

Play Along by Music Together

Supports New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core

DOMAIN 1: Approaches to Learning		
Foundational Skill	Indicators	Play Along Alignment
Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actively and confidently engages in play as a means of exploration and learning. 2. Actively engages in problem solving. 	<p>The curriculum is grounded in the understanding that children learn through play. Through Play Along, children are given the opportunity to play with their voices, bodies, and developmentally appropriate instruments. Some activities also support pretend, dramatic, and imaginative play through music. Teachers are also guided on how to create a music center in the classroom that encourages spontaneous music play.</p> <p>Play Along activities provide children with opportunities to explore and experiment with instruments, musical props, and their own voices and bodies, all of which support the development of problem solving skills.</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Approaches tasks, activities and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences or activities. 	<p>Songs and chants that provide children with opportunities to invent a verse, substitute a word, or lead a movement are an integral part of the Play Along curriculum and provide for the opportunity to be creative and imaginative. All ideas are accepted, which provides a safe space for children to be creative in their own way and to try new activities.</p>
Curiosity and Initiative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Exhibits curiosity, interest, and willingness in learning new things and having new experiences. 	<p>Play Along classes provide guidance yet let children direct their own musical experiences. Children are free to explore and investigate instruments and other musical props (e.g., scarves) in their own ways. Integral to every class are play-alongs (instrumental jams during which children freely play a range of developmentally appropriate instruments).</p> <p>Rich and active music-making can support children's curiosity and initiative to learn and explore, especially when providing children with new and different materials, such as instruments.</p>
Persistence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Demonstrates persistence. 	<p>Play Along activities with variation and substitution opportunities provide a structure that gives children the opportunity to decide what they want to do, and to do it! For some children it is a challenge to show their idea to others; teachers are guided in how to scale the challenge as appropriate to allow children to persist through this challenge at their own pace. Also, songs are repeated several weeks in a row, which can help children practice persistence.</p>

DOMAIN 2: Physical Development and Health		
Foundational Skill	Indicators	Play Along Alignment
Physical Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uses senses to assist and guide learning. 2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements. 3. Demonstrates coordination and control of large muscles. 4. Combines a sequence of large motor skills with and without the use of equipment. 5. Demonstrates eye-hand coordination and dexterity needed to manipulate objects. 	<p>The program provides children with a multi-sensory, multi-modal experience that develops their visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile skills. Word substitutions can also be an enjoyable way to teach children about senses.</p> <p>Large movement activities support children's coordination and balance, body and spatial awareness, locomotor and non-locomotor skills, and skills in crossing the midline. Many songs have "freeze" moments, which can be an enjoyable movement game for children to practice body control and self-regulation. Songs can also be an opportunity for children to practice different ways of moving, e.g., hop, jump, twist, reach high and low, etc.</p> <p>Some Play Along large movement activities incorporate the use of scarves while many others use no prop.</p> <p>Songs and chants with fingerplays and instrument play support children's development of small-muscle strength and control, fine motor dexterity, and hand-eye coordination.</p>
	Physical Fitness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Engages in a variety of physical fitness activities.

Health and Well Being	7. Demonstrates personal care and hygiene skills.	Many Play Along songs provide word substitution opportunities where teachers can use words geared toward teaching children about health and well-being.
Health and Safety	8. Demonstrates awareness and understanding of healthy habits.	Many Play Along songs provide word substitution opportunities where teachers can use words geared toward teaching children about health and safety.

