...*
- *This instrument has a long sound. You can still hear it ringing after you hit it once.*

**Examples of questions/prompts teachers can use to help children express and explain their ideas and opinions:**

- *Tell me about your artwork. Why did you choose these colours?*
- *Why did you paint the circle over here? What does it represent?*
- *What movements can we use to show the growth of a plant? Why did you choose these movements?*
- *What movements shall we do when we sing the song softly and loudly?*

Besides teacher-guided conversations, there should also be opportunities for children to talk about their friends' artworks and experiences in music and movement. By valuing and respecting children's ideas, teachers will support the development of children's autonomy and choice, and help them build a positive self-concept which in turn, will motivate them to create and learn.



Encourage children to talk about their own artwork and those of their peers.



## Using Novel and Sensory Experiences

**Novel experiences** can come in many forms and serve a variety of purposes. Some of these experiences include going to places or using items new to the children, to stimulate their sense of wonder and curiosity and inspire them to create art, music and movement through observation and imagination. Natural, cultural and heritage objects are excellent resources to support such learning experiences.



Mango motifs on objects (e.g., clothing, decorations) can inspire children to design and create their own mango motifs.

Novelty can also come in the form of familiar objects used or imagined in new or unusual ways, to encourage new perspectives and children's inventiveness. Stimulating questions and scenarios can evoke children's imagination and creativity during their art and music and movement experiences.

Some suggested questions that teachers can pose to children are:

### Questions related to art:

- *Could we paint with a fork, a knife and chopsticks?*
- *What is the biggest artwork you can create?*
- *What is the craziest cake you could bake?*
- *How would a 100-storey school look like?*
- *What if everything in the world was purple?*
- *What if humans were the size of an ant?*

**Questions related to music and movement:**

- *What kind of sounds can we create with the different parts of our body or different materials (e.g., plastic, wood, water)?*
- *Can animals dance and what does that look like?*
- *How can we communicate with each other without using words or pictures?*
- *Is listening to music with our eyes closed different than with our eyes opened?*
- *How can we dance if we only have one arm?*



Novel written prompts, such as “square doors” and “round house” can be used as stimuli for children’s imaginative drawing.

**Sensory experiences** develop children’s sensitivity to the aesthetics around them. Such opportunities allow children to observe their immediate surroundings and recognise and appreciate the beauty of what they see, hear and feel in the natural and built environment around them. While children are naturally adept at using their senses to explore the world, teachers play an important role in showing children what, where, when and how to use their senses to notice objects of interest and wonder at the beauty in their everyday lives (Eglington, 2003).



The outdoor environment provides rich opportunities to engage children's senses as they observe, touch, listen to and smell what is around them.

There are endless ways to facilitate sensory experiences for children to explore art and music and movement. Consider the following:

- **Going on nature walks**

Invite children to examine things in nature closely. For example, they could:

- Look at a leaf and note the colour, the veins, the fine lines, the texture and the smell.
- Let the leaf sail through the air and observe how it moves and lands.
- Observe how the tree branches sway in the wind and the sounds they produce.
- Listen to the sounds their shoes make as they walk on dry leaves, pebbles, or sand.

- **Imagining themselves as an object**

Encourage children to take on different perspectives by pretending to be the object they have observed using their senses. For example, if they were a durian, where would they live? How would their house look like? How would they move in a crowd? What would their clothes look like?

- **Examining their body**

Invite children to choose a part of their body and explore it in detail. Look at their knuckles. How does it bend? What do the lines look like? Does it feel rough or smooth? Will different sounds be made if they used their fingertips to tap on a tabletop instead of their knuckles?





Children explore using their fingers and tempera paint to create an artwork while listening and responding to music.

Depending on the context, the available materials and children's responses, the art-making process can be integrated with music and movement. For example, getting children to listen to music pieces like "Military March" by Frank Schubert, "Pizzicato Polka" by Johann Strauss II and "Peer Gynt Suite No. 1" by Edvard Grieg can stimulate their imagination and inspire them in how they use the drawing materials. For instance, parts of the music that have a faster tempo and an upbeat melody could convey a sense of excitement and this could be represented by dots or fast strokes across the drawing paper or canvas. The choice of colour could also represent children's emotions as they hear the music, like yellow for the emotion of joy and delight.

## Using themes

Themes can emerge from a variety of sources, such as children's interests, the current topic of exploration or a book that they are reading. Art and music and movement activities based on a theme can be very useful in guiding and extending children's creative expressions and may serve as an avenue for them to communicate what they know, feel and think about the topic. As children engage in the arts, teachers may elicit children's responses about what they have created, whether art, music or movement, to understand their points of view and extend their thinking in that particular topic or theme.

The examples below show how a theme may be used to facilitate children's art and music and movement experiences.

### Exploring the topic of camouflage through art



Children can demonstrate their understanding of the concept of animal camouflage through an artwork.

- Get the children to explore the topic, camouflage where animals use colours to hide themselves in their environment.
- Invite the children to demonstrate their understanding by creating a collage using strips of paper from old magazines to show how an animal may camouflage itself to make itself less visible to others.
- Teachers can facilitate a discussion with the children using these questions:
  - *How is the animal in your artwork camouflaged?*
  - *Why have you chosen to use these colours?*

### Exploring the topic of recycling through music and movement



Children can reuse empty yoghurt cups to make their own shakers to raise their awareness about recycling.

- After learning about the importance of recycling and taking care of the environment, invite the children to make their own musical instruments (e.g., shakers) by using a variety of recycled materials or loose parts.
- Have them sing a song about recycling and use their shakers to accompany their singing.

## Exploring the topic of housing through art



Encourage the children to share and exchange ideas as they work together to construct a model of their dream house using recycled materials.

- Have the children share what they know about housing in Singapore and encourage them to find out more about the different types of housing around the world through information books, websites and online videos.
- Have them work together to make their own dream house using a variety of recycled materials.
- Invite them to talk about their creation using questions/prompts, such as:
  - *Tell me more about what you have built.*
  - *Who do you imagine might live in such a house?*
  - *Why did you choose this material to build the house?*

## Using Picture Books

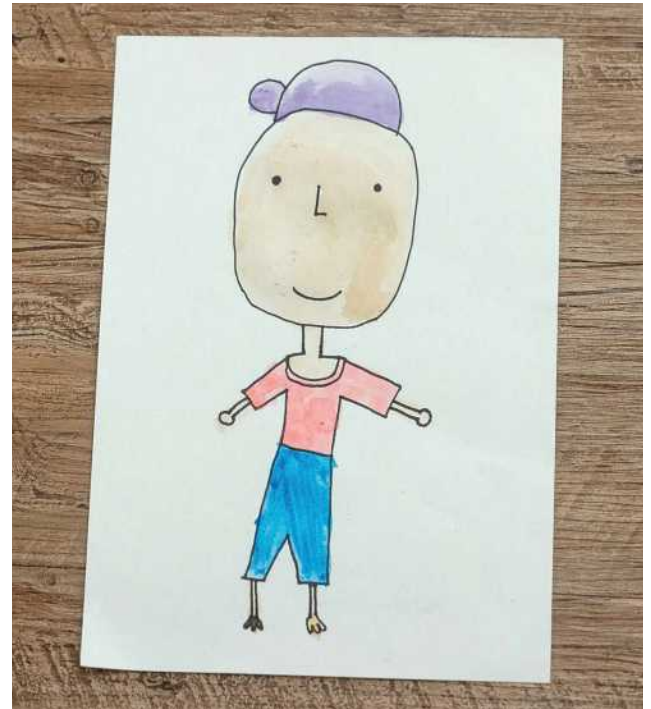
Many picture books have inspiring messages about the positive impact that the arts can have in a person's life and community. Not only do picture books feature creative and attractive illustrations that inspire children to look and create in new ways, they provide opportunities for children to experience music and sounds and create them, which in turn enhances their reading experience.

Depending on the intent, picture books can serve as useful resources which can be meaningfully incorporated into children's learning experiences.



Below are some examples of picture books that promote an appreciation of art. They may be used to:

- **Encourage exploration in art.** Some picture books can encourage children to see everyday materials like a box in creative and new ways or to create art using something simple like a dot. Such explorations also foster the learning disposition, “inventiveness” in children. Here are some of these picture books:



Inspired by the illustration style of Taro Gomi in the book, “Hide and Seek”, which “hides” familiar objects in plain sight, this is a drawing by a child that includes a cup, fork and spoon as part of the drawing.

