UNIT 27  RHYTHM : MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

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27.1 INTRODUCTION

Music and body movement, like art activities or story telling, are important aspects of any curriculum for children. Young children have a natural affinity for music and rhythmic movement, which is a part of many activities. Rhythm involves repetition in movement or sound at regular intervals.

Music provides rhythm and repetition through sound, whereas body movement enables the exploration of space. Children enjoy rhyming words and repeat them with enthusiasm. They also like to dance to music. Creative use of music and body movement is basic for a well rounded curriculum for children. Learning in many areas can be achieved through music.

Objectives
After studying this Unit, you should be able to
- understand the significance of music and movement activities for children
- build upon children's natural responsiveness to music
- plan and organize some rhythm activities with children
- identify appropriate songs for children and teach them to children
- carry out some movement activities with children, with music in the background
- involve children in making simple musical instruments

27.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF RHYTHM, MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Children react to sound from the very early moments of their life. The newborn relaxes when cajoled through soft sounds, loving tones and lullabies. To comfort a crying infant, we usually rock her, clap our hands, click our fingers or make repetitive sounds like "kakakaka". These rhythmic sounds and movements are soothing, comforting and peaceful to the baby. A tense young toddler, alone in a room, immediately feels secure on hearing the familiar sounds of her mother's footsteps.
When mothers put their children to sleep, they usually take the child on the lap and rock and pat her gently. Rocking, swaying and other rhythmic movements are built into children's songs, as well as into cribs and play equipment such as swings, rocking horse and wheel toys.

Why does rhythm have such a natural appeal for children? Right from conception, being part of their mother's body, the unborn baby experiences rhythmic movement, as life itself is based on the rhythms of pulse, heart and breathing. This rhythmic movement is soothing to the baby in the womb. Therefore, the rhythm of songs and dances provides security to the children, being close to their earliest physiological experience in the womb.

Children's natural responsiveness to music and movement has been recognized for long. Almost all cultures have a tradition of special songs for infants and children. These songs are rhymes and jingles, which use simple words and rhythm, and are usually accompanied by actions.

Can you list some reasons for including music and movement activities in early childhood programmes? Yes, apart from pleasure and joy, children express the creative impulse through these activities. Music and movement provide for self-expression and self-discovery. Children should be encouraged to respond to music, to interpret the music in their own way and to make up new words, new tunes and new movements. Music and dance enable expression of feelings and moods. They allow the child to give vent to her pent-up feelings and emotions in a socially approved manner. Through beating of drum, flinging arms, stamping feet or some other vigorous dance movements, the child may be expressing some disturbing emotion; letting out steam. Music can quieten and calm children and enhance their feelings of self-worth.

Kinaesthetics, or the sense of movement, familiarizes young children with their ability to act upon the environment. Through movement the child experiences the vastness of space and understands that she can use her body to explore her surroundings. Hence, rhythmic movement provides the opportunity for the child to learn about the environment.

Just as movement helps to experience space, rhythm gives a sense of time. Rhythm is an integral aspect of our lives. Every child has to adjust to her daily routine involving time for having a bath, time for eating, time for the brother to come back from school and so on. The use of rhythm for learning is an age-old tradition. For generations, tables of multiplication and religious chants have been learnt by building on rhythm. Children's attention span and memory develop through music. Rhyming and repeated sounds of the songs and jingles provide the setting for language learning. The understanding of grammar develops as children repeat correct language forms, and vocabulary develops as children learn new words in the songs. Auditory discrimination improves. Being sensitive to sound, in turn, helps to develop in children an ability to listen, a sense of curiosity, a skill for identifying and labelling and an appreciation of nature.

Listening is the basic skill in music and movement activities. If children are to learn to sing properly, they must reproduce the pitch and rhythmic pattern of a song accurately; this requires that they attend to it and recall it. For creative movements in which children respond to music, they must first listen. As children listen to music, they become aware of its various qualities. Some music is loud, some is soft; musical pitch rises and falls. Children can also learn to distinguish the various instruments and identify their sounds.

Essentially, children are alert to the various sounds in the environment. This natural sensitivity to sound helps children learn to communicate, explore and expand their understanding of the environment. In our environment, there are several kinds of sounds. There are sounds like the chirping of birds, the pitter-patter of rain or the blowing of wind through trees. Apart from this, there are many events, occurrences and conversations going on all the time in the family and the community. Children learn to identify and discriminate the source of the various sounds. They recognize
crying and laughter, distinguish merry-making from unpleasant interactions, and differentiate a request from an order. The environment provides ample opportunity for refining auditory discrimination.

However, apart from these incidental learning experiences, it is useful to plan some music and movement activities in the day care centre, preschool or the home. Repetition and rhythm appeal to the child. Music and movement with their many aspects like songs, rhymes, jingles and dance provide a rich source of rhythm and repetition. Therefore, we would be losing a rich source of enjoyable learning, if we do not provide for music and movement activities for children. This is what we will read about in the following subsections.