DOMAIN 3: Social and Emotional Development

<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Self Concept and Self Awareness	1. Recognizes himself/herself as a unique individual having his/her own abilities, characteristics, feelings and interests.	Songs, chants, and movement activities provide opportunities for children to present to the class their own idea for a sound, word variation, musical story idea, or movement. As Play Along class is grounded in an "accept and include" teaching philosophy, these leadership opportunities support the development of a child's self-confidence in his/her own abilities, characteristics, feelings, and interests.
Self Regulation	2. Regulates his/her responses to needs, feelings and events.	<p>Songs with substitution opportunities and tempo and dynamic contrasts support children's inhibitory control for they must wait their turn and/or resist the urge to behave inappropriately during the music activity. Lullabies are also a wonderful and effective way for a child to learn to self-soothe, regulating emotions on her own.</p> <p>Some Play Along songs expose children to what it feels like to be "happy", "sad", "angry", etc., and to those words, faces, and actions that are associated with these feelings. This supports a child's ability to recognize, label, describe, and express emotions.</p> <p>The group experience gives children the opportunity to attune to others, mimic emotions, and understand and respond to others' cues that signal certain emotions.</p>
Relationship with Others	3. Demonstrates and continues to develop positive relationships with significant adults (primary caregivers, teachers and other familiar adults). 4. Develops positive relationships with their peers. 5. Demonstrates pro-social problem solving skills in social interactions.	<p>Research has shown that group music-making can foster empathy and prosocial behaviors among young children. Play Along is designed to be a group music-making experience that involves the important adults in a child's life - both teachers and primary caregivers at home.</p> <p>The rich dyadic musical opportunities at the foundation of Play Along classes help to foster the positive child-caregiver and child-child interactions that support emotion knowledge, expression, and regulation.</p> <p>Songs and chants provide opportunities for children to express themselves through variation and substitution ideas. When done in a group experience, all ideas are accepted and included in the song activity so that children see examples of respecting others' ideas and perspectives.</p>
Accountability	6. Understands and follows routines and rules.	Songs and chants are an effective and enjoyable way to add energy to everyday routines and to signal a transition from one activity to another during the school day.
Adaptability	7. Adapts to change.	Songs can be used as drop-off and pick-up rituals, which is an enjoyable way to assist a child in managing separation from families.

DOMAIN 4: Communication, Language, and Literacy

Part A: Approaches to Communication

<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Motivation	1. Demonstrate that they are motivated to communicate.	<p>Play Along class is designed to be a large group activity that incorporates musical storytelling, singing, and fingerplays.</p> <p>Activities ask children to pay close attention to instructions for song variation and substitution experiences, therefore supporting their attention control.</p>

		Classes provide children with the opportunity to explore communicating through music and provide a platform for engaging in eye contact with adults and classmates.
Background Knowledge	2. Demonstrates he/she is building background knowledge.	Many Play Along songs expose children to new words for objects, attributes, and actions that may not be a part of a child's receptive or expressive vocabulary, and that may not be a part of everyday conversational speech.
	Viewing 3. Demonstrates that he/she understand what they observe.	Some Play Along songs expose children to what it feels like to be "happy", "sad", "angry", etc., and to those words, faces, and actions that are associated with these feelings. This supports a child's ability to recognize, label, describe, and express emotions. Each child receives a songbook for the classroom and the home. These songbooks include full-page song illustrations that can be used as a visual aid for musical storytelling.
Representing	4. Demonstrates his/her ability to express ideas using a variety of methods.	Play Along's participatory music-making experiences provide children with a rich opportunity to express their ideas through song and movement.
Vocabulary	5. Demonstrates a growing receptive vocabulary. 6. Demonstrates a growing expressive vocabulary.	Play Along songs provide playful substitution, audiation, and imitation opportunities that support children's active listening skills, which, in turn, support language comprehension ability. Song variations in dynamics (e.g., whisper) engage children in listening more intensely and can offer extra emphasis on a word or phrase, supporting a child's understanding of that word or phrase. Many Play Along songs expose children to new words for objects, attributes, and actions that may not be a part of a child's receptive or expressive vocabulary, and that may not be a part of everyday conversational speech. Some phrases in Play Along songs are often more complex than a child may encounter in everyday speech and reading, providing a rich example of descriptive sentences. Many Play Along songs tell a "story", serving as an example of how music can be used as a form of communication of events and experiences. Children are often given the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to a musical "story".