- **Introduce elements of art.** Children explore how the elements of art can be used to portray ideas, feelings, characters and even story events through these picture books. After reading the story, facilitate a discussion for children to identify the elements of art used and how they are used to convey the story. Where appropriate, encourage them to use the same elements of art featured in the picture book to create an artwork on their everyday experiences, e.g., a day at the preschool centre. Here are some of these picture books:



- **Introduce famous artists and their artworks.** Artists and works of art come alive and become more relatable and meaningful to children through these picture books. These books can help develop children's appreciation for art when they realise that art can be used as a form of self-expression and everyone's expression is unique. Here are some of these picture books:



- **Engage and inspire with stimulating illustrations.** Artists and illustrators can inspire children to think of different ways to use various types of art materials to represent their thoughts and ideas. Share with them Eric Carle's collage technique using hand-painted papers, Ed Young's mixed media style (e.g., use of ink, collage and found materials), Uri Shulevitz's exaggerated anatomy, such as long limbs and beak-like noses. Invite them to vote for the illustration style they like the most and share their reasons, highlighting the aspects of the illustration (e.g., use of colours, shapes, representation of characters) to engage them. Here are some well-known authors and illustrators that will engage and interest children about art:



Below are some examples of picture books that promote music and movement. They may be used to:

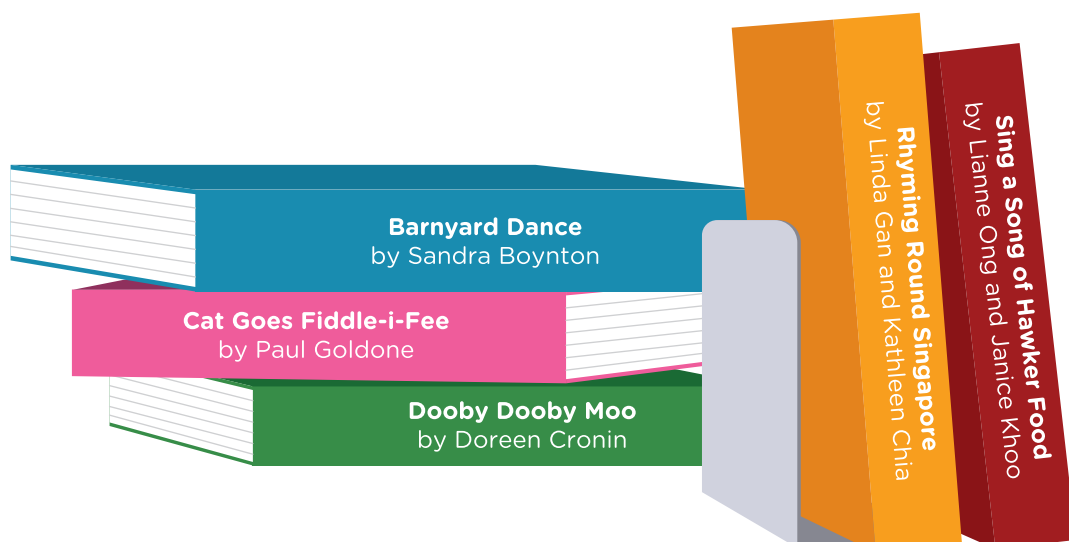
- **Introduce popular songs or classical music.** Picture books with attractive illustrations can help children understand the song lyrics and appreciate the song better. They can be read and sung with children. Those that represent classical music give children an opportunity to see how an author and illustrator used art and words to represent the music.



- **Encourage children's enjoyment of music and sounds around them.** Children get to experience the joy and fun of having music and sounds around them. Some of the stories get children to imagine hearing music in the most unlikely places and this piques their interest to know more about the music or instruments.



- **Encourage children to sing and move along to repetitive lines or simple rhymes.** The repetitive lines in these books make it easier for children to read them aloud, perform the rhythm or create simple movements (e.g., tapping their fingers, stomping their feet) to accompany them. This provides children with an opportunity for music and movement experiences in a meaningful context.



## Using Thinking Routines

Children's appreciation for the arts is an important aspect of their experience in art and music and movement. Teachers play an important role in facilitating conversations about the arts with children, tapping their prior experience with familiar objects or encouraging them to use their imagination to describe what they think and how they feel.

The use of thinking routines encourages children to observe artwork and other forms of art closely, describe what they see or hear and learn from their peers' perspectives. There are no right or wrong answers, and the key is to encourage different kinds of responses and perspectives, nurturing in children the learning disposition, "appreciation" as they see how everyone's ideas can enrich their learning.

**A thinking routine is a set of simple questions or sequence of steps to support children's thinking.** They can be used in all learning experiences to make children's thinking visible and this helps teachers understand what children are thinking about, and to provide the appropriate scaffolding to develop and deepen their thinking (Project Zero, 2022).

The **"See, Think, Wonder" thinking routine** can be used to facilitate conversations with children to deepen their appreciation and enjoyment for the arts. This routine encourages children to make careful observations and respond to the arts in a thoughtful manner. It also nurtures curiosity and inspires children to find out more. The "See, Think, Wonder" routine has three main questions that are asked in this sequence:



What do you  
**see?**



What do you  
**think** about it?



What does it make  
you **wonder?**

Depending on the context of children's experience, teachers can adapt the three main questions to facilitate conversations with children to develop their awareness and appreciation for the arts. For example:

### Viewing art

- *What do you see in the artwork?*
- *What does it make you think of?*
- *What might be happening? What is going on?*
- *Where is the place?*
- *What is the artist thinking when he/she created the artwork?*
- *What story is the artwork trying to tell?*
- *What do you wonder? What questions do you have about the artwork?*
- *What more do you want to know about the artwork?*
- *I wonder if we could act out the story in this artwork.*

### Listening to music

- *What sounds do you hear?*
- *What do you think is happening?*
- *What does the music/sound make you feel?*
- *What could the song be for?*
- *What is this song about?*
- *What question/s do you have for the composer or performer?*
- *I wonder how we can move to the different parts of the music.*

#### Note

*These questions can be further adapted if children are viewing a music or dance performance.*



## ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES FOR ART

### Using Artwork and Other Art Forms

Two-dimensional and three-dimensional artworks by artists can expand the way children look at art and the world. It helps them become aware of the aesthetics of art and inspires them to experiment with different media, tools, techniques and processes. Teachers can use these artworks to encourage children to observe and express their thoughts verbally, as well as listen to their friends' observations to understand different perspectives.

For example, introduce to children the self-portraits of Georgette Chen, Vincent van Gogh and Yayoi Kusama. Get them to discuss how self-portraits are made and what the self-portraits may say about the artist, as well as the artist's feelings and thoughts. Invite them to create their own self-portraits and what they may include to show their strengths, likes and dislikes. These will inspire children as they continue to create their own self-portraits and talk about their artwork.



Children can be inspired to explore creating 3-D self-portraits using clay.



Look out for art exhibitions and events nearby which may involve local and regional artists. Some of them are held in accessible places in the neighbourhood, such as libraries, community centres or recreational spaces. Teachers can also bring children to walk on a public art trail which can provide them with opportunities to observe and appreciate art in their environment, such as murals and architecture.



Murals found in the neighbourhood are useful for children to notice the aesthetics in their environment.

## Using a Variety of Art Materials



Teachers can set up prompts with associated materials and artworks to encourage children to explore a certain style or the elements of art.

Children's creations are often guided by the range of materials available to them. The art materials form the basis for the creation of any artwork. Teachers should provide children with tools and resources to allow them to develop the necessary skills and build on what they know and can do. Providing children with an array of materials in sufficient quantity and variety allows children to experiment with and become familiar with using different types of materials to create art (Kindler, 2010). Teachers can also adjust the materials available based on children's interests and the current theme.



Children can explore different ways to create splatter art.

Children can explore and talk about different ways of creating splatter art, such as:

- Hitting the brushes with more/less strength.
- Moving the arm and wrists in different ways as they hit the brush.
- Using brushes of different thickness or other items (e.g., a fork, a comb) to create the splatter.
- Trying paint of different viscosity (e.g., water colours, tempera paint, acrylic paint).
- Creating splatter art on different materials (e.g., canvas, paper, cardboard).

Give children easy access to the materials they want to use and the flexibility to choose what they wish to create, how they want to make it and what it will look like. Teachers should also encourage children to think of different ways to use the materials provided and techniques they are interested in to express and represent their ideas.

Examples of materials teachers can provide to promote art-making include:

- Art tools and medium (e.g., crayons, paint, brushes, ink pads)
- Natural objects (e.g., leaves, twigs, sand, pebbles, seeds)
- Recycled materials (e.g., cardboard, paper, plastic bottles)

Some of these items can be placed in a mystery bag and children can take turns to pick out two or three items from the bag to create their artwork.

## Using Games

Games can get children to exercise their creativity in a fun and open-ended setting and boost their enjoyment and participation in art-making. These games can be intentionally designed to expose children to different ways of thinking, unconventional modes of drawing or novel tools and techniques. Here are some games which teachers can play with children to increase their participation and enjoyment in art-related activities:



In this art relay game, children jump into the hoop and run around the cones before adding their touches to the team's artwork.

Game	Description
Relay Drawing	Get the children in teams. Set up a relay race with two stations, the first where they pick up their chosen painting tool and the second with a canvas for them to paint on. Have the children engage in a relay race and create an artwork as a team. For added challenge, set a theme for the artwork or a timer for each child.
Simon Says	Play "Simon Says" using instructions for prompting the children's drawing, such as, <i>"Draw two circles"</i> , <i>"Draw a curved line with your left hand"</i> and <i>"Draw a straight line in the square"</i> .



**Art Dice**

Create dice with different art-related prompts. The prompts can be based on different themes (e.g., nature, machines), elements of art, techniques, materials or medium. Have the children roll a die and create an artwork based on the prompt shown on the die from their roll. The game can be extended by having the children roll more than one die at a time to produce more interesting results.

**Scribble Game**

Play a scribble game in a group. Have each child in the group draw a quick scribble on a blank sheet of paper before passing their paper to their group member seated on their left or right. Give each child 1 minute to look closely at the scribbles on the paper to see what the scribbles remind them of and add on to the scribbles or drawing. Continue the game until every child in the group has at least two turns to add on to each drawing.

## ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES FOR MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

### Exploring a Variety of Music and Dances

#### Singing



When teachers sing along with the children, they help them become more comfortable about singing or using their voices in an expressive manner.

According to Zoltan Kodály, singing experiences form the foundation for appreciating music. Singing is children's natural means of musical expression as their voice is a "musical instrument" that they can access readily. Since children respond quickly to nursery rhymes, chants and familiar songs, teachers can use these to teach and reinforce musical concepts. Opportunities can be provided for children to experience rhymes, chants and songs with different moods, contexts, culture and languages.

Teachers can consider the following when selecting suitable songs for children:

- Choose songs that are **meaningful to the children**.

When the subject matter of the song is within children's experiences, they can better remember the lyrics and be engaged with the song. Likewise, it helps when children can pronounce the words of the song.

- Look for songs that have **repeated phrases or patterns and short lines**.