27.3 SOME RHYTHM ACTIVITIES

When young children are initially exposed to rhythm activities, the rhythm should have simple and definite sounds, with an even and steady beat. A good beginning to rhythm activities is the exploration of sounds in the environment, not necessarily actual musical sounds. For example, encourage the child to listen to sounds that have a definite beat such as a clock ticking or water dripping from a tap. Ask her to reproduce them by clapping hands or tapping feet. Draw her attention to the thunder, the rainfall, the chirping of birds and the sounds of animals, and provide appropriate labels for them.

This sensitization to sounds can be done through quiet listening moments as well as through games. In a preschool classroom quiet moments are as important as freedom to enjoy, express or experiment.

One such 'quiet activity' can be asking the children to close their eyes and listen. Encourage them to tell you about all that they hear, which may be cars, buses, bullock-cart, train, animals and so forth. The teacher, as a leader in this process of listening, can help add more subtle sounds like their breathing, the rustling of leaves, footsteps and perhaps the noises from the kitchen. She can also identify for children uncommon sounds like the koyal's song, the croaking of the frog or the hissing of crickets. Children enjoy identifying sounds and are quick to reproduce.

Another possibility is listening to and reproducing different vocal sounds, for instance laughing ('ha-ha-ha' or 'ho-ho-ho') or chanting to a rhythmic pattern. Four to five word sentences can be made into chants and different rhythm patterns clapped out as children repeat the sentences. For example, the sentence "I can do that" can have a variety of patterns. Emphasis can be put on the first, second, third, or fourth word in succession. The sentence can be said soft or loud, fast or slow, steady or wavering.

Another activity can be as follows. Provide rhythm in the background (e.g. by playing music, singing a song or beating a drum). Ask the children to follow the rhythm as they clap, walk, hop, skip or jump. Change the rhythm from fast to slow and vice-versa, and ask children to match it as they move.

Each musical experience is also a rhythm experience, and children begin very early to feel the rhythmic patterns in music. Even infants sense the beat. However, it is not at all unusual to find young children who have difficulty in sensing the pattern of the rhythm. Care should be taken not to make these children feel uncomfortable or pressured, which will take away the enjoyment of music.

27.4 SONGS AND SINGING

Almost all children enjoy singing. They sing loudly, often with more energy than skill. They pick up songs they hear, sometimes repeating a phrase over and over, sometimes mispronouncing the words. At times the pitch is off but that seldom deters a young child. Learning and singing songs are probably the most common
musical experiences in the early childhood years. You can use this enthusiasm in many ways.

Let us first see what makes certain songs more fascinating for children.

### 27.4.1 Characteristics of a Good Song

Songs appeal to children because of their musical quality. If you take a close look at the popular children's songs, you will observe some traits most of them share.

Foremost, the rhythm of these songs is easy for children to pick up. The tempo is neither too slow nor too fast. Children get bored if the rhythm is too slow, and are unable to keep up with the song, if it is too fast. The tune of the popular children's songs usually does not go beyond the range of children's voices. It is important to remember that children can neither sing very low nor very high. Use of the middle octave is most appropriate. Secondly, the content of these songs is fascinating—familiar yet curiosity-provoking. Songs rich in emotional content and dealing with feelings appeal to children. The language should be essentially simple. Another characteristic that draws children to a song is the use of nonsense words and repetitive lines.

In a nutshell, children like songs that

i) Deal with familiar things
ii) Include children's emotions
iii) Have an easy rhythm
iv) Are not very slow or very fast
v) Do not have much change in voice inflections
vi) Use easy and simple language
vii) Have nonsense rhyming words

Some of the popular children's songs in English and Hindi are given in subsection 27.4.4.

### 27.4.2 Different Kinds of Songs

Songs for children are of many different types. There are ballads or story songs. These traditional songs have been handed down from generation to generation and are narratives of myths or folk tales. Such songs can be used for their musical appeal as well as for dramatization.

There are lullabies which have a calming effect on children. Have the children pretend they are trying to get a baby to sleep. They may rock her in their arms or pretend to rock her in a cradle. How quiet they will be to make sure the baby is not awakened!

Humourous songs are songs with nonsense or funny words, or those which describe funny episodes. Then there are songs in most languages that teach numbers and letters of the alphabet. There are songs for arithmetic rules and language usages. Songs can be made on eating habits, daily routines and so on. You have songs about modes of transport, aspects of science, family relationships and daily experiences. The horizon covered is vast indeed.

India has a rich heritage of children's songs. Are you aware of them? Are you aware of the songs about festivals and celebrations? Did you know that Indian folk music of the North has songs for each season known as 'Baramasa' or 'Chaumasa'? Isn't it amazing how much children can learn about their culture through music?