Part B: English Language Arts and Literacy

<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Reading Standards for Literature & Informational Text		
Key Ideas and Details	1. With prompting and support, ask and answer about detail(s) in a text. 2. With prompting and support, retell familiar stories. 3. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about characters and major events in a story.	Many Play Along songs tell a story through music. Furthermore, the songbooks and Singalong Storybooks provide visuals that serve to support children in asking questions about characters and discussing details in the song.
Craft and Structure	4. Exhibit curiosity and interest in learning new vocabulary (e.g., ask questions about unfamiliar vocabulary). 5. Students interact with a variety of common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems, songs).	Many Play Along songs and chants expose children to new and unique words that may not be a part of everyday conversational speech. Some phrases are often more complex than a child may encounter in everyday speech and reading, providing a rich and enjoyable opportunity to discuss the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. As part of the curriculum, each child receives his or her own songbook with song illustrations, song lyrics, and some notation. The notation provides exposure to the understanding that notes on a page represent the sung language. In addition, every class has Singalong Storybooks that provide the opportunity for musical storytelling.
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing or idea in the text an illustration depicts).	As part of the curriculum, each child receives his or her own songbook with illustrations that provide a visual representation of the songs and chants. These songbooks, along with the Singalong Songbooks for the classroom, provide the opportunity for children to describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in the song.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.	The Play Along Singalong Storybooks provide a wonderful group reading activity that engages children of all learning styles. Singing along to a story might engage a child in a way that simply reading the story may not, providing teachers with an additional tool to support children's understanding of text.
Responding to Literature	1. With prompting and support, make connections between self, text, and the world around them (text, media, and social interaction).	Many songs support children's growing knowledge about the world around them and provide opportunities to connect their own lives with the outside world.
Reading Standards: Foundational Skills		
Print Concepts	1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.	Play Along songbooks support print awareness, appreciation, and concepts.
Phonological Awareness	2. Demonstrate an emerging understanding of spoken words, syllables and sounds (phonemes).	Because songs and chants are often a slower pace than normal speech, music is a great way to allow children to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds within a word. Vowel-consonant combinations and isolated units of single sounds are often accentuated in song, particularly in songs with rhyme and/or repeated verses. Play Along songs include rhyme, sound patterns, and alliteration, providing for language play opportunities. Each Play Along collection has at least one "song without words" (a song using neutral syllable sounds, or "vocables"). These songs allow children to focus on phoneme sounds, such as "la," "da" "ba"). Teachers can do variations of the songs by using specific phonemes the children are learning in class. We also have songs with rhymes and/or alliterations which further support children's phonemic and phonological development.
Phonics and Word Recognition	3. Demonstrate emergent phonics and word analysis skills.	Songs and chants with alliteration serve as a fun word game to use when focusing on words that begin with the same sound and/or letter.
Fluency	4. Displays emergent reading behaviors with purpose and understanding (e.g., pretend reading).	Songbooks and Singalong Storybooks can be used to inspire and encourage pretend reading.
Speaking and Listening Standards		
Comprehension and Collaboration	1. With guidance and support, participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about pre- kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups.	Songbooks and Singalong Storybooks can be used to inspire and encourage collaborative conversations about song topics in class and at home.
Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas	4. Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail. 5. Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail. 6. Demonstrate an emergent ability to express thoughts, feelings and ideas.	Songs and chants with variation and substitution opportunities provide teachers with a tool and platform through which to engage children in talking about people, things, and events, as well as allow for expression of thoughts, feeling, and ideas. Songbook illustrations further support this.
Language Standards		
Conventions of Standard English	1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Play Along songs and chants are an enjoyable and natural way to engage children in understanding and using nouns, verbs, question words, prepositions, and other conventions of standard English grammar and usage. Illustrations also provide an opportunity for the teacher to ask questions about the picture and for the children's answers to be integrated into the song, exercising their grammar knowledge and usage.
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on pre-kindergarten reading and content.	Play Along songs and chants often provide new meaning of familiar words due to the creativity and richness of the language in each song. Lyrics are not often as "simple" as they are in other children's music; they are often more detailed, creative, and appropriately novel to a child.