Children thrive on repetition and recognising a recurring pattern, i.e., whether rhythmic, melodic or words. Repeated patterns provide security and help children remember a song. Also, choose songs that have short phrases, rather than long, meandering lines that are difficult to remember.

- Select songs that encourage children to **move rhythmically**.

Children remember songs which have accompanying actions, often mirrored in the words. Such songs offer a range of ways to experience elements of music like beat and/or rhythm while singing.

- Consider the **most comfortable or appropriate tempo for singing** (i.e., around 60 to 70 beats per minute).

Singing at a comfortable tempo allows for the melody, rhythm and words to make sense. Singing songs that are too fast or too slow can pose problems for children to remember the melody and the words, or both.

- Find songs with **ranges that fall between middle C (Do) and A (La)** as these are generally appropriate and easier for children to sing.





Teachers can role model for children the joy of singing with accompanying actions.

### Suggestions on how to sing with children:

- Sing songs with children **live and unaccompanied** where possible. This provides the best model for them to learn to sing the song.
- Let children **listen to and sing the whole song** without breaking it into small sections.
- **Increase children's exposure to the new song/rhyme** by singing/reciting or playing a recording of the new song/rhyme during snack time, transition or clearing up time to familiarise children with the song/rhyme.
- Have children sing by **echoing** where the song is designed for echo-singing. Alternatively, children can join in on easy or repetitive phrases.
- When singing with children, **guide them to raise and lower their arms to the rise and fall of the melodies** and use words to describe the directions of the melodies (e.g., going up, coming down).
- Lead children in **tapping to the beat** or swinging/swaying to **the rhythm** as they sing.
- **Assist children to sing the entire song independently** after they have been engaged in a variety of experiences related to the song (e.g., listening and moving to the song, using body percussion to accompany the song).
- Have children **substitute words** in songs, rhymes and chants. The new words should preferably have the same number of syllables as the original words to keep to the song's rhythm.



Here are some examples of appropriate nursery rhymes, songs and music for preschool children:

- Songs which invite children to move to their music - “The Alphabet Song”, “Hot Cross Buns”, “The Muffin Man”
- Songs that involve finger play - “Incy Wincy Spider”, “Where is Thumbkin?”
- Songs that can incorporate games and actions - “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”, “Hokey Pokey”, “London Bridge”, “The Wheels on the Bus”
- Songs with sound effects - “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”, “She’ll be Coming Round the Mountain”
- Songs suitable for singing in rounds - “Are You Sleeping”, “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”, “Three Blind Mice”
- Songs that have a limited range of notes - “Star Light, Star Bright”, “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”
- Local community songs and music and folk songs from around the world
- Songs for celebrating festivals and holidays

## Moving and Dancing

Children love to move and dance around by exploring body movements. According to Dalcroze, all musical concepts could be taught through movement (Caldwell, 1993). For example, children can learn about tempo by dancing or moving to slow or fast pieces of music. Moving to music can have a positive effect on children’s physical coordination or motor development (Young, 2009). Children’s development in movement is such that they are able to coordinate their hands before they can coordinate their feet (Hooper & Umansky, 2013).

Children should have opportunities to engage in both **spontaneous and open-ended** experiences, and **structured** experiences with music and movement. Spontaneous and open-ended experiences do not have a fixed set of movements and do not require children to follow to the beat. Such experiences support children who are still developing their coordination as they provide opportunities for children to develop an awareness of how they move in space and in relation to others (e.g., moving, stopping, balancing their body) (Young, 2009). Structured experiences are those where children can be engaged in synchronised movement, moving to the beat of the music.

Examples of spontaneous and open-ended experiences in music and movement:

- Exploring sounds in the environment
  - Listen to the sounds in the environment of a new place and describe what they sound like (e.g., a high-pitched sound, a sound with a steady beat).
  - Create different types of sounds from everyday objects such as tapping on a piece of cardboard as compared to a metal tin cover.
- Moving freely or imaginatively to prompts, such as “float like a feather” and “stomp like an elephant”
- Moving in response to the dynamics and tempo of the music
  - When parts of the music are louder, make larger body movements such as taking larger steps when walking.
  - When parts of the music are slower, slow down the speed of body movements made such as swaying instead of waving one’s arms rapidly.
- Improvising movements/actions to accompany a song/rhyme or piece of instrumental music
  - Get children to take turns to improvise the movements to parts of a song sung during routines like snack time.
- Using the body to demonstrate pitch of melodies that is gradually getting higher or lower
  - Songs with a wide range of pitch can be demonstrated by larger body movements as compared to songs with a small range of pitch (i.e., notes that are close to each other in terms of pitch) that can be demonstrated by smaller body movements.



Children engage in spontaneous and open-ended experiences in music and movement when they listen to a slow piece of music and move their bodies according to the tempo of the music.

Examples of structured experiences in music and movement:

- Moving to songs with lyrics that dictate specific actions and body movements, such as “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes” and “Hokey Pokey”
- Dancing a sequence of pre-determined steps such as in a folk dance

## Using Body Percussion, Musical Instruments and Props

Children are naturally attracted to the sounds of musical instruments and enjoy playing instruments, such as drums, bells, rhythm sticks and tambourines. When used in appropriate ways, musical instruments can reinforce children’s learning and understanding of musical concepts and skills.

Teachers need to provide opportunities for children to be involved actively in music and movement experiences, whereby children explore and play instruments in a learner-centred environment to acquire musical knowledge and skills. A range of home-made and purchased instruments should be made available to children for first-hand experiences in sound exploration and music-making.

## Body Percussion

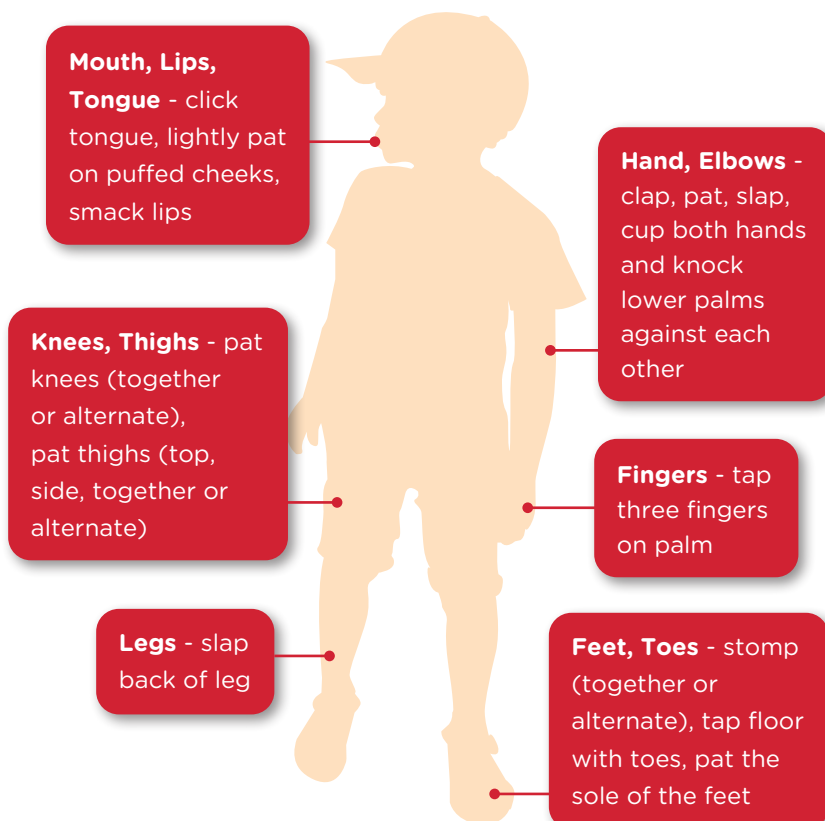


Using picture cue cards can help children follow the body percussion patterns and be engaged in the music-making process.

The body is the most versatile musical instrument because of the many creative sounds that can be made with different parts of the body. In some cultures, it is one of the primary sources of musical sounds. Using body percussion also develops children's gross and fine

motor skills. The Orff approach recommends using body percussion to accompany songs, rhymes and chants as it scaffolds children's later learning of using percussion instruments (Mizener, 2008).

Teachers can provide opportunities for children to discover different ways of creating sounds and rhythms with their mouth, hands, palms, fingers, thighs, knees and feet. The diagram on the left shows some ways to create sounds and rhythms with different parts of the body.



## Musical Instruments

Using different types of musical instruments in the classroom allows children to participate actively in music and movement activities. This also facilitates creativity and personal musical growth.

Teachers should, over time, provide a range of tuned and untuned musical instruments that children can hit, tap, shake and scrape to produce different types of sounds. Children should be given sufficient opportunities and time to learn how each instrument works; to explore the different sound qualities (i.e., timbre) that can be produced by each type of instrument before new ones are introduced; and to experiment with combining different instruments.

Teachers can introduce musical instruments in the following ways:

- Get children to listen, compare and talk about the sound qualities of two or more instruments, and present the differences in sound qualities through free movement.
- Lead children to choose a particular rhythm to represent a character or movement in a story/rhyme and play the rhythm using a musical instrument as the story/rhyme is being told/recited.



Children learn about the quality of sounds (i.e., timbre) as they use different percussion instruments to represent characters in a story or song.



## Props

Teachers can use a variety of props to enhance and enrich children's experiences in music and movement activities. It is important to pay attention on how these props are used with children. Besides engaging children in the learning activity, the intent of using props should also be to assist children's development of musical understanding. For example, a prop such as a hand puppet could be used to develop children's skills in keeping to the beat and rhythm of a song. Using a hand puppet and a song that is familiar to children like "Mary Had a Little Lamb", role model singing one line aloud and the next line silently with the suggested actions shown below.

