



## Music In Our Schools Month® General Music: Kindergarten 2022 – 2023

### “Exploring Fingerplays and Birthday Songs”

#### Fingerplay: *Five Little Candles*

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**Overview** Students will learn the fingerplay, *Five Little Candles*, and demonstrate a steady beat while speaking it. Students will also compare/ contrast two birthday songs and respond to the  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter of each using rhythm sticks.

#### **Prerequisite Skills**

For students to be successful in this unit they will need knowledge of and experiences with the following:

- Tapping, moving, or patting to a steady beat—with and without classroom rhythm instruments.
- Singing as a class.

#### **Instructional Goals/Objectives**

Launching Point 1: Students will learn the fingerplay, *Five Little Candles*, then demonstrate a steady beat while speaking it.

Launching Point 2: Students will—with teacher assistance—generate a list of how they celebrate their birthday. Students will hear two different birthday songs and respond, with rhythm sticks, to the  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter of each. Students will—with teacher assistance—generate a list of similarities and differences between the two and choose their favorite.

#### **National Core Arts Standards (2014)**

#### **CREATING LP1**

**Anchor Standard:** MU:Cr1.1.Ka

With guidance, explore and experience music concepts (such as beat and melodic contour).

**Essential Questions:** How do musicians generate creative ideas?

**Enduring Understanding:** The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians' work emerge from a variety of sources.

**RESPONDING LP2**

**Anchor Standards:** MU:Re7.1.Ka

With guidance, list personal interests and experiences and demonstrate why they prefer some music selections over others.

MU:Re7.2.Ka

With guidance, demonstrate how a specific music concept (such as beat or melodic direction) is used in music.

**Essential Questions:** How do individuals choose music to experience?

How does understanding the structure and context of music inform a response?

**Enduring Understanding:** Individuals' selection of musical works is influenced by their interests, experiences, understandings, and purposes.

Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.

**Assessments**

Assessment rubrics are included in each launching point.

**Fingerplay:**

“Five Little Candles” by Debbie Beninati

*Five little candles on a birthday cake (hold up all five fingers),*

*You know the kind that a baker at a bakery makes? (whisper conspiratorially!)*

*Along comes a child with a birthday today, (“child” can be replaced with the school’s mascot, e.g., “Eagle,” “Shark,” “Rattler,” etc.)*

*He/she makes one wish (blow out thumb candle)*

*And he/she shouts, “HOORAY!”*

Count down till no fingers are left, blowing out a new “finger candle” each time:

*No little candles on a birthday cake,  
You know the kind that a baker at a bakery makes?  
Along comes a child with a birthday today,  
He/she takes one bite (CHOMP)  
And he/she shouts, “HOORAY!”*

**Recordings:**

*Las Mañanitas* <https://www.loc.gov/item/lomaxbib000094/>

*Happy Birthday to You*: The song is now public domain. However, individual recordings created on various streaming channels (like YouTube) may still be subject to copyright law. Therefore, no specific version of this song is linked to this lesson plan.

**Other Materials:**

White board and markers

Rhythm sticks and other assorted unpitched classroom rhythm instruments

## Teacher Talk – To the Teacher (Historical and Cultural Significant information)

### Launching Point 1:

*Five Little Candles* was created to replace the fingerplay *Five Little Monkeys*. To understand why *Five Little Monkeys* is considered an unacceptable educational choice, please refer to the following links:

[https://blackwiki.org/index.php/Five\\_Little\\_Monkeys](https://blackwiki.org/index.php/Five_Little_Monkeys)

<http://pancocojams.blogspot.com/2014/07/the-racist-roots-of-five-little-monkeys.html>

<https://face2faceafrica.com/article/nine-nursery-rhymes-you-probably-didnt-realize-were-racist/7>

### Launching Point 2:

*Las Mañanitas* is a traditional birthday celebration song from Mexico:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las\\_Mañanitas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Mañanitas)

Information about the song *Happy Birthday to You*:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Happy\\_Birthday\\_to\\_You](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Happy_Birthday_to_You)

There are many versions of each song available on the music streaming platform of your choice. It is recommended that you search for and use an example most appropriate for your group of students; perhaps one using children's voices or a mariachi version of *Las Mañanitas*, for example.

When generating a list of how students celebrate birthdays, the list can include how they would like to celebrate the "birthday of their dreams" in order to be more inclusive.

## Launching Point One

**Objective:** Students will learn the fingerplay, *Five Little Candles*, then demonstrate a steady beat while speaking it.

**Essential Questions:** How do musicians generate creative ideas?

**Specific Performance Standards:** Students will demonstrate they can maintain a steady beat by tapping the beat while speaking the words to the fingerplay. Model student expectations and begin by tapping the beat on the knees, then switch to a new place with each new verse of the fingerplay. Invite the students to give ideas about where to tap the beat (on our shoes, on the tip of our nose, flapping our arms like chicken wings, etc.).