Now that we are aware of the basic characteristics that should be borne in mind while selecting songs for children and the types of songs that children enjoy, let us take a look at teaching songs to children and what to expect in terms of children's ability to learn songs and singing.
27.4.3 Teaching Songs to Children

When including songs in the preschool curriculum, it is essential to remember that developing expertise in singing is not our aim. The main rationale for making music an integral part of the early childhood curriculum is the child's enjoyment of music. Therefore, the emphasis should be on the child, not on the teacher; on enjoyment, not skill; and on the process, not the product.

Know the song well yourself and sing it fully to children. Avoid breaking lines and asking children to repeat. You may, on some occasion, find it necessary to teach some song in portions. This is particularly true of longer songs that are more difficult to learn. Later these portions can be all put together. However, when children are first introduced to the song, they should hear it in its entirety, so that they experience it as a whole unit.

Do explain the meaning and the context of the song to the children. Make sure that all children have understood the meaning of the unfamiliar words in the song. This needn't be done at one go. Encourage the children to sing with you. As you sing the song, articulate clearly and distinctly. We must be realistic in our expectations. Do not expect children to learn a new song in one day. Children learn best by repeated exposure. But equally, do not give them an overdose! Each song need not be sung everyday. You must select different songs for different days or encourage children to choose the songs they would like to sing. Make sure that over the week, all the children get an opportunity to select their favourite song.

Singing together in a group is effective. The mood and the feeling of the song, along with the teacher’s enjoyment of singing, gets conveyed to children and builds their enthusiasm. Sing confidently, but not out of tune.

Whenever simple actions, movements and dramatizations are appropriate, use them while singing the song. These make a song much more interesting. The same is true of using musical instruments with the singing. If the teacher can use instruments to accompany the children’s singing, it is a great advantage. You will read about musical instruments in some detail in a later Section of this Unit.

Always bear in mind that competition has no place in preschoolers’ singing. Never make comparisons between children. Also, remember not to force a child to sing. Often a child who does not sing at the centre is reported to sing at home. For some children, it takes time to feel comfortable singing with the group, and pressure to sing does not make them more willing to participate. Let the child decide on her level of participation. Value her contribution, however limited, and encourage her. Build on spontaneous singing. Often when children are engaged in individual activities, they hum a favourite song. The teacher can sometimes join the child and complete the song.

It is a good idea to give a typed copy or, if possible, a tape recording of the songs sung in the preschool to children’s parents. It helps children to learn better if parents are familiar with the songs. But suggest to the parents that they follow your pace of introducing new songs. They might be tempted to teach all the songs to their child, so that she is ahead of the others! This is not the purpose of providing the book or the tape to the family.

27.4.4 Some Children’s Songs

The following are some children’s songs in English and Hindi. It is not possible to give the complete songs and rhymes in the Unit here. In most cases we have mentioned the first two or three lines. You may know most of them. These are only a few examples. There must be similar songs which are popular in your region. Collect as many songs as you can.
I) Songs to teach numbers and letters of the alphabet

a) The following rhyme with movement can clarify the concept of numbers. There would be many such songs in most languages which the teacher can collect for the class.

Teacher —  कितने भई कितने
Chorus by the children — आप चाहे जितने
Teacher — बैठे मागे चार

The teacher beats the drum with the rhyme. Children move to drum beats listening carefully to the words and also repeat the chorus. When the beat stops, children form groups of the desired number, as said by the teacher.

b) The following game may be played with slow classical music. Children move slowly and peacefully to slow classical rhythm. The teacher gives simple instructions.

* Be a bird..............................
* Be a deer..............................
* Be a peacock .............................
  Stop when I stop the music ..................
  Listen carefully and form a group of the number I give ...............

A couple of rhymes in English, built around numbers, are the following:

— When I was one
  I saw the sun
  When I was two
  The moon peeped through...

— Rabbits on the run
  Rabbits on the run
  One, two, three four
  Rabbits on the run
  Out of the burrow
  Playing in the sun.....

c) There are certain rhymes which teach the *matras* of Hindi alphabet or vernacular.

क का कि की कू कू बादाम
के की को के क: राम

Another such rhyme is the following:

अ से अनार होता है
ब से बकरी चरती है ....

Such songs are both recent in origin as well as part of tradition.

d) The following song, besides teaching numbers, also sharpens discrimination of sounds. It also introduces the concept of subtraction.

चिड़िया चिड़िया उड़ती जा
चिड़िया चिड़िया खुशी से गा
पाँच छोटी चिड़िया खा रही अनार
एक चिड़िया उड़ गई बाकी चार ....
II) Humorous songs

Songs with nonsense, meaningless words or funny words amuse children. Often the content is also funny and unreal. Some examples of such songs are

- मेरे देहूँ यहीं अज्ञा
  खाने को मिर्गे दही बाँझा ....