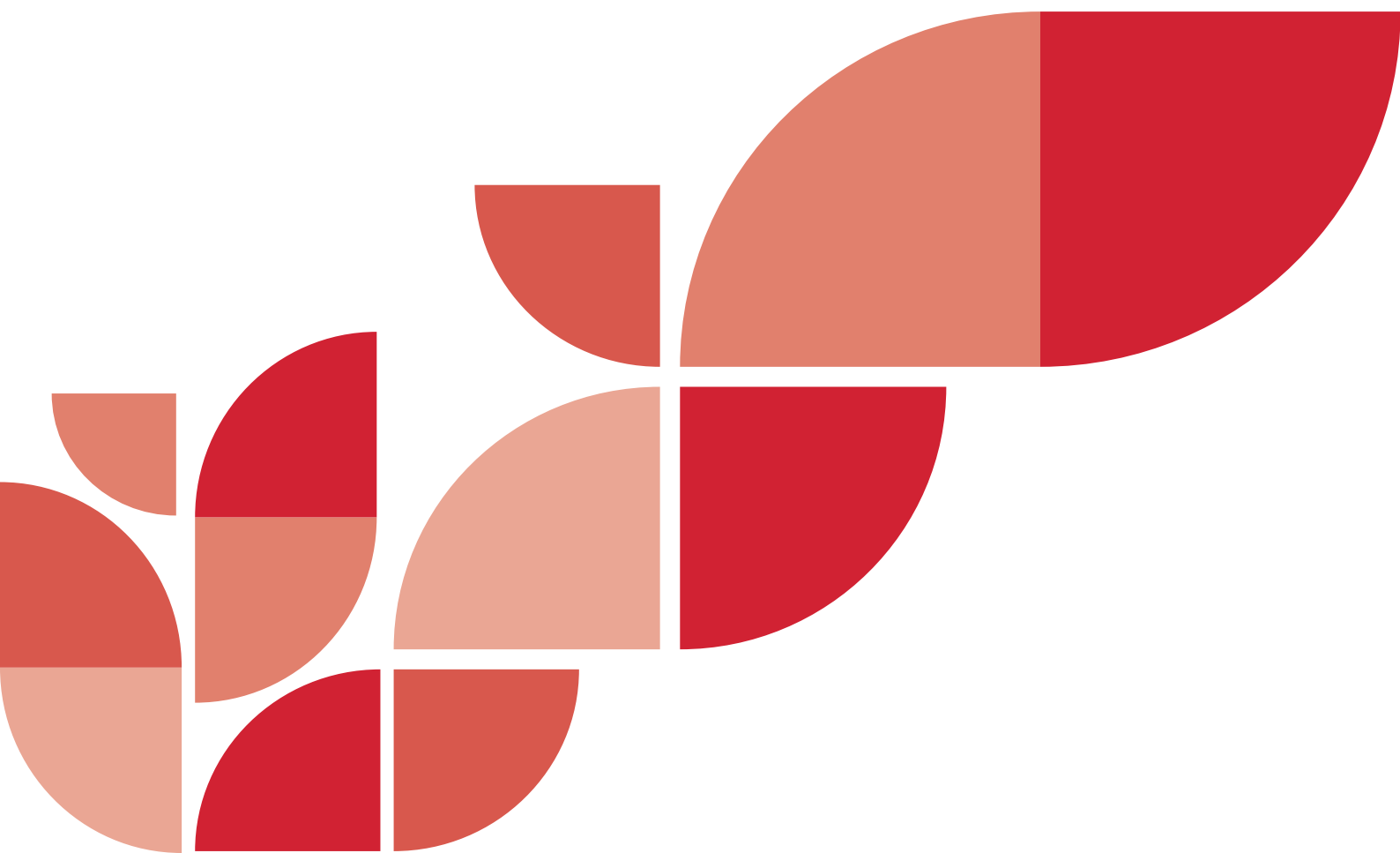
Song lyrics	Singing	Action with hand puppet
<i>Mary had a little lamb.</i>	Sing aloud	Place puppet in front of the teacher.
<i>Little lamb</i>	Sing quietly inside your head	Place puppet behind the teacher.
<i>Little lamb</i>	Sing aloud	Place puppet in front of the teacher.
<i>Mary had a little lamb.</i>	Sing quietly inside your head	Place puppet behind the teacher.
<i>Its fleece was white as snow.</i>	Sing aloud	Place puppet in front of the teacher.

Get children to try the first three lines to practise keeping to the beat and rhythm of the song. When they are more familiar, they can continue with the rest of the song using the puppet. As children get more familiar with the use of the puppet, substitute it with a musical instrument, such as a drum or a triangle. At the sound of the musical instrument, children can sing aloud and then quietly inside their head for the next line of the song until they hear the sound of the musical instrument again to sing aloud.



# Chapter 4

## ORGANISING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



Art and music and movement activities can be conducted beyond the classroom and should not be limited to the same learning space. Teachers should capitalise on the resources and spaces within and outside of the classroom, as well as in indoor and outdoor settings.



Provide ample and a conducive space for children to explore movement and musical instruments to enhance their engagement in music and movement experiences.

**Teachers can consider the following when organising an environment that promotes learning and development in the learning area of *Aesthetics and Creative Expression*:**

- Display beautifully illustrated books, art prints and interesting artefacts at children's eye-level
- Provide open spaces for creative and large body movements and group activities
- Provide spaces for creative and constructive activities, such as clay modelling and collage making
- Provide facilities for wet and messy activities
- Make available familiar and novel resources and materials for children to explore, experiment and use to express their ideas and feelings
- Provide materials that can invite children's interest and be used in multiple ways

## CREATING AN AESTHETIC ENVIRONMENT

Creating a purposeful and aesthetically pleasing environment that is thoughtfully designed will help to develop children's appreciation for the beauty around them. Displays and set ups that are inviting, functional, stimulating and at the same time, pleasing to the eye will motivate children to interact actively with their peers and the items and materials provided to express themselves in creative arts. These will also help to promote respect and care for the environment that they are in. Examples of such environments include thoughtful displays of artwork on the walls, carefully chosen colours and materials in the classroom and the use of music during routines.



An aesthetic learning environment can stimulate children's expression and exploration in creative arts.

## ORGANISING THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

**When organising the physical environment for art and music and movement learning activities, teachers can consider the following:**

- Flexible use of space for individual, small group and large group activities
- Sufficient space to facilitate children's engagement with the arts
- Purposeful selection and organisation of art materials and musical instruments

### Flexible Use of Space for Individual, Small Group and Large Group Activities

To give children opportunities to engage in individual, small group or large group activities related to the arts, these are some ways to be flexible in using the available spaces at the centre:

- **Allow furniture and partitions to be moved** around for children to engage in music and movement activities with others (e.g., in a dance), paint a mural or construct 3-D structures with large cardboard boxes.
- **Allocate a defined space for the arts in the preschool centre** for children to work individually or in small groups to explore making a collage on a large piece of cardboard or making different kinds of sounds and rhythms from musical instruments and recycled objects.



Display used kitchenware (e.g., ladles, pots, pans, forks, spoons) and household items (e.g., washboard, metal tins) in an outdoor space to allow children to explore the different sounds that can be made from these items.



### These spaces can have:

- Furnishings like easels that can be easily put away so that children's free movement will not be obstructed.
- Natural lighting or a good light source for children to work with colours.
- Displays of children's works or artworks by famous artists to inspire children.
- A "Work-in-Progress" area for children to put their unfinished work, allowing them to return to them later and encouraging their engagement and focused attention over a prolonged period.
- A rack or a clothesline for drying children's work.



An open and inviting space with natural light can be dedicated to children's art-making experiences.



Displaying children's work prominently invites them to reflect on how and why they created these artworks and encourages them to have conversations with their friends. The artful display using frames shows respect for what children have created and instils a sense of pride and ownership in them.



## Sufficient Space to Facilitate Engagement with the Arts

Children often engage with the arts in a playful manner, fuelled by their own interests and motivations to explore and express their ideas through art and music and movement. This happens at a more conscious level as children gain control over the language or symbolic systems of art, music and movement.

To facilitate children's engagement with the arts such that they will develop an interest, teachers should ensure that children have the time and space to explore and experiment with different aspects of art and music and movement in an environment that encourages such freedom. One often-cited space for such free exploration is **the outdoors** where children are less restricted by the considerations and constraints of an indoor environment. Teachers should always view messiness and spills as part of children's learning. For example, most children enjoy a good messy painting experience which allows them to be imaginative and creative as they freely explore and express themselves.



The outdoors encourages active interaction among children, allowing them to be fully engaged in the arts experience without being constantly reminded about not making a mess.

To conduct art and music and movement activities outdoors, teachers can place a selection of musical instruments, art materials and props (e.g., scarves, puppets, beanbags, hula hoops, paint, brushes, crayons) in boxes or trolleys so that they can be moved easily to the outdoor areas.

## Selection and Organisation of Art Materials and Musical Instruments

Children's learning experiences can be enhanced when they are provided with a range of materials to which they have easy access, and which are appropriate to their developmental and learning needs.

For art, a dedicated shelf to store art materials in an organised manner can encourage children's autonomy and decision-making process. The art materials can be grouped by media or type. They can be organised in containers with clear labels and placed on open shelves to facilitate children's independence in collecting them for use and putting them away after use. Resources and tools that are safe for children to handle can be placed within their reach. However, those that are sharp and require adult supervision should be stored near areas where the activities are conducted, but out of reach of the children. Nevertheless, giving instructions and role-modelling of behaviours and actions that ensure children's personal and group safety should be done on a consistent and regular basis.



Art materials and musical instruments should be neatly displayed with clear labels for children's easy access and proper use, as well as easy return of these resources.

The table below provides some examples of art and music and movement resources that can enrich children's learning experiences in the arts.

