TRICKS, TREATS, AND TUNES:
FALL MUSIC ACTIVITIES FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

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Link to Slides

Session Goals:

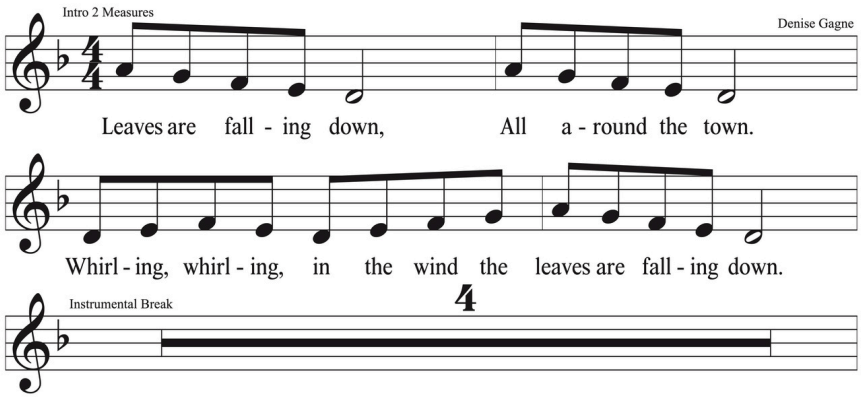
- Discover how to find and use seasonal resources on MusicplayOnline.
- Explore Halloween- and fall-themed songs, games, and activities that build musical skills while keeping learning fun and inclusive.
- Learn ways to adapt and modify seasonal activities to ensure full participation for all students, including secular options.
- Gain ready-to-use lesson ideas and strategies for incorporating rhythm, melody, and creative opportunities for various grade levels.

How to Find Seasonal Resources:

- Jump Into a Collection from the Landing Page:
  - Select a Collection, then "Seasonal"
  - Can use filters to narrow it down
- Units Section:
  - Festivals and Holidays
- Search Tool
  - Use the filters to narrow down your search
  - Use the language filter located to the left of the search bar.

Movement Songs and Activities

Fall Leaves - Musicplay Pre-K - Song #19



Teaching Suggestions: Teach the song by rote or immersion. Have the students create movement with scarves to accompany the song. While singing, I suggest they stand in place and move the scarves to show the way the melody goes. During the instrumental section the students love to toss their scarves in the air.

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Autumn Leaves – Musicplay Pre-K – Song #17

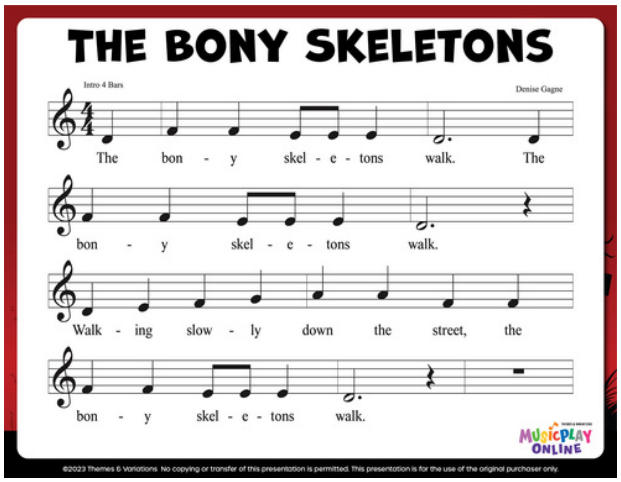
Prek-K Teaching Suggestions:

- Main Theme – Rake the leaves
- Alternating Sections – Throw and toss the leaves.

Plate Routine:

- A Section – Hit plate and circle R (4x), Hit place and circle L (4x), Hit plate and circle R (5x)
- B Section – Rock plates back and forth high 4x, Rock plates back and forth low 4x
- A Section – Hit plate and circle R (4x), Hit place and circle L (4x)
- C Section – Rock plates back and forth low 4x, Rock plates back and forth high 4x, Rock quickly back and forth
- A Section – Hit plate and circle R (4x), Hit place and circle L (4x)
- D Section – Hit plate and wait 6 beats, Hit plates every 3 beats – gradually move higher (6x), Hit plates every beat (30x)
- A Section – Hit plate and circle R (4x), Hit place and circle L (4x)

Boney Skeletons – Musicplay Pre-K – Song #33



Additional Verses:

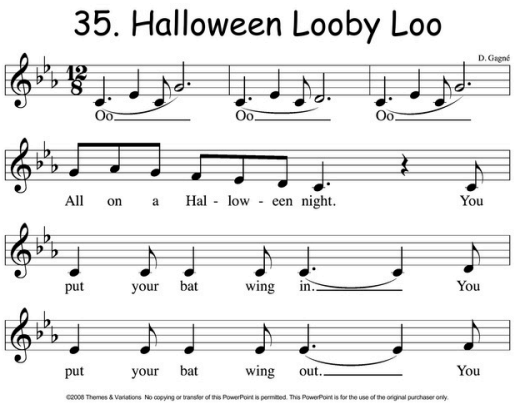
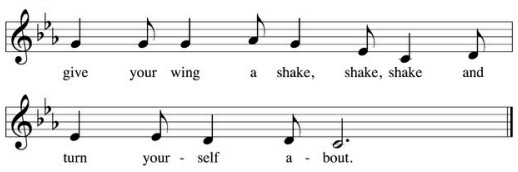
- The black cat creeps…
- Oooo…

Teaching Suggestions: Teach the song by rote or using immersion, first doing non-locomotor movements, then inviting them to create locomotor movements for each verse.

Lazy Bones – Musicplay General Songs

Teaching Suggestions: "Lazy Bones" is a fun Halloween song for children that tells the story of a lazy skeleton who just wants to dance all day and night. The song has catchy lyrics and a playful melody that makes it perfect for kids to sing and dance along to during the Halloween season. It's a light-hearted and entertaining way to celebrate the spooky holiday with little ones.

Halloween Looby Loo – Musicplay Kindergarten – Song #35

Teaching Suggestions: Students hold the parachute and circle right on the "oo's." On "all on a Halloween night," lift it high and let it fall. Follow the song's actions, and on the final chorus, lift the parachute for a big "Boo!"—then run under and out before it falls. If a parachute isn't available, students can form a circle holding hands instead.



2. You put your cat paw in…
3. You put your leg bone in…
4. You put your pumpkin head in…
5. You put your cat tail in…
6. You put your skeleton in…
7. Oo..Oo..Oo.. All on a Halloween night! Boo!

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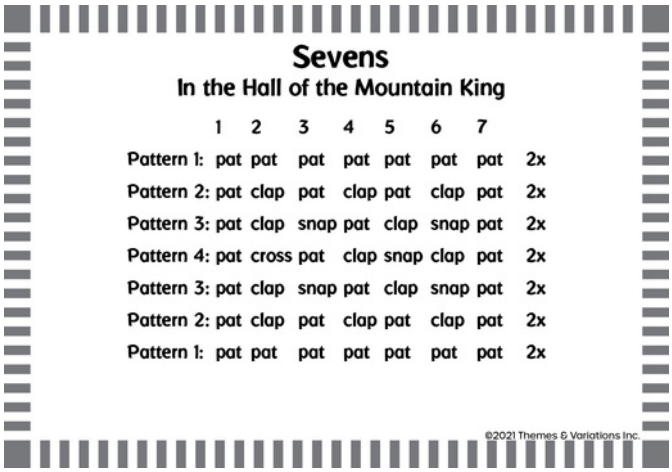
In the Hall of the Mountain King – General Learning Module



Sevens
In the Hall of the Mountain King

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Pattern 1:	pat	pat	pat	pat	pat	pat	pat	2x
Pattern 2:	pat	clap	pat	clap	pat	clap	pat	2x
Pattern 3:	pat	clap	snap	pat	clap	snap	pat	2x
Pattern 4:	pat	cross	pat	clap	snap	clap	pat	2x
Pattern 3:	pat	clap	snap	pat	clap	snap	pat	2x
Pattern 2:	pat	clap	pat	clap	pat	clap	pat	2x
Pattern 1:	pat	pat	pat	pat	pat	pat	pat	2x

