



Music

Adventures in Reading:

Family Literacy Bags from Reading Rockets

Contents:

- Two books – one fiction, one nonfiction
- Parent information sheet
- Three activity sheets
- Bookmark
- Parent survey



for teachers and librarians

This Reading Rockets Activity Packet is designed to support reading activities at home. We've chosen a fiction and nonfiction book about music, appropriate for a kindergarten listening level, and included related activities to encourage some hands-on fun and learning. Just assemble the packet in a two-gallon zip top bag, and send home with your students.

Reading Rockets carefully chose books that are widely available and appealing to young readers. The titles selected should be available in your school library. If the two featured titles are not available, or you prefer another title, feel free to substitute books related to the theme. You'll find a list of alternative titles included in the bookmark.

The featured books for the Music Activity Packet are ***Mama Don't Allow*** by Thacher Hurd and ***A Day In the Life of a Musician*** by Linda Hayward. In ***Mama Don't Allow***, Miles forms a Swamp Band with his friends and they almost become dinner when they play for the Alligator Ball. ***A Day In the Life of Musician*** is a DK Reader that follows a violinist through her day. Photos show her playing her violin in several different situations.

The parent information sheet includes an introductory note that you can personalize, instructions about how to use the packet, and tips for sharing fiction and nonfiction books with children.

The activities are designed to encourage further exploration and learning at home:

- >> the Creativity Activity is a hands-on craft project
- >> the Imagination Activity encourages imaginative play, writing, or drawing
- >> the Get Real Activity focuses on real-world experiences for parent and child
- >> The bookmark lists both the featured titles and additional titles

Putting it all together

Print out copies of the parent information sheet, the activities, the survey, and a master for making bookmarks. Cut the bookmark page into strips. You may wish to print the activity pages and bookmark on card stock for durability.

Into a two-gallon zip top bag, place:

- >> two books – one fiction and one nonfiction
- >> parent information sheet
- >> three themed activity pages
- >> bookmark
- >> survey for parents

Send the packet home with your student. Encourage parents to keep the parent information sheet, the activities, and bookmark, and return the books and survey to you by the date you specify.

Let Reading Rockets know what you think of the family activity packets by e-mailing us through our website: www.readingrockets.org/sitecontact. Click on "Family Literacy Bags."

ADVENTURES IN READING!

Welcome

Dear _____

Exploring new ideas and enjoying books with you sends a powerful message to your child: Reading and learning are fun, and happen everywhere – not just at school. This Reading Rockets Activity Packet about _____ was created to help you and your child enjoy reading and learning together.

Start your learning adventure by reading some books with your child about this popular topic. Then explore the topic with three activities. Enclosed you'll find what you need:

- >> two books to share with your child
- >> three related activities
- >> bookmark with a list of other books to extend the fun, if you wish
- >> short survey to tell me if you enjoyed using the packet

The simple steps on the back explain how to use the packet.

The bookmark, this parent information sheet, and the activities are yours to keep.

When you've finished with the materials, please return the books and the completed survey to school in your child's backpack. Please return the Reading Rockets Activity Packet by _____.

I hope you'll enjoy reading and learning together!

To learn more about children's books, reading with your child, and information about helping kids become confident readers, please visit www.ReadingRockets.org

ADVENTURES IN READING!

Instructions

How to use your Reading Rockets Activity Packet

Getting ready

1. Before you read the books to your child, be sure to read them yourself. One book is fiction – a “make-believe” story. The other book is nonfiction, or informational and true. Reading the books first will give you the “inside scoop” to the twists and turns of the story, the interesting information inside, and the parts of the books that will appeal most to your child.

2. Next, read the three activities to see which of them you think your child will enjoy most, and which one you have the time and materials on-hand to do right away. Chances are, after you read one (or both) of the books with your child, he or she may want to do an activity right away.

Start the fun

3. When you know you’ll have at least enough time to read and talk about one of the books, grab your child and a book, and dive right in. Start with the fiction selection. Talk about the cover of the book with your child – can he guess what it is about? Have they ever read a book by the same author or illustrator or about the same topic?

Read the book to your child. Take time to ask and answer questions, explore the pictures, and wonder what will happen next. Read it again, if your child asks you to. Then, try the nonfiction book or one of the activities.

4. When you read the nonfiction book, take a moment to explain to your child the difference between the two types of books. The first book told a made-up, make-believe story, and a nonfiction book is about real people, places, and things. The information in nonfiction books can answer lots of questions.

5. Feel free to pick and choose from the activities, or change them to suit your child’s interests. Read the books again over the next few days and try different activities. Most important: have fun!

When you’re done...

6. Keep the bookmark, the activities, and this page. Complete the survey and return it with the books to your child’s school.

Make the most of the excitement the books create, and try some hands-on learning or make-believe fun. Exploring new ideas alongside you lets your child see you learning – and reading – too, and gives your child personal experiences to support her growing knowledge.