- शेर नितावा हिम्मत वाला
  मोटी मोटी पृथ्वी वाला ....

- बाबा ये लकड़ी का घोड़ा
  विलकुल अड़ो ढूंढ़ूँ है
  नहीं कभी सरपट चलता
  ये आलसी निघटूँ है

A jingle which ends with the following lines greatly amuses children

- घोड़ा दोहरा सरपट सरपट
  हुम भी जाओ झटपट झटपट


The following rhyme in English is popular with many children:

*Hey diddle-diddle*

*The cat and the fiddle*

*The cow jumped over the moon*

*The little dog laughed*

*To see such sport*

*And the dish ran away with the spoon*

III) Songs with stories

Certain songs are narratives of popular folk tales. They can be used for their musical appeal as well as for dramatization. They are simple to enact. Some examples are:

- एक था अंगूर का गुलाब
  लगना था सबसे ज़ीवन ....

  or

- एक बुढ़िया ने बोया दाना
  गाजर का था पेड़ लगाना ...

In the latter example, as the song unfolds the entire family gets involved in the process of planting the tree.

Another song of this type is:

एक कौआ प्यासा था
घड़े में पानी घोड़ा था
कौआ लाय कंकड़
घड़े में डाला कंकड़
पानी आया उपर
कौए ने पीया पानी
खत्म हुई कहानी
IV) Songs about animals and birds

Perhaps as a child, you too have sung the following song:

*Old Mac Donald had a farm*
*Ee-Aa-Ee-Aa-O*
*On his farm he had a duck*
*Ee-Aa-Ee-Aa-O*
*With a quack quack here*
*And a quack quack there*
*Here a quack, there a quack*
*Every where a quack quack*
*Old Mac Donald had a farm*
*Ee-Aa-Ee-Aa-O*

It acquaints the child with the sounds produced by various animals.

V) Songs about modes of transport

Songs about bus, train, bullock-cart etc. are enjoyable because it is fascinating to know about the means of transport. Such songs can be used to discuss simple aspects of science, like why are wheels round or why you need energy to push or pull and so on. Also, the action words in these songs appeal to children.

- रेल गाड़ी छुक छुक ...
  बीच बाले स्टेशन बोले छुक छुक ...
  or
- छुक छुक छुक छुक गाड़ी आई
  आगे से हट जाना भाई.

Children can move like a train in a circle or zig zag manner, moving their hands in a circular motion.

- *Two twin aeroplanes*
  *Two twin aeroplanes*
  *Flying high*
  *Flying high*
  *Circling and turning*
  *Circling and turning*
  *In the sky*
  *In the sky*

VI) Songs about festivals, celebrations and nature

There are several simple children's songs about rain, clouds, sun, seasons, festivals, crops, home life and household chores. Children enjoy the simple folk rhythms and learn about many aspects of the world around them. One such song is the following:

- *देखो देखो बादल आया*
  *गरज-गरज कर मेह बसाया*

You would certainly be knowing many more songs such as this, popular in your language. Songs can be created regarding eating habits, cleanliness, hygiene etc.

VII) Lullabies

Children enjoy lullabies. In the following lullaby, the mother talks to the child about the moon as she gently rocks her.
The following song is popular in Bihar which a mother often sings while massaging the baby:

— इलसन बीलसन
  कोआ के मचान संग
  जब घर उठे
  पुरान घर खसे

VIII) Other songs

Children often pick up jingles and rhymes from their peers. The following are some common ones:

— अकड़ बकड़ बने भी
  असी नब्बे पूरे सी ....
— झट बोलना पाए है
  घर के नीचे सप्त है ।
— दो दिन की छुटी
  रेती मेरी कुटी
— मानी के घर जाएगे
  दूध भलाई खाएगे।

IX) Game songs

The following song has an element of a game. It is a story about a fish who lives in an ocean with water all around. Each stanza ends with a question about how much water is there in the ocean. In answer, the children reply: “This much”, marking the level of water on their body with the hands. At the first reply, the water level is till the ankle, and subsequently, it keeps rising. Finally, the fish drowns and children run away saving themselves from the water.

हरा सामुंडर गोपी चंद्र
बोल मेरी मछली
कितना पानी
इतना पानी (Children mark the level of water till the ankle)
एक लहर में इतना पानी
ती लहरों में इतना पानी
पानी ये पानी
पानी ये पानी
इस जाएगे सारे प्राणी
हरा सामुंडर ....
कितना पानी?
इतना पानी।

Children’s songs, as far as possible, should be accompanied with actions and movements. This makes the song more lively.

