

## 5 week lesson plan EYFS 3-5 Year olds

### Overview

This 5 week EYFS music plan is designed to explore seasonal themes from autumn to winter, integrating songs, movement, percussion, and imaginative play. Each 30-minute session combines vocal activities, body percussion, instrumental exploration, and sensory experiences to develop children's musicality, coordination, and social skills. The plan incorporates inclusive strategies, ensuring that all children, including EAL learners, non-verbal learners, and children with sensory or physical needs, can participate meaningfully.

This session progresses from listening and sound exploration in Week 1 to ensemble coordination and performance in Week 5, allowing children to gradually build confidence, rhythmic understanding, pitch recognition, and expressive skills. Seasonal songs, rhymes, and familiar tunes encourage engagement, with additional props like scarves, leaves, and percussion instruments enhancing sensory exploration and creativity.

### Progression and Assessment Table

Week	Focused Musical Skill	Observable Progress Indicators
1	Listening and sound imitation	Child imitates autumnal sounds, participates in vocal play, engages with props
2	Rhythm and pulse	Keeps a steady beat using body percussion or instruments, responds to tempo changes
3	Coordination and ensemble	Plays in time with others, follows rhythmic patterns, participates in group chants
4	Pitch and expression	Recognises high/low sounds, expresses feelings

		through sound and movement
5	Recall and performance	Remembers and performs favourite songs with confidence, demonstrates teamwork

For children in the early years, having experiences and songs repeated for them weekly is essential as they take advantage of the brain's natural neuroplasticity. By using the same 'Welcome' and 'Goodbye' songs each week, it will create predictable routines that will support them and their memory, emotional security, and as their general language development grows.

Repetition also comes under the umbrella of behaviourism, where these constant cues and responses help children to understand the concept of expectations and begin to build positive learning habits. The children begin to associate the songs with a routine, either warming up or cooling down, supporting more emotionally regulated behaviour and promote the idea of self-regulation.

In addition to behaviourism, there is also elements of social learning theory, Children with much more effect through imitation, so using the same songs encourages them to participate, copy actions and build confidence in a protected and familiar space. Constructivist ideas also become active, as while the children begin to repeatedly engage with the songs, they begin to develop and understand the meaning through the words, actions and regime building awareness through experience.

Furthermore, as argued by Ioannis Mavroudis, "During early childhood, musical engagement stimulates multiple areas of the brain simultaneously, reinforcing neural connections that underpin fundamental cognitive processes such as language acquisition, spatial reasoning, memory, and executive functioning." He goes on to explain how, "In school-aged children, participation in music education programmes has been linked to improved academic performance, particularly in subjects requiring high levels of verbal memory and mathematical skills. This suggests that music fosters broader cognitive domains through a

mechanism of ‘transfer effect’, where improvements in one skill domain promote gains in others.” (Mavroudis, 2025) These arguments follow the Constructivist ideas that children will begin to connect with the music and songs performed for them and with them through the melodies, lyrics, and actions.

Overall, consistent musical routines help create disciplined, nurturing environment where young children can grow and strengthen their neural connections, furthering positive behaviour and a sense of belonging.

### ***Week 1 – Sounds of Autumn: Crushing Leaves and Whistling Wind***

Learning Objectives:

- Identify and recreate autumnal sounds with voice, body, and instruments
- Explore rhythm through movement and song
- Develop listening and turn-taking skills

Session Outline (30 minutes)

Time	Activity	Details and Differentiation
3 Minutes	Welcome Song – Hello Autumn Friends “Hello (Name) x2, It’s Autumn Time Again...”	Wave scarves, stamp feet, flutter like leaves. Confident children can lead; non-verbal children wave or hold a leaf
5 Minutes	Song 1 – Scarecrow, Scarecrow	Stretch arms, freeze in scarecrow poses, echo sing. Children follow actions or create their own.
5 Minutes	Song 2 – I’m a little Acorn (to the tune of <i>I’m A Little Teapot</i> )	Children swing slide, reach up and look left to right.