	5. With guidance and support, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	Songs allow for exploration of concepts and categories (e.g., songs about animals, foods, modes of travel, ways to move, etc.) Overall, teachers are guided in how to turn any song or chant into a variation or substitution opportunity allowing them to provide children with a rich and enjoyable way to explore the concepts, categories, verbs, adjectives, and other words they are studying in class.
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DOMAIN 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World

Mathematics

<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Mathematical Practices	b. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.	Songs and chants with patterns and sequences support children's ability to reason abstractly and make predictions.
Overview of Skills	a. Counting and Cardinality b. Operations and Algebraic Thinking c. Measurement and Data	Music can support emerging math skills and future math development given that songs, rhythmic chants, movement, and other music activities are made up of some combination of one or more of the following: patterns, sequences, numbers, quantity, categorization, and spatial relationships. Play Along songs are rich with repetition of patterns, sequences, and form, cultivating a child's early mathematical understanding in a kinesthetic and auditory way. These music activities support children's ability to identify similarities and differences (e.g., loud/soft, fast/slow, high/low, long/short), to count numbers, to classify things, and to identify spatial relations. Because each child has his own songbook, children also get to count things on a song picture page (e.g., the number of animals in the tree) and categorize objects, which can be an enjoyable and natural way to learn the essentials of mathematics.
Measurement and Data	1. Identify measurable attributes of objects, such as length, and weight. Describe them using correct vocabulary (e.g., small, big, short, tall, empty, full, heavy, and light).	Songs support children's understanding of measurement. Substitution and variation opportunities allow for a more targeted lesson in length and weight.
Geometry	1. Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as top, bottom, up, down, in front of, behind, over, under, and next to.	Songs support children's understanding of shapes and positions in the environment and variation opportunities allow for a more targeted lesson in length and weight. Play alongs in particular are a wonderful way to expose children to common shapes in the environment as the class can discuss the shape of the instruments.

Science

<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Scientific Thinking	1. Asks questions and makes predictions based on observations and manipulation of things and events in the environment. 3. Generates explanations and communicates conclusions regarding experiments and explorations.	Active music-making engages all of a child's senses, supporting his/her use of senses to gather, explore, and interpret information. Play Along's activities including instrument play, call-and-response songs, and body movement songs, which naturally expose children to cause-and-effect:
Earth and Space	4. Observes and describes characteristics of earth and space.	Songs and chants provide opportunities to sing about the features, characteristics, and properties of the many things in a child's environment, which can include things in nature. Teachers are mentored in using music to support thematic lessons.
Living Things	5. Observes and describes characteristics of living things.	Songs and chants provide opportunities to sing about the features, characteristics, and properties of the many things in a child's environment, which can include living things such as plants and animals.