You would have noticed that many of the songs reflect children’s feelings and emotions. The song about the brave tiger appeals to the child’s sense of adventure. Songs, like stories, fulfil many needs of children and nurture various aspects of their personality.
Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) You must be aware of some children's songs popular in your part of the country. You could speak to your family members or the neighbours to know more about them. Select any two songs and see if they have the characteristics that we have listed in the Unit. Mention the characteristics of a good song in the following space.

If each one of you collects two songs, then as you exchange your songs with the other learners at the Study Centre, you will have a list of songs that you can introduce in your preschool. Singing all these songs with the learners in the Study Centres will be fun!

2) How do music and movement activities help the child? Answer in the space provided below.

27.5 MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES WITH MUSIC

You have read about the importance of movement and mobility, as well as some play activities for fostering this aspect of development in preschoolers in the previous Block. In this Section, we shall focus on movement with music. Children's understanding of their physical capabilities depends on the opportunity for movement, the use of the body and the exercise of limbs. Movement activities also help in channelization of children's energy.

Some of the basic movements are walking, climbing, running, hopping, jumping, skipping, crawling, sliding, swinging, rolling, stretching, pushing, pulling, rising, falling, twisting, turning, and shaking. These movements can be expressed using music and rhythm. Provide music or rhythm in the background by a drum beat or a
song or by clapping. Encourage children to explore movements, to use the movements in a variety of ways and to find different ways of expressing themselves in keeping with the music. What do we mean by exploring a movement? Let us take the example of running. The child could run lightly or heavily, stop suddenly or change directions. The above mentioned movements and their variations, by and large, form the basics in creative movement.

To the young child, music and movement are often one and the same. When children hear music, they move spontaneously. Even adults often nod their head, tap their feet and move to the rhythm and sound of music. You do not need to teach children creative movements, but rather help them discover their own creativity.

Do not set yourself up as a model to be copied by children. Do not make comparisons among children. In creative movements, the idea is to allow individuality of expression. Do bear in mind that children will lose their shyness if the teacher is an active participant. In addition, do not press a child to join the group. Sometimes, a shy child needs to observe several times before joining in. Too much adult interference or negative comments from children or adults can cause inhibition; so guard against these. Build confidence and give support, particularly to children showing signs of hesitation.

As children become involved in movement exploration, try to redirect, challenge and stimulate their discoveries by suggestions such as: “Try moving like a bird” or “Move like a tree when the wind is blowing”. Movement can be used to represent any experience or thing such as a butterfly flying, an elephant walking, water dripping or clothes being washed. Music and movement can explore natural motions like the rain, movements of clouds and animal walks. Movement can also be used to explore emotions like anger, happiness or fear.

Music is not the only stimulus for creative movements. A story or a poem may give suggestions for creative movements. Sounds made by children can also serve as a background for movements.

Although materials are not necessary for creative movements, they can add variety and, for some children, may stimulate more exploration. Some suggestions are scarves, ribbons, balloons, balls, ropes, boxes, feathers and crumpled papers.

Dramatization with as well as without music also ties in closely with creative movements. Do you remember reading about dramatization in Unit 25? Parts of stories can be dramatized as the children enact some situation, action or incident. Children’s songs also have possibilities for musical dramatization.

As you can make out, music and movement activities have a wide scope in the young child’s curriculum. The following are some more movement activities you can carry out with children.

Some Activities

a) **Discovering movement of body parts**

   Children can jump, move their arms up or sideways and clap, hop on one leg, bend down to touch toes in response to the numbers called out by the teacher. These movements can also be performed to music. Such movements can be done as daily exercises. Most of these can be done while sitting or standing. Through such activities children improve their coordination, learn to follow instructions and, in general develop a sense of discipline.

h) **Move to a point and back**

   Ask the children to
   
   i) “Run and touch the Neem tree” or “Run and touch the yellow flowers.”
   
   ii) Touch the chair with her left arm/knees.
Play Activities for Preschoolers

iii) Move across with both her feet together.
iv) Touch objects that are red in colour.

c) Dramatize movements, preferably accompanied with appropriate sounds
   i) Become a toy, a horse, an aeroplane
   ii) You can ask two or three children to dramatize a market scene or “become a train” or “work in the garden”. Each child does part of some work and together the group depicts a particular scene.

d) Movement to varying beats

Clap a certain rhythm and ask children to move their bodies according to the rhythm. You can show movements like swaying from side to side or swinging arms. Children can move in any way. Change the beat after some time.

e) Fast and slow

Begin clapping slowly and encourage children to walk slowly in a circle in one direction, in response to the claps. Increase the pace of your claps from slow to fast, till children begin to run. This can lead to discussions about slow and fast, loud and soft.

These movements can also be performed with music. For this, choose a piece of music that changes in rhythm from slow to fast.

Movement activities can be used for enriching the child’s experiences and generating active participation. Freedom to express through the body enhances self expression and reduces inhibitions. As a teacher, just allow children to move to the rhythm or music; do not insist on style, only show the beat. Body movements also help in usefully directing excess energy.