### Art Resources

- Books related to art or artworks of famous artists
- Scrap materials for collage making (e.g., nature specimens, fabric, yarn, clips, buttons, gift wrap, recycled items)
- Modelling and moulding materials (e.g., clay and play dough, rolling pins, cookie cutters)
- Paper in different sizes, shapes and textures
- Tools for cutting, fastening and attaching (e.g., scissors, glue, tape, staples, string, pipe cleaners)
- Tools for mark-making (e.g., markers, crayons, pencils, chalk)

### Musical instruments

- Sound producers found in the environment that can be hit, struck, shaken or rubbed (e.g., kitchen utensils, stones, seed pods, cans filled with beans)
- Tuned percussion instruments used to play melodies (e.g., xylophones, chime bars, glockenspiel)
- Untuned percussion instruments used to play the beat or rhythm patterns (e.g., triangles, woodblocks, rhythm sticks, maracas, guiro, castanets, bongo, cabasa, two-tone block, wrist bells, rain stick, tambourine, kompang)

### Other Useful Resources

- A folder containing songs and rhymes for children
- Books related to music
- Costumes, instruments, seats for audience, tickets and toy microphones to transform the Dramatic Play Centre into a stage
- Different types of music from local and global cultures (e.g., classical, contemporary music, traditional folk dance) to encourage movement and dance
- Mark-making materials to combine drawing with music
- Materials for experimenting and making musical instruments (e.g., paper plates, empty cans, pie tins, paper towel rolls, rice, sand, coins, small bells, bands)
- Paper and writing tools for children to make their own songbooks
- Pictures of children and adults singing, dancing and playing instruments
- Scarves, streamers, ribbons, strips of fabric

## ORGANISING THE INTERACTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Creating an inviting environment that values each child's individual expression is key to enhancing the learning opportunities for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* at a preschool centre. An important aspect of setting up a positive and respectful learning environment is providing time and space for children to work collaboratively in groups and share ideas and feelings about their own creations in the arts and those of their peers. For example, creating the time and space for a **gallery walk** for children to talk about their own artwork and respond to questions and comments by their peers helps them to:

- Reinforce their use and understanding of the elements of art and music when describing their own and friends' creations in the arts.
- Develop the value, "respect" and learning disposition, "appreciation" as they consider and acknowledge their friends' perspectives and individual's unique expressions, as well as learn from others on how to move forward or improve on their work.

## ORGANISING THE TEMPORAL ENVIRONMENT



**There should be music in the child's environment, just as there does exist in the child's environment spoken speech. In the social environment the child should be considered and music should be provided.**

Maria Montessori



Experiences in the arts can be a part of children's daily experiences at the preschool centre. They increase the learning opportunities for children to revisit the knowledge and skills they have gained during learning activities and extend their appreciation for the arts. A possible way to do this is to consider how routines and transitions (e.g., snack time, toileting time, going outdoors) can incorporate activities and materials related to art and music and movement.

At preschool centres, music and movement, such as singing and movement can be frequently explored as children transit from one activity to another (e.g., when walking from the classroom to the outdoors). These can be both planned and spontaneous opportunities during routines and transitions to nurture children's interest in music and movement.



Some examples of **planned opportunities** for music and movement during routines and transitions are:

- Sing a greeting song to start the day and a goodbye song to end the day
- Sing or play a familiar tune each time you want to start or end an activity
- Sing a song to gather children together for story or large group time

As children become familiar with these songs, get them to suggest ways to modify the song, e.g., changing some words in the song; introducing a body percussion or movement at the end of the song, such as clap twice, turn around and sit down.

Some examples of **spontaneous opportunities** for music and movement during routines and transitions are:

- Sing as children are engaging in activities, e.g., washing paintbrushes, watering the plants
- Invite children to take turns to suggest and sing a “walking song” as they move from one room to another
- Invite children to hum familiar tunes or sing their favourite songs when they are getting ready for snack time, washing their hands or wearing their shoes

While it may be more common to see and hear music and movement-related activities during routines and transitions in a preschool centre, there are also opportunities to develop children’s appreciation and interest in art.

Displaying children’s artwork prominently in the preschool centre affirms their thoughts and ideas. These displays provide opportunities for teachers to facilitate children’s wonderment and appreciation for art. Teachers can use the “See, Think, Wonder” thinking routine to facilitate a conversation with children about an artwork, e.g., when children are waiting for their turn at the toilet or shower area. Teachers can take note of the ideas shared by children during routines and transitions and make use of these ideas to plan activities for children to explore and find out more to pursue their interest and deepen their learning.

Another important aspect of organising the temporal environment is to establish clear routines and expectations that can help to manage and maximise learning time and opportunities for children.



**Teachers can consider the following to establish cleaning-up routines and expectations for art activities:**

- Supply work aprons with easy-to-use hook and loop fasteners
- Ensure there is a water source or buckets of water nearby
- Line the workspaces with newspapers or reusable plastic sheets
- Keep a supply of rags, sponges, duster or dustpans in the art area for the occasional spills and have children clean up their own spills whenever these happen
- Assign roles for children, e.g., the “Paintbrush Master” will ensure friends take turns with each other to use different paintbrushes and that friends clean up and put away their paintbrushes after using them
- Ensure children return all materials to where they are kept
- Ensure children clear up the table and throw used materials into the bins
- Ensure children push their chairs in



Laying out a piece of tarp before starting the art activity minimises the amount of cleaning up to be done after the activity.



Establishing clear cleaning-up routines and expectations for art activities help to manage and maximise learning time by facilitating a quick and efficient transition between activities.

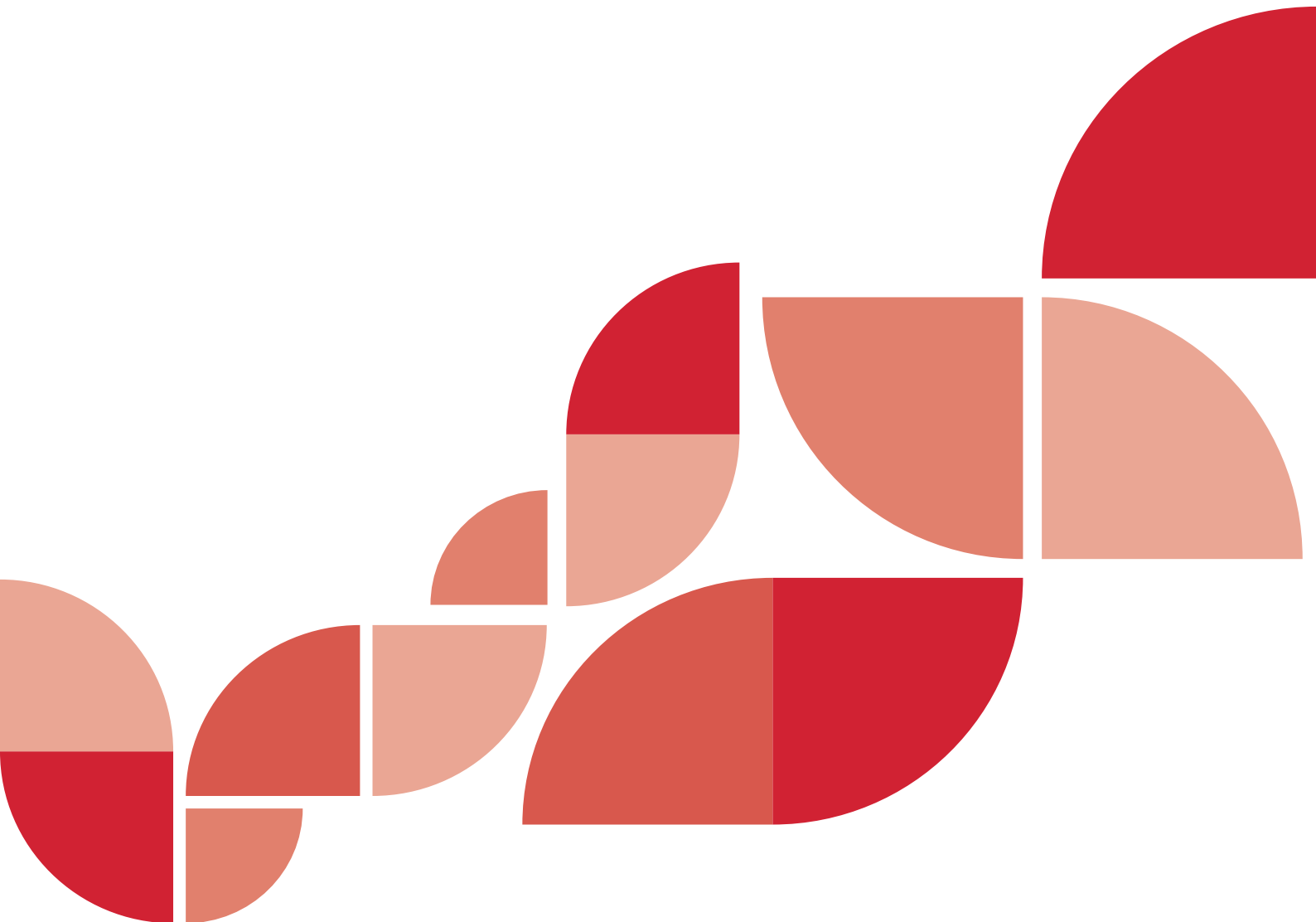
For music and movement, it is also important to establish clear routines and expectations for children when handling musical instruments. This will ensure that quality interactions between teacher and children and amongst children can be promoted and that learning time for children is maximised.

