



TIPS FOR TEACHING PRESCHOOL MUSIC



General:

- Plan to sing six songs in each class (better to have too many than too few)
- Know the songs by heart (use chord cards as prompts)
- Continuity is very important (always sing a hello and goodbye song)
- Repeat songs week after week to build repertoire
- Use props whenever possible
- Make lessons active and interactive
(hand motions, sign language, clapping, dancing, percussion, zip in their ideas)
- Have a favorite silly or movement song ready to use in case the children are restless
- If a song isn't working, bring it to an end and move on
- Sit physically at their level – on floor or low chair

Administrative:

- Ask teachers to put nametags on children for the first few weeks of school
- Provide song-sheets for teachers and administrators
- Write newsletters to parents each month
- Keep track of what was sung in each class (music units with lists and teaching notes)
- Correspond with teachers by email prior to the start of the year, letting them know what you expect from them. Ask about their classroom curriculum so that you can select songs that relate to what they are learning.
- Divide curriculum into groups (2/3 and 4/K)

Typical Routine for 25-minute class:

- Sing hello song(s)
- Sing friendship/community song
- Introduce unit
- Teach 3-4 songs (the progression of songs should correspond to how you are developing the theme)
- Give out stickers
- Sing goodbye song
- Tell the children how much fun it was to sing with them!
- Do 'air' high fives while saying Shalom!

Curriculum Planning:

- Calendar-out the year with all holidays, days off, special events, etc. Plug in themes. Evaluate how you will fill the remaining classes.
- Choices of themes are impacted by your personal mission as an educator as well as by the school's mission for their music program.
- When selecting songs, have a clear concept about your objective and evaluate if the song meets that objective.
- Themed units give context to songs and provide a natural progression throughout the year. (Ex: Simchat Torah → Creation → Noah → Rainbow → Colors → Fall Season → Animals). Also help us to focus in on what we want to teach.
- Examples of themes: tikkun olam, friendship, songs that teach (counting, colors, Hebrew, body parts, manners), class identity, just for fun, favorites.
- Class structure considerations: progression of songs, kinesthetic opportunities, number of weeks you have to teach the unit.
- Considerations when choosing songs: Is it age appropriate? Are there multiple ways of engaging in the song? How does it develop your theme? How does it impact the flow of the class?
- Make songs POP with props, books, videos, hand motions, sign language, clapping, percussion, movement, drama/story, humor, using students' names or ideas.
- Adapt songs for your needs (change lyrics, sing just one part of the song)