The above activities have been listed only as examples. You can develop many more.

27.6 MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Do you know of some musical instruments in your region that are appropriate for children? We are all familiar with wooden and metal rattles popularly called jhunjhunas. Each area has its own variations of rattles. Dhapli, ektara and damru are other commonly available instruments. Such instruments are simple and available at the local mela. No expertise is required to use them. In children’s day care centre or preschool, it is necessary to have a collection of such musical toys as well as musical instruments. Provide opportunities for children to handle them. Children need to explore them independently and produce rhythm themselves. You may have a collection of simple musical instruments such as the following in your home or the centre.

   i) Damru
   ii) Dhapli
   iii) Toy flutes
   iv) Rattles
   v) Drums
   vi) Ghungroos
   vii) Bells
   viii) Cymbals (Manjira.)

In discussing musical instruments, we need to remember that the real instruments need expertise in playing and require serious learning and careful handling. Musical toys or simple musical instruments, like the ones mentioned above, are more attractive for children as they are easy to play.
If you do not have the above-mentioned instruments and musical toys, you can improvise them, using commonly available things around you. Children can also be involved in making them. For example, rattles can be made by putting beans or sand or pebbles in different boxes. This will show children that different objects in the box make different sounds. Children enjoy making playthings and have the joy of producing varied rhythms and sounds through their own creations. Let us now take a look at how some simple instruments can be made.

27.6.1 Making Some Simple Musical Instruments

Making small and simple instruments can be a group activity. Involve children in collecting old tins, bottle caps, seed pods of trees, old coconut shells, pebbles etc. Most of these can easily be collected from the surroundings.

Here are a few simple musical instruments that children can make using the objects mentioned above.

Rattles: Fill up old tins with pebbles, seeds or marbles. Cover the tin with coloured paper. Children may paste their drawings on it to make it look attractive. Insert a small stick through a hole made in the bottom of the tin and it becomes a rattle with a handle.

Take an old tin. Cover it with coloured paper or children’s drawings. Put some pebbles, twigs, marbles etc in it.

Insert a stick through a hole made in one end of the tin. A rattle is ready!

Cymbals (manjira): Cymbals can be made by passing a string through two coconut shells. Knot each of the two ends of the string so that it does not slip out.

Jhunjhuna: Old bottle caps, shells and beads can be strung together on a thin metal wire. Silver paper or coloured paper can be used to cover the bottle caps to make them attractive.

Drum: Old tins can be filled with different quantities of thick twigs. When you beat on them with a stick, you can create different sounds and rhythms.
**Jalitarang:** Bowls of the same size and made of the same material can be filled with different quantities of water. When struck with a spoon, each bowl gives a different pitch of sound.

**Castinettes:** Rhythm and sound can be created by letting children gently bang two rocks or two smooth stones.

**Gong or Dhapli:** A gong or dhapli can be made out of a metal plate or tin box.

Can you think of some other musical instruments that can be made from objects and things easily available in the surroundings? Talk to the other learners in the Study Centre about it and write, in the space below, how they can be made. This will be useful for you.

Encourage children to try their hand at playing these various instruments and using them to accompany their humming or singing. You may ask the children to play their different instruments to the same beat. In this way, they can make their own 'band'. This band can also be used along with songs. Such a group activity will be thoroughly enjoyable as well as be a valuable experience in cooperation.
27.6.2 Actual Musical Instruments

Real instruments need expertise and are relatively more expensive; yet they enrich children’s experiences. Having real musical instruments for a young children’s centre is good. If the teacher can play any of the instruments, children’s enjoyment increases. Children enjoy doing exercises to a good drum beat. It would indeed be joyous for young children to sing along with a harmonium and Dholak. Currently, there are various electronic musical instruments which have recordings of good music for free movement. If funds permit, some modern equipment of this type can be acquired. The following instruments may be acquired through annual budgets:

i) Harmonium
ii) Dhapli
iii) Flute
iv) Khadtal
v) Manjira
vi) Dholak
vii) Xylophone
viii) Drum
ix) Bells
x) Ghungroos

Listening to and observing the instruments being played is exciting for children. In listening to music, children learn to discriminate between sounds. They should be introduced to different kinds of musical instruments. This will foster their appreciation of music.
Encourage children to try real instruments under supervision. Handling these may require more care, but children can easily be taught to exercise proper care. As children play the instruments, draw their attention to the range of sounds that can be made with each instrument. A drum struck with the hand sounds different compared to when it is struck with a stick. Struck in the centre it emits a different sound than at the edge.

As children become familiar with the various musical instruments, you can plan the following game. Take some musical instruments and place a screen between yourself and the children. Play a certain instrument and ask the children to identify it by its sound. Give children turns to go behind the screen and play the instruments.

