

Using Action Songs to Promote Fun English Learning at Elementary School

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Action songs

- are songs *with* movements for miming and role-playing the words and the language structures.

Similar Features of Song and Language

- First “physically, both of them made up of sound waves which our ears capture and our brains process into a meaningful, recognizable code.”
- Second, both of them “communicate emotions and meanings.”
- Third, they both have an “intrinsic phonology namely rhythm and accentuation, key and intonation”

Benefits of using action songs

- “allow for self expression, encouraging a child's own response in his or her use of body and speech.”
- “encourage students to participate verbally.”
- “provide relaxation (a legitimate opportunity to wiggle and move around).”
- “assist the child in learning to follow directions.”
- “increase attention span.”
- “develop listening skills.”
- “teach order and sequence.”
- “help teach number concepts.”
- “ increase manual dexterity and muscular control.”

Fun atmosphere

Bringing songs to the classroom:

- allow learner to enjoy **stress-free learning situation** which furthermore lead to the **low level of affective filter**.

Using songs

- **Preparing and Selecting Songs**
- **Analysing**

Preparing and Selecting

- familiarize yourself with the **aims** and the **ministry documents** that provide guidelines.
- Decide the teaching and learning **objectives** (in line with the overall aims of the teaching program)
- Examine **the actions or body movement** (fit learners' needs and characteristics)

Analyzing Songs

- check whether the songs provide sufficient and good language model for the students
- Investigate what kind of language focus it provides, the pronunciation and grammar used in the songs, and also the tune of the song
- examine carefully the length of the lyric as well as words' density and difficulty

Examples of the action songs

- Pinocchio
- 3 bears songs
- Do little motion 1 2 3
- Follow Me
- Hockey Pockey
- Teddy Bears
- Head Shoulders Knees and Toes

Teaching the action song

- letter a large sign or use pocket chart to serve as a teleprompter.
- be enthusiastic, use those songs that you enjoy.
- demonstrate appropriate actions as you say or sing the words to the group.
- replay the action encouraging the children to imitate only the action.
- do the actions again allowing those who wish to participate with both action and words.
- keep actions and words slow enough so that children do not have trouble keeping up.
- repeat often enough for children to become familiar with them.
- occasionally send parents the words and music so they concurrently can be used at home.

Learning Activities

- The preparation activities should help to prepare the students to accomplish the core activity.
- Pre-teaching of language items or activating topic vocabulary is one form of preparation activity which is done prior to the core activity.
- The follow-up stage then should build on the completion of the core activity.

Action Songs as follow up activities

- Action songs can be used in the classroom as the complement or follow-up activities for other learning activities, for example after telling the story of Pinocchio the class is continued with singing and acting out the Pinocchio song.

possible activities associated with action songs

- Guessing
- Arranging words into sentences
- Listen and Tick
- Saying True or False
- Arranging sentences based on songs
- Completing the song
- Acting out the song
- Miming and guessing
- Performing the songs
- games

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