

SINGING FUN 'N GAMES

Arizona Music Educators Association 2025

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“The only thing better than singing is MORE singing!”

. . . Ella Fitzgerald

Join your colleagues in lessons that will have your students singing joyfully, while addressing audiation, melody direction, intervals, steady beat, and phrases. These fun and challenging opportunities include both primary and intermediate level lessons to encourage musical growth in unique ways.

1. Chumbara (French-Canadian nonsense song)

Source: *Singing Fun and Games!* (Publication by Almeida)

Focus: *Octave, Melodic Direction and Intervals, Diction*

Materials: *Three bags for the word fragments, Syllable cards for each bag (see PPT visual for details)*

Process: Teach the song with original verse of nonsense syllables. Focus on descending scale line and octave skips. In a subsequent lesson, prepare three bags of nonsense syllables for children to use in constructing new words. Bag One should contain word fragments that begin with consonants, Bag Two should contain cards of one single vowel, Bag Three should contain word fragments that begin with a consonant and end in a vowel.

2. Swimming

“You can’t be great if you can’t audiate!” ☺

Source: *Singing Fun and Games!* (Publication by Almeida)

Focus: *Melody, Audiation*

Materials: *Projectable Visual from book is provided*

Process: Display visual and sing song for students, then invite students to sing the song with you. Be sure to emphasize that this is not a “take-away-the-words” song, but rather a “keep-them-in-your-head” song. Each projected slide highlights the new words to internalize, in an additive fashion.

3. The Cat Opera (Rossini)

Source: This activity was shared with me by *Debbie Clifton*, and I thank her for allowing me to share it with you!

Focus: *Vocal Timbres, Opera Genre, Melodic Direction.*

Materials: *Kitty responders on sticks, two for each student (different color for male/female voices)*

Process: Lead the class in listening, with teacher using a duo of kitty responders to show the melody direction of the two contrasting voices. Distribute sets of responders to students and repeat the listening experience, while they match your motions. There are numerous good YouTube videos of this piece that your students will enjoy. *Practice, practice, practice this one!* ☺

4. There’s a Spider on the Floor

Source: Words by Bill Russell, adapted by Artie Almeida. **Tune:** “If You’re Happy & You Know It

Focus: *Steady Beat, Phrases, Rhyming Words, Blending, Coda*

Materials: *A harmonic accompaniment instrument enhances this experience. I use a guitar, ukulele, etc. A class set of toy or paper spiders is great for engagement. There is a page of cute clip art spiders provided in the clinic PPT for duplication. Additionally, there is a fun “Spider Facts Page” in the visual for this song.*

Process: *Create many verses to sing with the children, then allow small groups of students to create their own rhyming verses and sing for their classmates. Send a paper spider home with each student and encourage the students to teach this song to their families. Another fun extension is to ask each student to write a new rhyming verse to share with their music class next week.*

5. Long-Legged Sailor

Source: *Singing Fun and Games!* (Publication by Almeida)

Focus: *Steady Beat, Body Percussion Patterns, Tuneful Singing, Working Well with Partners*

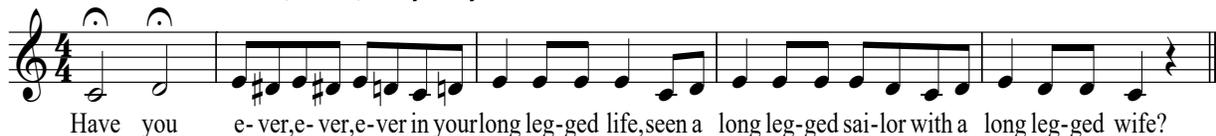
Materials: *Cards to use as humorous replacement words for “sailor.”*

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(Continuation of Long Legged Sailor plan)

Process: Add the following song motions step-by-step:

- Sing the song and **spread arms wide** on each sung word “long.”
- Continue with the previous motion on the words “long,” and add to them (in order) from the directions below:
- **Do a drumroll on lap** during “Have you” and **strike lap** on “ever”, then do another drumroll on lap during “No, I’ve “and strike lap again on “never.”
- Repeat the song with all those motions and add a **lap pat** on each sung word “wife.” It happens quickly and will be challenging for the kiddos at first!
- **Begin the full pattern below** with the children and repeat it a few times to help them feel comfortable:
 - “Have . . . you . . .” (drumroll on lap)
 - “ever” (strike lap with both hands)
 - “ever” (clap your own hands)
 - “ever” (push hands out in front of you, like clapping a partner’s hands)
 - “in your” (clap your own hands)
 - “long” (arms out wide to your sides)
 - “legged” (clap your own hands)
 - “life” (push hands out in front of you, like clapping a partner’s hands)
 - “seen a” (clap your own hands)
 - “long” (arms out wide to your sides)
 - “legged” (clap your own hands)
 - “sailor” (push hands out in front of you, like clapping a partner’s hands)
 - “with a” (clap your own hands)
 - “long” (arms out wide to your sides)
 - “legged” (clap your own hands)
 - “wife” (pat lap with both hands)
- Continue these same motions with verse #2: “No, I’ve never, never, never, in my long-legged life, seen a long-legged sailor with a long-legged wife!” Dramatic facial expressions will really bump up the fun!
- Replace “sailor” with some silly substitution words listed in the visual. Invite children to suggest silly 2-syllable words to use. Some favorite substitution words for “Sailor” include: Skeeter, Cockroach, Meatball, Pizza, Baby & Eyeball! ☺



Dr. Artie Almeida recently retired after 38 years of teaching in the public schools. She was the music specialist at Bear Lake Elementary school in the Orlando FL area, where she taught 1200 K-5 students. Her dynamic student performing groups have performed for AOSA, NAfME, Florida Music Educators Association, Georgia Music Educators Association, Walt Disney World, many general education conferences and on the NBC Today Show. Look for *The Bear Lake Sound* in the upcoming music education advocacy documentary “Marching Beyond Halftime.”

Artie was chosen as Florida Music Educator of the Year and was also selected as an International Educator 2006 by the Cambridge England Biographical Society. She was a Teacher of the Year at the school level 6 times, Seminole County Teacher of the Year, Runner-Up for Florida Teacher of the Year, and was recently chosen as a University of Central Florida Alumni of the Decade. Artie is included in the publications *Who’s Who in American Education*, and *Great Minds of the 21st Century*.

Artie was an adjunct professor of music education at the University of Central Florida for 34 years, the saxophone instructor at Valencia State College, the Music & Movement instructor at Seminole State College and a saxophone performer and teacher. Additionally, she performs early music with Ars Antiqua and the Halifax Consort.