Musical instruments, real or those made by children, can be used to accompany children's singing or movement, to reproduce rhythmic patterns or to create original sound patterns. They also provide an avenue for free musical exploration. A teacher can direct this type of activity by helping children extend their simple explorations to more complex sounds.

Children should also be taught to explore their own body and use it as a musical instrument. Let us see how this can be done.

27.6.3 The Body as an Instrument

When we walk there is a soft sound; when we jump the sound is louder. Thus there are various sounds the children can make. These sounds can be produced in different rhythms. This use of their own body helps children learn to coordinate their movements. What are the various sounds that children can produce from their own body? Clapping is a common example. Some of the others could be

i) jumping  
ii) stamping the feet  
iii) patting different parts of the body  
iv) clicking the tongue  
v) rubbing hands  
vi) snapping the fingers  
vii) hissing  
viii) gasping

You could add to this list. Apart from this, you could focus on one part of the body, such as the hands, and discover ways of using it to produce different sounds and rhythms. For example, the hands could be used to clap, tap on the floor or tap some part of the body such as the neck, shoulder, chest or thigh. Multiple sounds may be produced by combining body movements, such as jumping and clicking the tongue.

Simple sounds can be discovered by children and these can accompany the songs. One could introduce such an activity through a song like the following:

*Come on and play a game with me.*

*Its a very funny game to play*

Clap your hands—Ta-Ta-Ta  
Stamp your feet—Tap-Tap-Tap  
Now flap your arms—Sh-Sh-Sh  
Come on children join the game.

*Its a very simple game to play*

Clap your hands ......  
Stamp your feet ......  
Flap you arms ......  
Jump up high—uh-uh-uh  
Now turn around  
Its a very ......
Clap ........
Stamp ........
Flap your ........
Jump up high ......
Now turn around
Touch your toes—Tip-Tip-Tip
Now turn around

You could add other movements to the song and extend it.

A song through which you can introduce rhythm as well as numbers is the following:

1, 2, 3, 4 Clap Clap Clap Clap
5, 6, 7, 8 Click, Click, Click, Click and so on.

Such activities can be in groups. Children can also be divided into groups of three or four and different tasks given to the groups. One group stamps, another group claps while yet another hums to a rhythm. Each group first does it by turn and later all can do it together. These kinds of coordinated games are suitable for the older children in the preschool group.

Surely children will enjoy such games. Besides the activities mentioned here, you will be able to devise many similar activities to generate musical skills and interest among children.

The play activities mentioned in this, as well as in the earlier Sections, are only examples and are not the only ideas to try out. Give your creativity a chance and think of other activities by watching children’s natural behaviour. You will see that children are never still or silent for long, as they have a natural urge for movement.

Some of the music and rhythm activities will need to be initiated by you. You could introduce songs and musical games, plan musical dramatizations and rhythm activities, encourage children to play musical instruments and to perform creative body movements. You can initiate discussions that will improve children’s sensitivity towards music and extend to critical listening of music. At the same time, you must be receptive to the activities initiated by the children. A child may begin singing or chanting during play. She may sing a familiar song, make up her own tunes or expand a song. She may begin humming or moving rhythmically. You should take advantage of such opportunities and encourage children to be spontaneous.

27.7 TIME FOR MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Music is an integral part of the curriculum and you can have a special time for it. The day could begin with music, exercise and creative movement. This could be organized with all the children, or in separate groups. Singing and dancing together builds a sense of comradeship, cooperation and harmony. The music and movement session can be followed by a quiet story time since the former takes up a lot of energy. If it is not possible to organize music activities in the morning, you can schedule them just before snack time or towards the end of the day.

Not only should music be planned as a separate activity every day, it should be used to support other play activities, to create variety or to provide the transition between activities. Just as in homes we carry out many activities with music in the background, in the centre you can play soft folk or classical tunes while children are engaged in indoor activity. This helps in creating an atmosphere of harmony and provides an exposure to the richness of music. Music often helps to quieten children.

There are moments during teaching or discussion when the teacher can break into music and movement to dramatize an idea. For instance, when introducing the alphabet to children, you can include movement activities. Children may bend to make an ‘A’. They can make letters with their arms or fingers or by joining in pairs.
Singing can help to pass the time while children wait for another activity to be set up. Sometimes singing can serve to revitalize children’s interest in their regular activities. Children can sing about what they are doing, for instance, by using **expandable songs**. For example, a familiar song in English: “If you are happy and you know it ....” becomes an expandable song as children add their own phrases, such as “If you are happy and you know it, blink your eyes”, “If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands” and so on.