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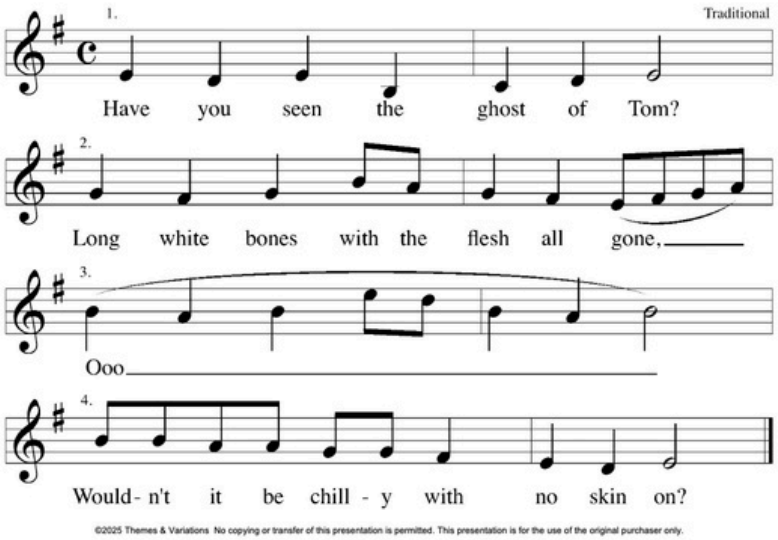
Teaching Suggestions: Teach each pattern slowly, moving to a steady beat and resting on beat 8. Only move on once students are confident. When ready, try the patterns with In the Hall of the Mountain King as the tempo gradually increases.

CODA:

- Say "No more!" and throw hands in the air twice.
- Clap seven times.
- Repeat.
- Roll hands in front of the body.
- Throw hands in the air on the final chord.

Ghost of Tom – Musicplay Grade 5 – Song #18



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Teaching Suggestions: Listen to "Ghost of Tom". Teach the movements to the song given above or create your own. Perform the movements as you sing. Later, divide the class into two groups and sing it as a round. When the students are really proficient at two parts, try this in three and four parts.

Movements: Walk around the room shading your eyes as if searching. On "long white bones," find a partner and run your hands down their arms from shoulders to hands. Join hands, sway left and right, then circle around. Cross arms on your chest and shiver. Try using scarves for a fun variation!

Singing Games

Five Fat Turkeys – Musicplay Grade 1 – Song #25

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Game Directions: Choose one student to be the cook and send them out of the room. Give five feathers to five students, who hide their hands behind their backs. The cook returns and guesses which students have the feathers. Keep score to see which cook guesses the most correctly.

Alternate version:
Have five guessers at the front. After singing the song, give feathers to five students who each sing, "I am a turkey." The guessers try to identify the turkeys. Rotate new guessers each round, or have the students who guess correctly continue at the front.

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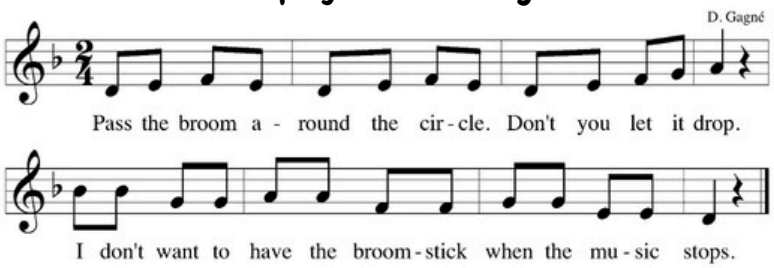
Pumpkin Pie - Musicplay General Songs

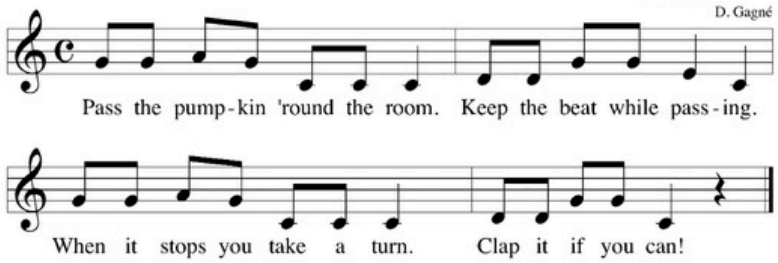
Game Directions: During the "A" section, pass a pumpkin or bean bag around the circle. For more student engagement, use 3-5 pumpkins or beanbags. During the "B" section, students holding the pumpkins stand up and skip around the circle. During the spoken section, all students stand and march in the circle.

Pass the Broom - Musicplay Grade 3 - Song #24



Game Directions: Sing the song while passing a rhythm stick or broom around the circle. When the music stops (pause the video or signal with crash cymbals), the student holding the broom goes out. For larger classes, form two circles and use two brooms—when the music stops, the students holding the brooms switch circles.

Pass the Pumpkin - Musicplay Grade 4 - Song #26



Game Directions: Print and cut Rhythm Flashcards and place them in a pumpkin or container. Students pass the pumpkin to the beat while singing, and when the music stops, the student holding it draws a card and claps the rhythm for the class to echo. That student starts a rhythm chain at the front, with each new student adding a rhythm. Once two or more students are in the chain, have them turn away so the class must remember all rhythms, continuing to see how many the class can recall.