**Teachers can consider the following to establish routines and expectations for handling musical instruments:**

- Introduce percussion instruments one at a time to avoid confusion and excessive noise.
- Set simple rules and cues for children to follow, such as:
  - Rest position – When not in use, put the percussion instrument and beater in rest position (i.e., on the floor in front of the child about one arm's length away or under the chair if the child is seated) when not in use.
  - Play position – Pick up the percussion instrument, look at the teacher and listen to the cue before playing.
  - Treat the percussion instrument with care and respect.
  - Play the percussion instrument gently and appropriately.

# Chapter 5

## MONITORING AND ASSESSING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Teachers observe children's experiences in the arts to gain insights into how children understand the world around them, as well as their thoughts, ideas and feelings about themselves and their experiences. In addition, teachers will also better understand children's knowledge, skills, and dispositions for the learning area of *Aesthetics and Creative Expression*. By identifying children's learning needs in the arts, teachers can respond accordingly and adjust instruction and plan appropriate activities to enhance the children's creative experiences in art and music and movement activities.

## OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING AND ASSESSING CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Children's development in the arts is an iterative process and requires ongoing observations by teachers across various settings, time points, and of both the process, as well as the final product.



Teachers can observe children's experiences in art-making and take notes to document their progress in learning and development in the area of *Aesthetics and Creative Expression*.

Teachers can ask open-ended questions to find out what children are doing and examine and interpret their responses and actions to better understand children.

Some questions that teachers should keep in mind when observing and assessing children's overall experiences in art and music and movement include:

- *To what extent did the children enjoy the art or music and movement experiences?*
- *What did they say and/or do in the process? How did they express their thoughts and feelings?*
- *How did they engage with and explore the materials/instruments given?*
- *How did they respond to the artwork/music/stimulus given?*

Some questions to keep in mind when observing and assessing children's expression in the arts include:

- *What did the children draw/paint/do/say/sing/play?*
- *What stimulated the children in their creations (e.g., from a classroom/home experience, a television programme character/plot, a story book, a recent/upcoming celebration)?*
- *What techniques/media did they use?*
- *What elements of art/music did they use?*
- *What are the elements of art/music that the children could identify?*
- *How did the child use the elements of art/music in his/her work (e.g., drawing, performing on musical instrument)?*
- *What are the children trying to communicate? What story are the children trying to tell?*
- *How does the expression relate to the children's prior experiences and knowledge?*
- *How did the children move in response to the different elements of music (e.g., dynamics, tempo, pitch, rhythm)?*
- *What elements of art did the children use in their artwork in response to the story/music/stimulus given?*



Teachers can also consider the following when observing and assessing children's appreciation of the arts:

- *Are the children aware of the aesthetics/sounds in the environment? What did they notice in their immediate environment?*
- *What observations did the children make of the piece of art/music? What might have led them to do so?*
- *What questions did the children ask when immersed in an aesthetically stimulating environment?*
- *What artforms or musical styles did the children respond most to? What might be some reasons for their response?*
- *What artforms/music are the children interested in? Why?*

Information gathered from these observations will enable teachers to better understand their children, monitor and track their progress, identify what they know and can do, and personalise the type and level of scaffolding required to extend their knowledge and skills in *Aesthetics and Creative Expression*. Teachers can also make use of the information gathered to evaluate their classroom practices, such as the art materials provided, the set-up of the learning environment and the learning experiences planned for the children. With this reflective process, teachers can also proceed to plan for the next appropriate action to extend and enrich children's experiences in the arts.

## EXAMPLES OF OBSERVATION, DOCUMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

### Example 1

#### Context and Observation

During "Show-and-Tell", an N2 child, Hans, shared with the class a song about art that he had learnt. He shared that he liked the song as it was fast, and he swayed his body when singing the song. The class thought that the song was very catchy and several children, including Hans, started asking if they could mix paint and swirl their brushes around to paint something, just as it was sung in the song. The children were provided with watercolour paints and paintbrushes of different sizes to explore and experiment with in their painting.

When asked what he would be painting, Hans shared that he would paint something for his father because his father had taught him to sing the song. With some prompting, Hans also shared that he would use the colour blue for his painting because that was his father's favourite colour. He began painting, using a thin brush and dipping it in blue paint. As he painted blue lines on the paper, he said, "Blue, more blue. Nice!" After painting several blue lines on the paper with the thin brush, Hans then tried to use a thicker brush to add on more blue strokes. Next, he took up a thinner paint brush and dabbed it in black and purple to add on to his artwork. When it was time for outdoor play, he placed his artwork on the rack to dry. Upon returning to the classroom after outdoor play, Hans went to the drying rack to take his artwork and said to the teacher, "I add orange for the flowers I saw just now. Ok, Teacher May?" Hans then went to get the marker to add orange dots to his artwork.



### Documentation, Interpretation and Assessment

The teacher could document his/her observations to reflect Hans' progress in the learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* in a table like the one shown below. The teacher should make use of this interpretation and assessment to plan subsequent activities to help Hans reinforce and extend his learning.

<b>Learning Goal/Other Indicators of Learning and Development</b>	<b>Documentation</b> <i>(What aspects of my observation of the child should I pay more attention on?)</i>	<b>Interpretation and Assessment</b> <i>(What do the observations tell me about the child?)</i>
<p>Learning Goal 1: Enjoy participating in art and music and movement activities.</p> <p>Learning Goal 2: Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During "Show-and-Tell", Hans shared with the class a song about art that he had learnt. He shared that he liked the song as it was fast, and he swayed his body when singing the song.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hans seemed to enjoy music and movement and creating artwork. He could identify the tempo of a song and share why he liked the song.</li> </ul>

Social and Emotional Competency 1: Develop self-awareness

Social and Emotional Competency 4: Build relationships with family, friends and significant adults

Learning Dispositions: reflectiveness, engagement

- He asked if he could paint something just as it was sung in the song. When asked what he would be painting, Hans replied that he would paint something for his father because his father had taught him to sing the song.
- With some prompting, Hans also shared that he would use the colour blue for his painting because that was his father's favourite colour.
- He used a thin brush to paint some blue lines on the paper and said, *"Blue, more blue. Nice!"*
- He also used a thicker brush to add on more blue strokes before using a thin brush to add some black and purple strokes to his artwork.
- When it was time for outdoor play, he placed his artwork on the drying rack to dry.
- After outdoor play, Hans said, *"I add orange for the flowers I saw just now. Ok, Teacher May?"* He added orange dots to his artwork using a marker.
- He showed a sense of autonomy and choice as he was able to explore and experiment with different colours and paintbrushes in creating the artwork for his father confidently and independently.
- He was also aware of the need to show love and appreciation for his father who had taught him the song.
- Hans knew and was able to follow the routines for painting activities by placing his painting on the rack to dry.
- He was reflective as he showed keenness to enhance his artwork based on his observations during outdoor play and seemed ready to explore using different media for his artwork.

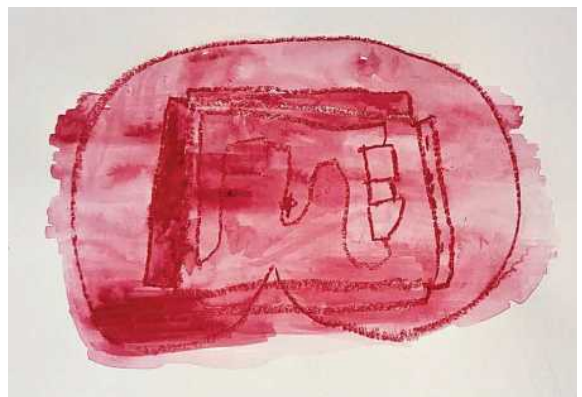
### Possible Follow-up Activities to Reinforce/Extend Learning

- Provide more opportunities for Hans to talk about his artwork and create other artworks for different purposes to sustain his enjoyment and interest in creating art.
- Provide more opportunities for Hans to participate in music and movement activities and talk about what he likes about the music.
- Introduce opportunities for the children to create artwork using mixed media and explore how different media, such as watercolour, markers, crayons, and coloured pencils create different effects on paper. Encourage Hans to choose the media that he would like to explore and experiment on his own.
- Encourage Hans to create artwork to show his love and appreciation for other members of his family.

## Example 2

### Context and Observation

The K1 children had learnt about the process of batik art as part of their inquiry project. A selection of crayons, paint and paintbrushes was placed at the Art Centre, together with swatches of batik material to invite the children to create their own batik design. They were encouraged to use some elements of art (e.g., lines, colours, shapes) to represent their ideas on paper.



Anika asked to go to the Art Centre and invited her best friend, Zi Ling along. She said, *"I want to try the batik!"* The pair chatted as they created their own batik artwork. Anika chose a red wax crayon to create the lines and red paint to fill in the spaces. As she was painting, she said to Zi Ling, *"The crayon is like the batik wax. The paint cannot cover it."* After finishing her artwork, Anika looked at Zi Ling sadly and said, *"I cannot see my lines."*



Zi Ling suggested that she tried to use a different colour for the lines. Anika took a fresh sheet of paper and used a blue wax crayon to draw the outline of a rabbit. She filled in the spaces with red paint. After she was done, she looked at both her pieces of artwork and said to Zi Ling, *"See! I can see the blue lines of my rabbit."*

## Documentation, Interpretation and Assessment

The teacher could document his/her observations to reflect Anika's progress in the learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* in a table like the one shown below. The teacher should make use of this interpretation and assessment to plan subsequent activities to help Anika reinforce and extend her learning.