Some other songs that contain expandable phrases and words are as follows:

To the tune “Mary had a little lamb”, you may sing:

Pass a plate to your friend, to your friend, to your friend
Pass a plate to your friend, now take one yourself

or

*Its time for us to go outside, go outside, go outside*

*Its time for us to go outside, for soon we’re going home*

In the former, ‘plate’ may be replaced by ‘spoon’ ‘crayon’ or any other item.

To the tune “London bridge is falling down”, sing the following:

*Time to put your things away, things away, things away*

*Time to put your things away*

*Until another day*

or

*Find a person wearing green, wearing green, wearing green*

*Find a person wearing green*

*What’s that person’s name?*

In the latter, ‘green’ may be replaced by ‘red’, ‘blue’ or any other colour.

Many children’s songs can thus become expandable. In the space provided below, try expanding any of the children’s songs that you know.

At the conclusion of this discussion, we would like you to remember one aspect. The purpose in giving musical experience is for enjoyment and exposure rather than for teaching a skill. Children’s performance ability would not be high at the start. Do not expect them to be experts in movement or singing. There is no right or wrong way to use the body. As far as the child is concerned, she is experimenting and exploring.

Similarly, the child should not be forced to sing or be ridiculed for not knowing the words. The teacher should move to rhythm and sing songs with joy so that she becomes a model for the children. She should avoid correcting children’s musical rendering; it is better to sing correctly and wait for them to pick it up. As with other aspects of learning, children’s interests and joy can be created and sustained by the teacher. Her positive attitude and approach to musical experiences are crucial factors. The person who enjoys music and sings with enthusiasm is the one who will receive the greatest response from children.
Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Identify a preschooler in your family or neighbourhood. Along with him/her, make any one of the simple musical instruments described in the Unit or any other that you can think of. Subsequently, use this instrument when singing a song with the child. Note down in the following space whether the child enjoyed making the instrument and singing the song, whether you experienced any difficulty in making it and what materials you used to make it.

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2) Select any popular children’s song. See whether you can incorporate some movement activities to go with the content of the song. Sing the song along with movements to a child, and encourage him/her to sing with you. Note down whether the child enjoyed this activity.

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3) You can use your arms and neck to perform many movements. For example, you can move the arms like the flapping of the bird’s wings or move neck to show the walk of a peacock. Think of other movements that you can perform with the arms and the neck. You should be able to think of at least five movements.

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27.8 SUMMING UP

In this Unit you have been introduced to the significance of music and movement activities in the curriculum for young children. Children enjoy rhythmic musical movements and love to sing. They respond to music and rhythm from the first day of life. Rhymes and jingles are catchy and they sing them with gay abandon.

Learning of many aspects of the curriculum can be achieved through music. Movement gives the child the opportunity to explore her body and her surroundings. Music and dance allow expression of moods and feelings. They provide a setting for language and cognitive development. Auditory discrimination, understanding of grammar and usage of words improves. Singing in a group and creating tunes with each other gives children a feeling of belongingness and harmony.

Children's natural responsiveness to music and rhythm can be built upon in many ways in the preschool or day care centre.

One of the ways is by involving children in songs. Songs for children must have a catchy and simple rhythm, use easy language, refer to familiar things and routines and should not demand much variation in voice inflections. There are a variety of children's songs specific to the regions in our country.

In the preschool encourage children to sing in a group. Songs can form the background for the different activities that the children do. They can sing as they paint, work with clay etc. Simple actions or movements can accompany the songs.

You can encourage children to perform movements to music. You do not have to teach children creative movements, but rather help them discover their own creativity. They can vary their movements in response to music, create movements together as a group, dramatize a song or a story using movements, move like a certain character, an animal or a bird—the possibilities are endless.

Musical instruments can add fun to singing and dance activities. You can buy inexpensive musical toys from the local market. Alternatively, you can involve the children in preparing simple instruments like rattles, damru, drum, cymbals and bells. If you have real instruments in the centre, encourage children to handle them with care.

You must remember that in all these activities the purpose is not to teach the children to sing, dance or play an instrument well. The focus of these activities is enjoyment. Do not compare children. There is no right or wrong way of performing movements or creating a song.

27.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) The characteristics of a good song are:
   - it has a simple and easy rhythm
   - it does not vary much in range
   - it uses an easy language
   - it refers to familiar events and things

Check to see whether the songs selected by you have these characteristics.
2) Music and movement activities give pleasure to children. They allow exploration and self-discovery. Children express their moods and feelings through singing and movement. Dancing together gives feelings of togetherness and belongingness. Music and movement activities also help in cognitive and language development.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Select any of the instruments described in the text or make any other. At each stage involve the child.

2) You will be able to devise movements for most of the songs. Many songs have references to the wind, the rain, the clouds, birds, animals and people—all of these can be easily depicted through movements.

3) Some of the movements can be

- swaying in the breeze
- moving like an aeroplane
- walking like an elephant
- depicting the rain
- moving like a wheel