5 Minutes	Listening Game – Autumn Sounds	Rustling leaves, wind, rain, birds. Children mimic vocally or with percussion. Visual cue cards for EAL learners.
7 Minutes	Main Activity – Autumn Sound Walk	Pretend forest walk: crumpled leaves (paper), scarves as wind, shakers as rain. Model simple rhythms; confident children improvise.
5 Minutes	Autumn Leaves are Falling Down / Goodbye Song	Gentle waving and “falling like leaves” to Lie down / slowly stand back up to wave

<https://bit.ly/3WZpT60> - Scarecrow, Scarecrow

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kbg63mxl1NY> – I’m a Little Acorn



I’m a Little Acorn, watch me grow

First I’m a sapling way down low

Then my trunk grows up so very slow

And all my branches grow grow grow

Music activities for young children provide a rich foundation for learning across many areas. Through listening and sound imitation, children explore timbre, volume and pitch, and begin

to appreciate the variety of sounds around them. By experimenting with instruments and body percussion, they discover dynamics (loud/soft) and rhythm. This can be supported with reference to an article written for The Elizabeth Foundation, in which it reads, “In early years settings, music and songs help young children learn about tones and rhythm... children practice listening and identifying sounds as they try to pick up rhythms or different instruments.” (The Elizabeth Foundation, 2023) These experiences align with the expressive-arts mandate of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), allowing children to express ideas and feelings through sound and movement. They also support the understanding of the world, broadening children’s awareness of environmental and musical sounds. This can be supported with reference to an article written for The Sutton Music Trust, in which it is argued that “A strong foundation of music in the early years is vital for all children ... Playing instruments and moving to music have many benefits ... it helps children develop their physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills.” (The Sutton Music Trust, 2023) On a social and emotional level, group music-making also provides opportunities for non-verbal children to participate through gestures or props – which can be significantly empowering for children who may feel shy, learning English as an additional language, or less musically confident. Furthermore, assessing the children may involve observing a child’s imitation of sounds, monitoring their engagement with props and/or instruments, and noting how rhythm and participation evolve over time.

### ***Week 2 – Rainy Rhythms and Puddle Songs***

Learning Objectives:

- Keep a steady beat with body percussion and instruments
- Respond to temp and dynamic changes
- Develop coordination and musical memory

Session Outline (30 Minutes)

Time	Activity	Details and Differentiation
3 Minutes	Welcome Song – Hello Autumn Friends	Wave scarves, stamp feet, flutter like leaves. Confident children can lead; non-verbal children wave or hold a leaf
5 Minutes	Song 1 – One Little Bug Went Out to Play	Bug movements, echo singing, gestures for vocabulary support
5 Minutes	Song 2 – Incy Bitsy Spider	Finger climbing motions up/down. Non-verbal children can mime
5 Minutes	Warm-Up – Pitter Patter Rain	Tap knees (“drip drop”), speed up to “pitter patter,” stomp for thunder. Visual cues for tempo.
7 Minutes	Main Activity – Rain Band	Rainmakers (shakers), Thunder (drums), Puddles (hand claps). Call-and-response. Confident children can lead
5 Minutes	Autumn Leaves are Falling Down / Goodbye Song	Gentle waving and “falling like leaves” to Lie down / slowly stand back up to wave

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGPazoFMJvw> – One Little Bug Went Out to Play

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w\\_ICi8U49mY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_ICi8U49mY) – Incy Bitsy Spider

### One Little Bug went out to Play

*\*If you are singing this song in a classroom you can have children stand up and be bugs on the spider's 'web'.*

One little bug went out to play,  
On a spider's web one day.  
He had such enormous fun,  
He called for another bug to come.

Two little bugs went out to play...

*\*Then repeat versus from above. Continue with one more bug until you get to 5 or however many bugs you want to count.*

Five little bugs went out to play,  
On a spider's web one day.  
They got stuck, all in a bunch.  
And along came spider, in time for lunch!