Physical Properties		Teachers are mentored in using music to support thematic lessons.
	6. Acquires knowledge about the physical properties of the world.	Songs and chants provide opportunities to sing about the features, characteristics, and physical properties of the many things in a child's environment. Teachers are mentored in using music to support thematic lessons.
<i>Social Studies</i>		
<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Geography	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develops a basic awareness of self as an individual, self within the context of family, and self within the context of community. 2. Demonstrates awareness and appreciation of their own culture and other cultures. 3. Demonstrates knowledge of the relationship between people, places, and regions. 	<p>Play Along's music is representative of many different cultures, musical styles, and languages, serving as a rich way to expose children to new cultures. The songs can be woven into cultural lessons.</p> <p>With Play Along, a child's uniqueness is celebrated and children are given opportunities to express their uniqueness to their peers in a supportive and inclusive environment.</p> <p>With Play Along's home component, family activities provide opportunities for children to share their family's traditions and home culture through music and song variations.</p> <p>Family events are a wonderful way to invite families to share their customs, favorite music, and traditions.</p>
History	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Develops an understanding of how people and things change over time and how to relate past events to their present and future activities. 	Teachers and parents/caregivers are guided in how to use music to support rituals in class and at home.
Civics, Citizenship, and Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Begins to learn the basic civic and democratic principles. 	<p>Play Along is designed to be a group music-making experience. Research has shown that group music-making can foster empathy and prosocial behaviors among young children.</p> <p>Empathy is fostered through adult-child attachment relationships for children learn to recognize emotions and how to respond to emotions from the important adults in their lives.</p> <p>The curriculum provides opportunities for group, adult-child, and child-child interactions through music, which can serve as a platform for important social exchanges that help children develop emotion understanding, gain cooperation skills, learn to communicate with others, and learn to respect others' ideas.</p>
Career Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Demonstrates interest and awareness about a wide variety of careers and work environments. 	Some Play Along songs tell the story of "community helpers" and various professions in the world. Songs and activities can be woven into lessons on possible careers and work environments.
<i>The Arts</i>		
<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Music	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Expresses oneself by engaging in musical activities. 4. Responds and reacts during musical activities. 	<p>Play Along's curriculum includes songs, chants, large and small movement, fingerplays, and instrument play, exposing children to a wide variety of ways to express oneself musically.</p> <p>The program is a participatory and creative experience where children actively move and sing, make up silly and rhyming verses, imitate rhythmic patterns, and use music to tell stories and express feelings.</p> <p>Most children's music is in just one key and meter. Play Along's music includes a mix of original songs and rich arrangements of traditional tunes in a wide variety of tonalities and meters, and from a variety of genres and styles, including folk, blues, rock, jazz, classical, and world music.</p>

		<p>Some songs include opportunities for free instrument play with egg shakers, rhythm sticks, and other instruments. The teacher songbook and online resources give ideas for making instruments out of common, everyday materials.</p> <p>Overall, Play Along values music participation above music performance. The curriculum is grounded in the understanding that the performance-orientation to music education places too much focus on getting it "right". Music development happens best in an environment that accepts and includes all types of musical expression and abilities. An important part of the Play Along curriculum is family music events. These are participatory "concerts" where everyone—family members, school employees, and children—dance and sing together.</p>
Theatre/Dramatic Play	5. Participates in a variety of dramatic play activities to represent fantasy and real life experiences.	Play Along activities provide an opportunity for dramatic play through music and for developing symbolic representation skills.
	<p>7. Expresses what he/she knows, thinks, feels and believes through dance and creative movement.</p> <p>8. Responds and reacts to dance and creative movement.</p>	<p>Many Play Along songs offer opportunities to move one's body while in place (e.g., wiggling a leg, hopping on one leg) or to move through space (e.g., twirling in a circle, jumping forward and backward). Also, many songs provide children with enjoyable movement contrast experiences, such as moving in different directions (e.g., left, right, reaching up, crouching down, circling left, circling right). These experiences are all supportive of gaining knowledge of basic dance concepts.</p> <p>Scarves are provided for all children to use to create special movements.</p> <p>Movement to music is celebrated as a mode of self-expression.</p>
Cultural Differences	9. Expresses an understanding of artistic difference among cultures.	Play Along's songs come from a range of cultures and musical styles, and feature a rich array of musical instruments developing a child's ability to distinguish between different sounds of music and types of instruments from other cultures.
<i>Technology</i>		
<i>Foundational Skill</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Play Along Alignment</i>
Using Technology	5. Uses the knowledge of technology to increase learning.	<p>Although the Play Along curriculum is first and foremost about live music-making, the "Hello Everybody" app provides teachers and children the opportunity to play the Play Along songs and to read songbooks in a digital form.</p> <p>The Play Along app includes a "karaoke function" where children, with assistance from an adult, can record themselves (both vocally and on video) singing a Play Along song. The lyrics can be displayed when needed and vocals can be turned down or off so that only the child's voice is heard. This is an enjoyable way for a child to create a digital product and express a song in his own way.</p>