Tips for reading nonfiction books with kids:

- >> *Wonder out loud. As you are reading, or afterward, talk about facts you find interesting or questions you have.*
- >> *Show your child how to use the table of contents, section headings, index, and word list (glossary) to find the answer to a specific question.*
- >> *Don’t be afraid to jump around, reading pages that especially interest your child. You don’t have to read a nonfiction book straight through.*

Tips for reading fiction books with kids:

- >> *Take your time and talk about the story with your child. Ask your child questions.*
- >> *Explore the pictures with your child.*
- >> *Read with expression. Change your voice or how fast you read to create excitement. Ham it up!*
- >> *You don’t need to read every word. Keeping your child interested is the goal.*



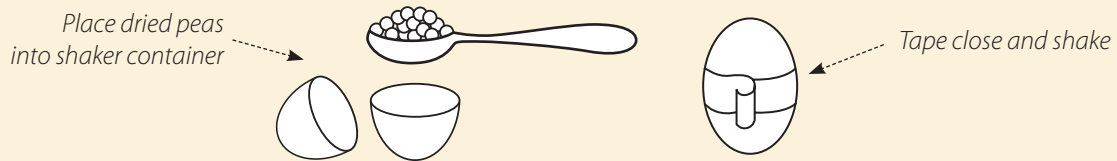
make your own Instruments

Strike up the band at your house with a homemade shaker or cymbals

Supplies

- >> 2-piece plastic egg or small plastic container with a lid
- >> rice, dried beans, lentils, or split peas
- >> tape

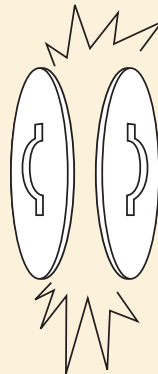
Instructions



1. Put about a tablespoon of rice or beans, lentils, or split peas inside the container.
2. Close the container with the lid and tape shut.

Supplies for cymbals

- >> two pot lids to bang together
- “CRASH”
- no assembly required!



Variation Different sizes of cymbals will make different sounds. Rice will sound different than beans. Try different sizes of lids or different filling for your shakers, play them, and listen to the difference.

put your ears on!



Music is everywhere – all you have to do is listen. Seek out new music in your home or your neighborhood and listen up!

Turn on your radio and tune to a favorite or new station. Listen to some music and talk about it. Does your child like it? How is it different or the same as other kinds of music you've heard?

Borrow music cds or tapes from your local library. Try out different kinds of music.

Watch concerts on your local PBS station – you'll find classical music, opera, jazz, blues, folk, or country.

Seek out and attend concerts in your community. Many neighborhoods have free or low-cost concerts at parks, schools, churches, and community centers.

Listen for environmental music when you are out and about:

- >> birds singing
- >> car horns and bus brakes
- >> rhythms created by construction equipment – jack hammers, drills
- >> rain drops and thunder
- >> music playing in restaurants, elevators, and stores

Sing! Sing favorite songs together. Teach your child songs from your childhood. Learn new songs together. Look for picture book versions of favorite songs in the children's section of the library. Read the book and sing the song together!

The Wheels on the Bus by Paul Zelinsky

Over in the Meadow by John Langstaff, illustrated by Feodor Rojankovsky

Give a Dog a Bone by Steven Kellogg



be a musician or invent a new instrument

Fire up your child's imagination with make-believe and wild musical inventions

Pretend you are musician and perform

Encourage some musical make believe! Suggest that your child pretend to be a musician. To get him started, you might ask:

What kind of musician are you? Jazz, classical, folk, marching band, salsa, rock, country?

What kind of instrument do you play? Do you play more than one?

Where do you perform? In a concert hall? In the park? At a party? In a recording studio?

Do I need to buy a ticket or is your performance free?

Do you wear special clothes? Do you use a microphone?

What kind of audience do you have? (Stuffed animals make a great audience!)

Encourage your child to choose a song to sing or perform (or make one up), practice it, and put on a show for you or for stuffed animals and dolls.

Make a new kind of music

Encourage your child to draw a picture or write a story about a new kind of musical instrument or group.

To get her started ask: "If you made a brand new kind of instrument, or discovered a new music group, what would it be? Something silly? Wacky? Noisy or quiet?"

After your child has drawn or written about their idea, ask her to tell you about her ideas. What would the music sound like? Where would you find it?

If she invented a new instrument, try making one out of items around the house. If she thought of a new group, encourage her to act out her creation.

MUSIC



Featured titles

Fiction

Mama Don't Allow by Thatcher Hurd

Nonfiction

A Day in the Life of a Musician by Linda Hayward (DK Reader)

Additional fiction titles

Berlioz the Bear by Jan Brett

Froggy Plays in the Band by Jonathan London, illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz

Olivia Forms a Band by Ian Falconer

Violet's Music by Angela Johnson, illustrated by Luara Huliska-Beith

Zin! Zin! Zin! A Violin by Lloyd Moss illustrated by Marjorie Priceman

Additional nonfiction titles

Ah, Music! by Alike

I Want to be a Musician by Dan Liebman (I Want to Be series)

Meet the Orchestra by Ann Hayes, illustrated by Karmen Thompson

The Story of the Incredible Orchestra by Bruce Koscielniak

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