<b>Learning Goal/Other Indicators of Learning and Development</b>	<b>Documentation</b> <i>(What aspects of my observation of the child should I pay more attention on?)</i>	<b>Interpretation and Assessment</b> <i>(What do the observations tell me about the child?)</i>
<p>Learning Goal 1: Enjoy participating in art and music and movement activities</p> <p>Learning Goal 2: Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement</p> <p>Learning Goal 3: Appreciate art and music and movement</p> <p>Social and Emotional Competency 1: Develop self-awareness</p> <p>Social and Emotional Competency 2: Develop self-management and regulation</p> <p>Social and Emotional Competency 4: Build relationships with family, friends and significant adults</p> <p>Learning Dispositions: appreciation, engagement</p> <p>Executive Functioning Skills: cognitive flexibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anika chose to go to the Art Centre and invited her best friend, Zi Ling along. She said, <i>"I want to try the batik!"</i></li> <li>Anika chose a red wax crayon to create the lines and red paint to fill in the spaces. As she was painting, she said to Zi Ling, <i>"The crayon is like the batik wax. The paint cannot cover it."</i> But after finishing her artwork, Anika said, <i>"I cannot see my lines."</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anika demonstrated familiarity with the resist technique used in batik and was able to recreate the effects using wax crayons and paint in her artwork.</li> <li>She showed an awareness of colour contrasts and was able to see the difference in the colour contrast between her two pieces of artwork.</li> <li>She was open to listening to the views of others as she took up her best friend's suggestion to try using a different colour to create the lines.</li> <li>She was also able to manage her disappointment appropriately when she could not see the red lines in her first artwork.</li> </ul>



- She took up Zi Ling's suggestion to try using a different colour. She decided to use a blue wax crayon to draw the outline of a rabbit and filled in the spaces with red paint. After she was done, she showed her new artwork to Zi Ling and exclaimed, *"See! I can see the blue lines now."*

- Anika may need some support and encouragement to explore doing things in different ways.

### Possible Follow-up Activities to Reinforce/Extend Learning

- Provide more opportunities for Anika to explore other variations of the resist technique, such as using tape, glue or masking fluid. Help her strengthen her sense of autonomy and choice by encouraging her to choose the type of medium and method confidently and independently.
- Conduct activities to help the children see how different colours are used to make things more attractive and interesting (e.g., observing flowers and fruits in nature, constructing with coloured building blocks, making collages using a variety of coloured paper).
- Introduce artworks to the children which use colours intentionally for contrast, such as Choy Weng Yang's "Horizontal" or Andy Warhol's "Flowers" and talk about how the artists used colours from opposite sides of the colour wheel to create their artworks.
- Using appropriate digital tools with an editing function, explore with the children the effects of different colours on their artworks or photographs.
- Help Anika develop cognitive flexibility by providing opportunities for her to make plans on paper, such as the design and type of materials/resources to use for building a structure or constructing an obstacle game. Let her complete the task by following her plan and help her to see how she might need to adjust her plan to make it work better. Help Anika practise and improve her executive functioning skills by playing games, such as "Simon Says" and matching and sorting cards in different ways.

## Example 3

### Context and Observation

The K2 children had just visited the National Gallery and wanted to set up their own gallery in the classroom to display their own artworks. During their visit to the National Gallery, they were fascinated by the robot museum guide and thus, wanted to create one for their gallery. The children were asked to work in pairs to create the robot. Raihan and Junxi decided to make the robot out of recyclable materials and started to select the most suitable items from the array of recyclable materials they had in their classroom.

Junxi pointed at two round tubes and said, *“These look like legs, we can use them to make the robot’s legs.”* The two children took turns to stack the selected materials on top of one another to try to make a robot that was as tall as them, but the boxes kept falling off. Raihan suggested, *“Use tape to stick everything together.”* Junxi did not accept the suggestion and continued to stack the selected materials on top of one another. Raihan tried to help Junxi by holding on to the boxes, but the boxes would collapse once he let go of them. Raihan said to Junxi, *“Let’s ask Teacher Sue for help.”* Both children went up to the teacher and told her their difficulty in constructing their robot. Teacher Sue suggested, *“Why don’t you try to use something to hold the boxes together? How about stacking the boxes in a different way?”*

The two boys went back to their workspace. Junxi said, *“Let’s try to put the bigger box first and turn it this way”* while Raihan said, *“I’ll bring some tape to stick them together”*. Both of them then worked together to cut the pieces of tape and managed to stick the materials together to create their robot successfully.



### Documentation, Interpretation and Assessment

The teacher could document his/her observations to reflect Junxi’s and Raihan’s progress in the learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* in a table like the one shown on the next page. The teacher should make use of this interpretation and assessment to plan subsequent activities to help reinforce and extend Junxi’s and Raihan’s learning.

### Learning Goal/Other Indicators of Learning and Development

Learning Goal 1: Enjoy participating in art and music and movement activities

Learning Goal 2: Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement

Social and Emotional Competency 1: Develop self-awareness

Social and Emotional Competency 2: Develop self-management and regulation

Social and Emotional Competency 4: Build relationships with family, friends and significant adults

Values: respect, care

Learning Dispositions: appreciation, perseverance, engagement

### Documentation

*(What aspects of my observation of the child should I pay more attention on?)*

- Raihan and Junxi decided to make a robot out of recycled materials. Junxi pointed at two round tubes and said, *"These look like legs, we can use them to make the robot's legs."*
- The two children took turns to stack the selected materials on top of one another to make a robot that was as tall as them. But the boxes kept falling off.
- Raihan suggested, *"Use tape to stick everything together."* But Junxi did not accept the suggestion and continued to stack the selected materials on top of one another. Raihan tried to help Junxi by holding on to the boxes, but the boxes would collapse once he let go of them.

### Interpretation and Assessment

*(What do the observations tell me about the child?)*

- Raihan and Junxi were able to work together to create the robot by choosing and deciding on the recycled materials to use without any assistance.
- Initially, Junxi was not so open to listen to Raihan's suggestion to use the tape to stick the materials together. This suggests that he still needs some support in learning to recognise that he can learn from ideas contributed by others to develop the learning disposition, appreciation. However, Junxi demonstrated perseverance as he did not give up easily and continued to try to stack the boxes despite failing a few times.

- Raihan suggested asking the teacher for help. The two boys took into consideration the teacher's suggestion and also an alternative viewpoint offered for them to try approaching the situation in a different way.
- Junxi said, *"Let's try to put the bigger box first and turn it this way"* while Raihan said, *"I'll bring some tape to stick them together"*. Both of them then worked together to cut the pieces of tape to stick the materials together and created their robot successfully.
- Raihan did not insist that Junxi listened to his idea. Instead, he showed respect and care for his partner as he tried to help Junxi to stabilise the robot structure by holding on to the stacked boxes.
- Raihan showed an awareness of when and who to ask for help when needed.
- Both children were fully engaged and confident in expressing their thoughts and ideas during the process of creating the robot.

### Possible Follow-up Activities to Reinforce/Extend Learning

- Provide more opportunities for the children to express their thoughts and ideas through creating 3-D structures using a variety of media and processes (e.g., observation, inspiration, imagination, experimentation).
- To help Junxi learn to respect and appreciate the different views of others, provide more opportunities for him to work in small groups to complete a common activity/task. Model and encourage Junxi to listen to the views of his group members and show how to make use of the ideas contributed by everyone to complete the activity/task.
- Encourage Raihan to be more confident in putting forth his views and ideas for others to consider.

## Example 4

### Context and Observation

The N2 children were introduced to the routine of putting their things away after learning centre time. The teacher introduced the song, “Put Your Things Away” and explained to the children that when they next hear this song, they would have to start putting away their play materials and gather at the large group area. The teacher sang the song a few times for the children to hear and encouraged them to sing along with him. Mahesh could sing and silently mouthed some of the words.

The children then went to their respective learning centres. When Mahesh heard the song being sung by the teacher again during clean-up time, he started to sing along as he put his play materials away. At the large group gathering area, Mahesh smiled and followed the teacher’s body movements (e.g., raise his arms and sit down) to parts of the song. He added his own movements by raising his arms and moving his fingers. His friends who were looking around also followed his body movements. When the teacher clapped to the beat of the song, Mahesh clapped slowly at the start. He was able to keep to the beat more consistently after clapping and singing the song a few times. Mahesh turned to a friend who was clapping slowly and said, “*Like this*” and continued clapping. He smiled at his friend when his friend started clapping to the beat. With all children gathered, the teacher sang the song one last time and then thanked the children for following the routine.

### Documentation, Interpretation and Assessment

The teacher could document his/her observations to reflect Mahesh’s progress in the learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* in a table like the one shown on the next page. The teacher should make use of this interpretation and assessment to plan subsequent activities to help reinforce and extend his learning.



### Learning Goal/Other Indicators of Learning and Development

Learning Goal 1: Enjoy participating in art and music and movement activities

Learning Goal 2: Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement

Social and Emotional Competency 1: Develop self-awareness

Social and Emotional Competency 2: Develop self-management and regulation

Social and Emotional Competency 3: Develop social awareness and show respect for diversity

Social and Emotional Competency 4: Build relationships with family, friends and significant adults

Values: respect, care

### Documentation

*(What aspects of my observation of the child should I pay more attention on?)*

- When Mahesh heard the song to signal clean-up time, he started to sing along as he put his play materials away.
- At the large group area, Mahesh smiled and followed the teacher's body movements to parts of the song. He added his own movements by raising his arms and moving his fingers.
- When the teacher clapped to the beat of the song, Mahesh clapped slowly at the start. He was able to keep to the beat more consistently after clapping and singing the song a few times.

### Interpretation and Assessment

*(What do the observations tell me about the child?)*

- Mahesh recognised the need to follow class rules as he stopped playing and started to keep the play materials on hearing the song to signal clean-up time. This also shows that he was able to self-manage and regulate his emotions appropriately (i.e., he could stop playing when it was time for clean-up).
- Mahesh was able to sing most of the song after listening to it a few times. He confidently performed the body movements shown and was able to improvise some movements to accompany the song.
- Mahesh showed an awareness of keeping to the beat and after a few times, could clap to the beat of a song that he had just learnt.