Instruments

The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything - Halloween Unit

Teaching Suggestions:

- Use The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything by Linda Williams for an October story activity.
- Story builds as the little old lady finds clothing items: gloves, pants, shirt, etc.
- Each new clothing item is repeated as additional items are found, culminating in a full scarecrow.
- Assign different instruments to each clothing item (e.g., drum for boots, shakers for pants).
- Students can create sounds to accompany the story as each item appears.

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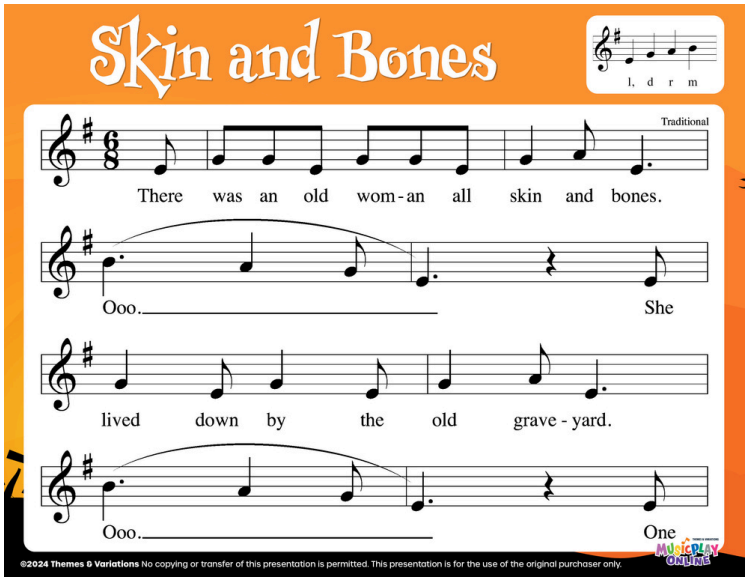
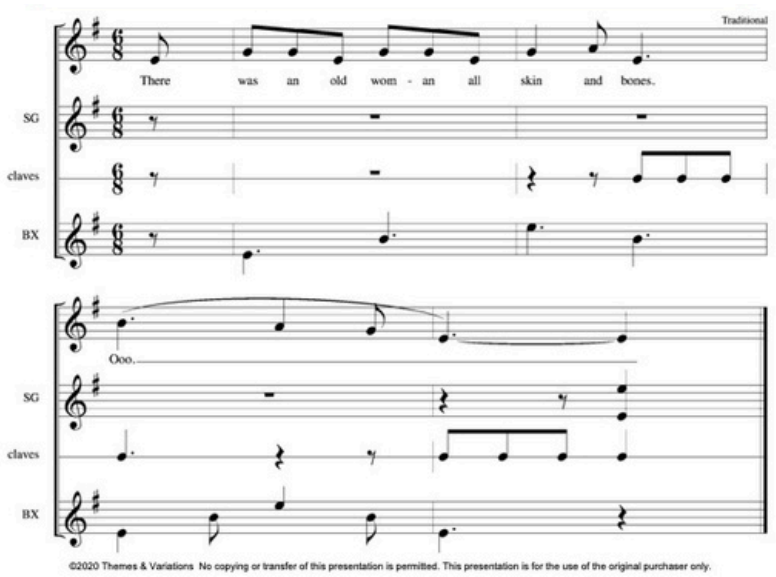
Skin and Bones – Musicplay Grade 3 – Song #21

Skin and Bones – Musicplay Grade 5 – Song #20

Teaching Suggestions: Teach verse 1 of the song by rote. Teach the words to all the verses, and sing the entire song.

Playing on Instruments: For your younger students, play a tremolo on "E". and on "Ooo" play BAG E. For your older students, try the Orff arrangement and on the "Ooo's" play BAG E on recorders.

Additional Verses:
One night she thought she'd take a walk. Ooo…
She walked down by the old graveyard. Ooo…
She saw the bones a layin' around. Ooo…
She went to the closet to get a broom. Ooo…
She opened the door and… Boo!

Halloween Treat Rondo – Halloween Unit

Teaching Suggestions:

- Use the melody as the theme for your rondo.
- Work as a class or in small groups.
- Create B, C, D… sections using treats and the interactives, worksheet, or printable word rhythm cards.
- Decide how to perform each section with body percussion or unpitched instruments.
- Try out your performance, then evaluate and make improvements as needed.

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