### Procedure:

1. Model and perform the fingerplay, *Five Little Candles*, making sure to use an animated voice. Have the students follow along and join in speaking the fingerplay as they begin to learn the formula.
2. Repeat the fingerplay after asking questions that check their understanding (What is this fingerplay about? How many candles did we start with? What happened to each candle? What do we call this idea in math when we "take away?" etc.)
3. Once students can speak the fingerplay, take away the actions and pat the steady beat instead, switching the location of beat placement for each new verse. For example: "Let's tap the beats this time while we say the rhyme. Let's start by tapping them on our heads...but watch out! I may switch it up! Don't let me trick you!"
4. Have students assess how well they did using the rubric below.
5. Students can then be invited to keep the beats using classroom rhythm instruments. This can be done in a number of different ways. For example: students can be divided into groups and instruments are handed to the next group after each verse, each verse can be represented by a different instrument, etc.

**Assessment:** Students can self-assess using this three-point scale by holding up the correct number of fingers. Teacher assessment of beat awareness can be accomplished using the same table.

<b>I can tap a steady beat all the way through our fingerplay.</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I can tap a steady beat most of the way through our fingerplay</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I need more practice.</b>	<b>1</b>

**Extension:**

1. Ask the students: “Can you think of a way we could bring this fingerplay to life? Could we act it out or add some movement?”
2. Explore fast and slow: “How do candles melt? How could you show that with movement and your body?”
3. “Which music would be a better choice to represent melting candles?” Provide two contrasting listening examples like *Gymnopédie No. 1*, by Erik Satie, and *Flight of the Bumblebee*, by Rimsky-Korsakov.

## Launching Point Two

**Objective:** Students will—with teacher assistance—generate a list of how they celebrate their birthday. Students will hear two different birthday songs and respond, with rhythm sticks, to the  $\frac{3}{4}$  meter of each. Students will—with teacher assistance—generate a list of similarities and differences between the two and choose their favorite.

**Essential Questions:** How do individuals choose music to experience?

How does understanding the structure and context of music inform a response?

**Specific Performance Standards:** When playing rhythm sticks to both *Happy Birthday to You* and *Las Mañanitas*, students should place beat one on the floor (off to their sides) and click the sticks together for beats two and three. This pattern should be modeled by the teacher throughout.

**Procedure:**

1. Begin by singing *Happy Birthday to You* and ask if the students recognize it! Invite the students to join you in singing it again.

2. Facilitate a discussion about birthday traditions and generate a list on the whiteboard of how students celebrate their birthdays. The list can include how they would like to celebrate the “birthday of their dreams” in order to be more inclusive.
3. Listen to a recorded example of *Happy Birthday to You*.
4. Answer questions one and two of the similarities and differences chart (See Assessment section)
5. Explain the origin of *Las Mañanitas* and listen to a recorded example.
6. Answer questions one and two of the similarities and differences chart (See Assessment section).
7. Using rhythm sticks, model the  $\frac{3}{4}$  beat pattern the students will play while they sing the birthday song with you.
8. Pass out rhythm sticks in whatever way is customary for your class.
9. Before playing along to the recorded examples, have the students practice the rhythm stick pattern. Use verbal cues for guidance: “floor-tap-tap” or “floor-click-click”, for example.
10. Play along to each recording, answering the third question in the similarities and differences chart between each song.
11. Since both songs are in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, the answer to the third question should be “yes.” This can be a point of discussion: “Although both songs come from different places, have different instrumentation and voices, the beats feel like 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3.”
12. Finally, through show of hands, have students decide which is their favorite and tally the results.
13. Students can be given one more opportunity to play along with each recording, completing a self-assessment after each song (see Assessment section).

**Assessment:** Similarities and differences chart. This can be displayed on a document camera or hand drawn on a white board:

	Happy Birthday to You	Las Mañanitas
What voices did I hear?		
What instruments did I hear?		

Can I play the rhythm stick pattern I learned along with this song?	Yes/ No	Yes/No
Which one is my favorite? Keep track with tally marks!		

Students can self-assess using this three-point scale by holding up the correct number of fingers. Teacher assessment of students' ability to show three beats to a set can be accomplished using the same rubric.

<b>I could play the rhythm stick pattern correctly all the way through <i>Happy Birthday to You</i>.</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I could play the rhythm stick pattern correctly most of the way through <i>Happy Birthday to You</i>.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I need more practice.</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>I could play the rhythm stick pattern correctly all the way through <i>Las Mañanitas</i>.</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>I could play the rhythm stick pattern correctly most of the way through <i>Las Mañanitas</i>.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I need more practice.</b>	<b>1</b>

#### Extension:

1. Ask students to share any birthday songs or traditions from their home country or culture.
2. Find those places and relative location to the USA (or your state) on a map.