- Mahesh turned to a friend who was clapping to the beat slowly and said, “*Like this*” and continued clapping. He smiled at his friend when his friend started clapping to the beat.
- He was helpful and showed care for his classmate by showing him how to clap to the beat of the song.

### Possible Follow-up Activities to Reinforce/Extend Learning

- Invite Mahesh and some children to sing the song, “Put Your Things Away” with the teacher to remind their friends to start putting their play materials away.
- Invite Mahesh to share with the rest of the class how he improvised one of the body movements to accompany the song. Get the class to improvise their own body movements to the song and invite some of them to share with the class how they improvised. The class could vote on the body movement they preferred and perform it as a class.
- Continue to give opportunities to the children to clap to the beat of the song. Model this through other routine songs that are sung during welcome, dismissal, snack or lunch time and encourage the children to clap to the beat.

## Example 5

### Context and Observation

The K1 children listened to and talked about two pieces of music with different tempo (i.e., fast and slow). A fast piece music, “Can Can” from “Orpheus in the Underworld” by Offenbach and a slow piece of music, “Air on the G String” from “Suite No. 3” by Johann Sebastian Bach were played. After hearing the music pieces, the children were asked which music was faster and which was slower. They were also asked how the music made them feel and what the music reminded them of. They were then invited to use their body movements to respond to both the fast and slow music.

Aishah giggled when she heard the fast music piece. She used her hands to pat her lap in a fast motion when the fast music piece was played. When the slow music piece was played, she listened and looked at some of her friends who started swaying in their seats. She started swaying with them, too. Later when the class was asked to move to the fast music, Aishah started running in a circle and raising her hands up and down in a rapid manner. She said, “*I’m a bird!*”. During the slow music, she did not move at first. As she saw her friends moving, she started walking slowly with them.

After listening to the two music pieces, Aishah could chorus with her friends on which music piece was faster and which was slower. When asked what the music pieces reminded them of, Aishah was quiet at first. After listening to her friends’ responses, she raised her hand and said, “*Like a bird! Flying so fast!*” When Aishah was asked how the fast music made her feel, she said, “*Fun!*”

### Documentation, Interpretation and Assessment

The teacher could document his/her observations to reflect Aishah’s progress in the learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* in a table like the one shown on the next page. The teacher should make use of this interpretation and assessment to plan subsequent activities to help reinforce and extend her learning.

### Learning Goal/Other Indicators of Learning and Development

Learning Goal 1: Enjoy participating in art and music and movement activities

Learning Goal 2: Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement

Social and Emotional Competency 4: Build relationships with family, friends and significant adults

Values: respect, care

### Documentation

*(What aspects of my observation of the child should I pay more attention on?)*

- Aishah giggled and used her hands to pat her lap in a fast motion when she heard the fast music piece being played. When the slow music piece was played, she listened and started swaying when she saw her friends doing the action.
- When the class was asked to move to the fast music, Aishah started running in a circle, raised her hands up and down in a rapid manner and said, *"I'm a bird!"*. She did not move at first and only started walking slowly with her friends in response to the slow music.

### Interpretation and Assessment

*(What do the observations tell me about the child?)*

- Aishah was able to identify the difference in tempo (i.e., fast and slow) of music pieces. She responded quickly to the fast music and was imaginative in her body movements as she pretended to be a bird that was flying fast.
- She was still exploring how she could respond to the slow piece of music and decided to respond as her friends had.
- Aishah seems to enjoy listening and responding to the faster piece of music. With some prompting, she was able to share that the fast music piece reminded her of a bird that was flying fast and was fun to her.

- Aishah could chorus with her friends on which music piece was faster and which was slower. When asked what the music pieces reminded them of, Aishah was quiet at first, but she raised her hand and said, *“Like a bird! Flying so fast!”* after hearing some of her friends’ responses.
- When Aishah was asked how the fast music made her feel, she said, *“Fun!”*

### Possible Follow-up Activities to Reinforce/Extend Learning

- Sing a familiar song or rhyme with a different tempo and give Aishah an opportunity to suggest a body percussion (e.g., patting her knees, tapping her toes ) that the whole class could use for the different tempo.
- Introduce a percussion instrument like a rhythm stick or drum and encourage Aishah to keep to a steady beat using the musical instrument when listening to fast and slow music pieces.
- Provide more opportunities for Aishah to lead the class in responding to slow and fast music pieces using different body movements.



## Example 6

### Context and Observation

The K2 children watched a video of a dikir barat performance. After watching the video, the teacher facilitated a discussion with the children to talk about what they noticed from the video (e.g., music, musical instruments used). Using a Singaporean folksong like “Geylang, Sipaku Geylang”, the teacher encouraged the children to create their own hand movements to the local folksong in each of their groups. The teacher then invited each group to share their hand movements with the class.

While watching the video, Si Min started imitating some of the performers’ hand actions. At the end of the video, Si Min shared that there were different types of drums used in the dikir barat performance and some could be found in the preschool centre. Si Min raised her hands when the teacher asked if anyone liked the hand actions of the performance. When asked to share her reason for liking the hand actions, Si Min replied, *“The hand actions and the sounds came together like this – ‘Hah!’”* and she imitated the hand actions that she saw earlier and said *“Hah!”* loudly.

After learning the song, “Geylang, Sipaku Geylang”, Si Min listened to her group’s suggestions on what they wanted to do for their dikir barat performance. She suggested enthusiastically that she could shout *“Hah!”* at different parts of the song and the group could pose. Her friends did not like the suggestion and Si Min frowned. As the discussion continued, Si Min kept asking if they could let her shout *“Hah!”* at different parts of the song. Her friends finally agreed to her suggestion to do it at the end of the first part of the song. During the performance, she sang the song with her friends and did the hand actions according to the beat of the song. When it came to the part to say *“Hah!”*, Si Min did it on time with the hand actions and the class applauded. She smiled and clapped for herself too.

### Documentation, Interpretation and Assessment

The teacher could document his/her observations to reflect Si Min’s progress in the learning goals for *Aesthetics and Creative Expression* in a table like the one shown on the next page. The teacher should make use of this interpretation and assessment to plan subsequent activities to help reinforce and extend her learning.

### Learning Goal/Other Indicators of Learning and Development

Learning Goal 1: Enjoy participating in art and music and movement activities

Learning Goal 2: Express ideas and feelings through art and music and movement

Learning Goal 3: Appreciate art and music and movement

Social and Emotional Competency 1: Develop self-awareness

Social and Emotional Competency 2: Develop self-management and regulation

Social and Emotional Competency 3: Develop social awareness and show respect for diversity

Social and Emotional Competency 4: Build relationships with family, friends and significant adults

Values: respect

Learning Dispositions: appreciation, engagement

### Documentation

*(What aspects of my observation of the child should I pay more attention on?)*

- While watching the video of the dikir barat performance, Si Min started imitating some of the performers' hand actions. She shared that there were different types of drums used in the performance and some could be found in the preschool centre.
- Si Min raised her hands when the teacher asked if anyone liked the hand actions of the performance. When asked to share her reason for liking the hand actions, she replied, *"The hand actions and the sounds came together like this - 'Hah!'"* and she imitated the hand actions that she saw earlier and said *"Hah!"* loudly.

### Interpretation and Assessment

*(What do the observations tell me about the child?)*

- Si Min stayed focus throughout the video and showed much interest in the dikir barat performance.
- She showed an awareness of the different percussion instruments like the gong and the gong-chime that were used in the dikir barat performance. She was able to demonstrate how both the vocal and hand actions were synchronised and describe what she liked about the hand actions.

- After learning the song, “Geylang, Sipaku Geylang”, Si Min listened to her group’s suggestions on what they wanted to do for their dikir barat performance. She suggested enthusiastically that she could shout “*Hah!*” at different parts of the song and the group could pose. Her friends did not like the suggestion and Si Min frowned.
  - As the discussion continued, Si Min kept asking if they could let her shout “*Hah!*” at different parts of the song. Her friends finally agreed to her suggestion to do it at the end of the first part of the song.
  - During the performance, she sang the song with her friends and did the hand actions according to the beat of the song. At the end of the song, Si Min shouted “*Hah!*” on time with the hand actions and the class applauded.
- Si Min was able to work in a group as she listened to her friends’ ideas for their dikir barat performance. Although she frowned when her friends did not agree with her suggestions, she was able to consider their views and adapt her suggestions. This shows that Si Min could regulate her emotions as she was not overly frustrated when her friends did not initially take up her suggestion.
  - She was able to keep to the song’s beat with the appropriate hand actions. She demonstrated good timing and confidence in saying “*Hah!*” loudly with her accompanying hand actions.

### **Possible Follow-up Activities to Reinforce/Extend Learning**

- To sustain Si Min's interest in different types of music and dance performances, introduce percussion instruments from different cultures like the tabla, the kompang and the cymbal to the children.
- Display labelled pictures of a variety of musical instruments used by different cultures to help the children be familiar with these different instruments.
- Invite a performer or a parent who knows about dikir barat to the preschool centre to talk about the musical form to enhance the children's interest in the cultural performance. Encourage the children to think of questions they may want to ask the classroom visitor to foster their sense of wonder and curiosity.
- Give the children an opportunity to share with the younger children what they have learnt about dikir barat and perform for the younger children in the preschool centre. This enhances the children's appreciation for different genres of music and movement performances and builds the K2 children's confidence and enjoyment in performing for different groups.

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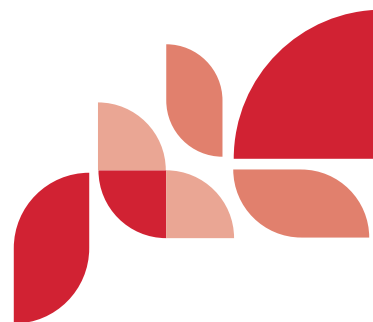
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