### Incy Wincy Spider

(Itsy Bitsy if you're from the US)

Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the water spout,  
*(Use fingers of both hands to represent a spider climbing up)*

Down came the rain and washed poor Incy out;  
*(Raise the hands and lower them slowly, wiggling fingers to represent rain)*

Out came the sunshine and dried up all the rain,  
*(Raise hands up together above head and then out and down)*

And Incy Wincy Spider climbed up the spout again.  
*(Move hands like in first line)*

Developing early musical skills in the early years foundation stage begins with helping children internalise a steady beat and pulse while exploring dynamics such as loud/quiet and fast/slow. Through call-and-response activities and simple rhythm imitation, children build confidence in musical communication. As Samuel D. Miller said, in an article highlight the work of Kodaly, Miller explains how “He (Kodaly) caused a lot of us to reevaluate our thinking and reestablish the principle that every child, regardless of musical potential, deserves the opportunity to become musically literate. Moreover, he (Kodaly) provided ample proof of the feasibility and practicality of his pedagogical theories”. (Samuel D. Miller, 1980). Monitoring children’s ability to maintain a steady beat, respond to call-and-response cues, and engage with changes in tempo or dynamics provides valuable assessment opportunities. In an article highlighting the Orff teaching process, author Susan Banks concludes the piece, stating that, “Making music just another body of concepts and relationships to be mastered is a great mistake. Even in the general music classroom, genuine aesthetic events can bring to children nonverbal modes of being, knowing, and communicating that cannot be learned through other subjects.” (Banks, 1982). It can also be argued that the Orff approach underscores the importance of inclusive, hands-on learning where children explore music physically and playfully. Differentiation can include small-group support for less confident learners and quite or tactile percussion options for children with sensory needs. In an article written by Carolyn Hildebrandt, it is emphasized the importance music has on a young child’s development and growth. Children having the opportunity to see and understand what their voices and other instruments can produce has

the ability to set them up for their future in terms of musical interest, but it also brings in the idea of respect surrounding music and understanding the difference between a gentle and harsh sounds.

### ***Week 3 – Harvest and Home: Warm Autumn Songs***

Learning Objectives:

- Explore rhythmic patterns using harvest objects
- Develop teamwork through shared play
- Sing and play in time with others

Session Outline (30 Minutes)

Time	Activity	Details and Differentiation
3 Minutes	Welcome Song – Hello Autumn Friends	Wave scarves, stamp feet, flutter like leaves. Confident children can lead; non-verbal children wave or hold a leaf
5 Minutes	Song 1 – 5 Little Pumpkins	Count Pumpkins, clap syllables. Visual aids for EAL learners. When confident, can split into groups and try in cannon/staggered.
5 Minutes	Song 2 – 10 Apples On My Head	Mime balancing, Mime stumbling for “wibbling wobbling”, shake head for “I will not let them fall”, bob up and down
5 Minutes	Warm-Up – Clap the Food	Chant harvest food names, clap syllables, create simple rhythms. (Corn,

		Blackberries, Potato, Cauliflower)
7 Minutes	Main Activity – Harvest Kitchen Band	Use spoons, bowls, instruments. Confident children lead; quieter children follow steady beats
5 Minutes	Autumn Leaves are Falling Down / Goodbye Song	Gentle waving and “falling like leaves” to Lie down / slowly stand back up to wave

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cm1qvX1ygOo> – 5 Little Pumpkins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IS9btv3GVk> – 10 Apples On My Head

## 5 Little Pumpkins

*Rhyme*

Five little pumpkins sitting on a gate (hold up 5 fingers)  
 The first one said, “Oh my, it is getting late!” (hands on cheeks)  
 The second one said, “There’s a chill in the air!” (arms around self)  
 The third one said, “But we don’t care!” (swing pointer finger)  
 The fourth one said, “We are ready for some fun!” (hands in air)  
 The fifth one said, “Let’s run and run and run!”  
 So whooooo went the wind, (make a “whoooo” sound)  
 And out went the lights (clap hands once loudly)  
 And five little pumpkins rolled out of sight! (roll hands)



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### SONG LYRICS

One apple on my head.  
 Two apples on my head.  
 Three apples on my head.  
 Wibbly wobbly, wibbly wobbly...  
 I will not let them fall.

