

# Timbre and Pulse

*Lesson Plan for nursery school,  
8 - 20 month old, by Rania*

Duration: approx 20 minutes

**Aim of Session:** feel a steady pulse moving fast, or slow

**Skill:** observation, listening to the music, being social, memory, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, spacial awareness, awareness of loudness, confidence

**Knowledge:** Learn about 2 qualities of sound: loudness and timbre; and 1 element of music: pulse

## Description of Session

1. Warm up
2. Move with scarves to slow music
3. Move with scarves to fast music
4. Give small percussion instruments and allow some time for the children to explore them.
5. Drum patterns: create small 3 beat, 4 beat or 5 beat sequences with the drum where everyone is quiet until the last beat and they make some noise
6. Sing: *Open Shut them* - 1st time normal, 2nd time fast, 3rd time quiet
7. Sing: *A Sailor went to Sea, sea, sea* - 1st time normal, 2nd time slow, 3rd time loud
8. Sing: *Roly - Poly* - 1st time quiet and fast, 2nd time loud and slow, 3rd time normal but omit the ending of each line.
9. Warm down music and goodbye

**Link to the Curriculum** - *What do you want the children to achieve by the end of the lesson?*

*“Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions and vocalisation” ( EYFS, Development Matters, 2012, Communication and Language, Listening and attention, 8-20)*

**Link to overarching learning objective** - *What do you want the children to achieve by the end of this term?*

*“Begins to move to music, listen to or join in rhymes or songs” ( EYFS, Development Matters, 2012, Expressive arts and design: Exploring and using media and materials 8-20 )*

## Role of the Adult

*Actively take part in the lesson by singing and playing. Help children that are less mobile by doing the movements with them.*

## Role of the Child

*Participate, listen and respond, imitate, recall from previous experiences*

## Resources

*Music source (tablet, iPad), music\*, scarves, hand held percussion instruments, drum or tambourine (and a mallet)*

## Music Suggestions

1. Changing between faster and slower sections:  
[Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Harp \(movement 1\)](#) - Andy Scott performed by Polaris Duo
2. Or try this one, [What is joy to you?](#) performed by Polaris Duo again and written by Esther Swift, there are more subtle changes between mellower and more energetic parts
3. Slow music or for calming down music [Unicorn in Rainbows](#) by Alison Berry  
Listen to Unicorn in Rainbows by Alison Berry on #SoundCloud

## Classical music suggestions

1. Fanny Mendelssohn - Piano Sonata in C minor (there are 3 movements that you can use for fast music - presto movement 3 - ; slow - Andante con moto - ; or the Allegro moderato con espressione that has little textural changes

## Key Vocabulary

The names of the percussion instruments, shake, rattle, quiet, loud, fast, slow, 1...2...3...4...5.

## Next Steps

Children perform activity No. 5 independently, they move around the room to music of different tempos, play musical statues, sing the songs

## Tips and Explanations - and Covid-19 safety

1. What is the Warm Up?  
The Warm Up could be your “Hello” song, any other nursery song the children know very well, a small inclusive activity you play at the beginning of each session, and brief the nursery practitioners of what is about to happen
2. Scarves will help the less mobile children to express themselves. At this stage children are highly imitative. It’s their way of learning. So be very active in activities 2 and 3 by shaking your scarf and engage your upper core as well. Think

that you are drawing shapes with the scarf so using the whole space in front of you (rather than just shaking the scarf with your wrist). You may combine the two activities and use music that interchanges between faster and slower sections.

You don't have to use the entire piece, 2 to 2,5 minutes is sufficient at this point

3. Activity 5 suggested patterns can be downloaded here. You can use a small drum or a tambourine. Babies and nursery practitioners should have a rattling / shaking instrument. There are musical aims to this activity as well but I think the more beneficial for this age group is to build anticipation which is a very important skill in general. You still have to keep a steady pulse, have clear rhythms and dynamics. Definitely, not all babies will "get it". It is expected and ok. As long as the adults participate in the expected way then the children will eventually follow.
4. Activities 6, 7, 8: there is no right or wrong order to sing them or alternate between the fast, loud, quiet and slow parts. It's what feels most natural to you. Remember to explain to the practitioners what is about to happen.
5. I liked ending with a minute of relaxing music but many choose the goodbye song or a both (successively) if you have time.
6. COVID-19 staying safe: each nursery has their own rules for keeping staff and children safe during the pandemic. Following those regulations is very important (I hope they are reasonable and make *you* feel safe as well).
  - a. Remember to wash the instruments, scarves and other props after each use. Nurseries usually have their own range of shakers and scarves. You can ask each room to use their own.
  - b. Apart from instrumental music that is recorded, think of recording all your singing, activities 6, 7, 8, you will have to be extra expressive so it comes through to the recording but I think it is an effective alternative for the time being.
  - c. If you want to minimise speaking as well, activity 3 can be done without talking, you just have to channel your inner performer (which you do anyway).