Four apples on my head.  
 Five apples on my head.  
 Six apples on my head.  
 Wibbly wobbly, wibbly wobbly...  
 I will not let them fall.

Seven apples on my head.  
 Eight apples on my head.  
 Nine apples on my head.  
 Ten apples on my head!  
 Wibbly wobbly, wibbly wobbly,  
 wibbly wobbly, wibbly wobbly,  
 wibbly wobbly, wibbly wobbly...  
 I will not let them fall!

Developing musical skills such as rhythm and syllable recognition, ensemble coordination, chanting, and simple instrumental work plays an important role in early childhood education and links directly to key EYFS outcomes. Research on early childhood music emphasises that children’s engagement with music should be intentionally planned to support their broader learning. Group music-making also offers holistic benefits beyond music itself, as scholars such as Frances H. Rauscher and Sean C. Hinton noted that “making music provides profound social and individual benefits” (Rauscher and Hinton, 2011), including improvements in cognitive skills and social interaction, which align with EYFS areas such as PSED (teamwork, turn-taking,

sharing) and Expressive Arts and Design (making music collaboratively). Especially in ensemble contexts, research shows that shared music activity is associated with developmental gains in cooperation, echoing the findings of Beatriz Ilari, Susan Helfter and Tina Huynh, that “collective music making has been associated with the emergence of prosocial behaviours in children and adults”. (Ilari, Helfter, Huynh, 2020). Noting a child’s ability to follow a beat or synchronise with others therefore provides meaningful insight into both musical and broader developmental progress.

#### ***Week 4 – Winter Winds and Snowy Sounds***

Learning Objectives:

- Explore high/low sounds using voice/instruments
- Express feelings through soundscapes
- Move in time to contrasting music

Session Outline (30 Minutes)

Time	Activity	Details and Differentiation
3 Minutes	Welcome Song – Hello Autumn Friends	Wave scarves, stamp feet, flutter like leaves. Confident children can lead; non-verbal children wave or hold a leaf
5 Minutes	Song 1 – Leaves on the Tree	Use scarves, explore high/low pitch with leaf movements
5 Minutes	Song 2 – Dance Like Snowflakes	Twirl scarves, gentle movements. Non-verbal children observe or mimic gestures

5 Minutes	Warm-Up – Blow the Snowflakes	Scarves/tissue as snow; gentle and fast blowing, moving to music
7 Minutes	Main Activity – Winter Orchestra	Groups: Wind (scarves), snow (bells), Ice (chimes), Feet (Stomps). Conducting roles for confident children
5 Minutes	Autumn Leaves are Falling Down / Goodbye Song	Gentle waving and “falling like leaves” to Lie down / slowly stand back up to wave

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwaCO3-KUKQ> – Leaves on the Tree

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2\\_PyEH\\_BeY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2_PyEH_BeY) – Dance Like Snowflakes

#### **The Leaves on the trees**

The leaves on the tree turn orange and brown, orange and brown, orange and brown.  
The leaves on the trees turn orange and brown, All through the town.

The leaves on the trees come swirling down, swirling down, swirling down.  
The leaves on the trees come swirling down. All through the town.

The leaves on the ground go swish, swish, swish, Swish, swish, swish.  
The leaves on the ground go swish, swish, swish, All through the town.

(Sung to: "The Wheels on the Bus")

#### **Dance Like Snowflakes**

**Sung to: “Frere Jacques”**

Dance like snowflakes X2

In the air X2

Whirling, twirling, snowflakes X2

Here and there X2

Research shows that young children can naturally hear and use basic musical elements like pitch and timbre even before they receive any formal music training. Because of this, activities such as exploring high and low sounds or identifying different tone colours are age-appropriate and beneficial in early childhood settings. Building on this, developmental research reveals in an article authored by Carol Rogel Scott, that “children respond to differences in loudness, timbre, and pitch at a very early age, “ which positions movement to sound not only as play but as an authentic musical learning process. These engagements align

with wider pedagogical recommendations that music and movement activities should enable imaginative play and coordinated action, fulfilling EYFS outcomes in Expressive Arts and Design and Physical Development by enhancing listening skills, motor coordination, and expressive capacity. Importantly, research also highlights the social dimension of early music, where shared musical activities support prosocial behaviours such as turn-taking and cooperative interaction, which connects strongly with PSED expectation in EYFS.

### ***Week 5 – Seasonal Celebration: Autumn – Winter Concert***

Learning Objectives:

- Revisit favourite songs/activities
- Demonstrate confidence and teamwork
- Celebrate participation and progress

Session Outline (30 minutes)

Time	Activity	Details and Differentiation
3 Minutes	Welcome Song – Hello Autumn Friends	Wave scarves, stamp feet, flutter like leaves. Confident children can lead; non-verbal children wave or hold a leaf
5 Minutes	Song 1 – Hanukkah, Hanukkah	Use scarves/props to mimic glowing flames of the menorah, sparkling dreidel spins or Hannukah lights. Encourage confident children to lead the actions, showing how the candles shine brighter each night of the festival

5 Minutes	Song 2 – Diwali Bells	Hand movements to show lights and diyas, with added claps and simple rhythms to reflect festive patterns and energy
7 Minutes	Mini Performance	Children perform songs from previous weeks; instruments, scarves, dance. Encourage confidence and leadership
5 Minutes	Reflection Activity	Discuss favourite songs/moments. Model praise and turn-taking.
5 Minutes	Autumn Leaves are Falling Down / Goodbye Song	Gentle waving and “falling like leaves” to Lie down / slowly stand back up to wave

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4k8dzH5SNu0> – Hanukkah, Hanukkah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFYhAiPH3O4> – Diwali Bells

**Hanukkah Hanukkah Lyrics**

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The First Night  
How many candles do we light?  
1, 1, 1, 1, 1

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The Second Night  
How many candles do we light?  
2, 2, 2, 2, 2

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The Second Night  
How many candles do we light?  
3, 3, 3, 3, 3

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The Second Night  
How many candles do we light?  
4, 4, 4, 4, 4

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The Second Night  
How many candles do we light?  
5, 5, 5, 5, 5

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The Second Night  
How many candles do we light?  
6, 6, 6, 6, 6

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The Second Night  
How many candles do we light?  
7, 7, 7, 7, 7

Hanukkah Hanukkah, The Second Night  
How many candles do we light?  
8, 8, 8, 8, 8

Hanukkah Hanukkah  
The Festival of Lights

**Diwali Bells Lyrics**

Diwali Bells, Diwali Bells  
Lights are shining bright  
Oh what fun it is to sing on this festive night  
Hey  
Diwali Bells, Diwali Bells  
Joy is everywhere  
Celebrate with love and light  
Diwali's in the air.

**X2**

In our music sessions, children are encouraged to recall and perform familiar songs, coordinate as a group and take on leadership roles through singing, movement and instruments, and research supports these kinds of activities because music is not just fun, but it also builds real developmental skills. For example, scholars such as John L. Vitale have argued that “making music...activates children’s ability to follow the structure of a piece of music,” showing how songs help kids understand patterns and respond confidently to rhythm and cues, which enhances their confidence and social engagement. This ties closely to the EYFS goals of Expressive Arts and Design by supporting creative expression, Personal, Social and Emotional Development by building teamwork and confidence, and Communication and Language as children learn sequences, follow instructions and communicate musically. I assess their progress by observing how confidently they perform, noting who leads or participates, and reflecting on which songs engaged them most. To make lessons inclusive, I offer a choice of roles like singer or prop holder, use visual and gesture prompts for non-verbal children, and give extra support in small groups so everyone can feel successful and included. In an article written by Paul G. Morehouse, Morehouse notes that music in early childhood is tied to cognitive and expressive growth broadly.

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