

Music Activities for the Non-Musician*

I've Got Rhythm: Use maracas or homemade shakers to play along to recorded music. This music should have a strong, consistent pulse, such as a march. See below for music suggestions. If you don't have maracas, the residents can make shakers from plastic Easter eggs or other small plastic container. Fill each container with split pea beans, rice, or small ball bearings and tape shut with colorful electric tape.

Song examples for rhythm activities

- Marches: Sousa's *Washington Post March*, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and *Triumphal March* (Verdi).
- Hits of the 50's and beyond: *Love and Marriage* (S.Cahn), *The Happy Wanderer* (Ridge), *Blue Suede Shoes* (Perkins), *Shake Rattle and Roll*, *I'm All Shook Up*, *Mister Sandman* (Ballard), *Hey Good Lookin'* (Guthrie), *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da* (Beatles), *Sh-Boom* (Keyes, et al.)
- Multi-Cultural Music: National Anthems, Irish Jigs, Polkas, African rhythms, Klezmer music, etc. Internet is your best resource- YouTube, Spotify, Apple Music, etc.

Rhythm is the soul of life. The whole universe revolves in rhythm. Every thing and every human action revolves in rhythm." Baba Tunji

Musical Hot Potato: Print up resident-preferred song titles in large font and then cut out each title. Fold each piece of paper in half and put papers into a hat or basket. During the activity, toss a balloon or beach ball while listening to resident-preferred recorded music and when you stop the music, which ever resident touch the object last gets to pick a piece of paper (song) out of the hat. The group can then sing the song together. Repeat these steps for desired length of time. Modify the activity as needed to ensure resident success. Option: Instead of song titles, you could have questions printed on the paper for the residents to pick. Example questions:

What is your favorite flavor ice cream?

What is you favorite time of the year, Winter, Spring Summer or Fall?

What was your favorite toy as a child?

Sound Effects: Using YouTube or other music platform, have residents listen to sound effects and then guess the sound. Many discussions can come from these sound effects. Be selective in choosing which sound effects the group hears since some sounds can trigger negative outcomes, such as machine gun or air raid siren.

Sound Effect Stories: Add sound effects to short stories or poems by using items or instruments you have around the facility. Residents can also use their voices to make the specific sound. For example, if the story calls for a wolf howling, a resident can imitate this sound with their voice. If the story calls for horse galloping, the resident can tap on their laps. Once you have assigned parts, practice the story together, incorporating the sounds. Once the group has practiced the story several times, you can record the group and play it back for them to hear. You can also discuss the use of sound effects in old-time radio programs during the “Golden Age” of radio.

Story example:

It was a dark and rainy night.

The thunder boomed!

The wind was blowing!

In the distance, you could hear wolves howling at the moon.

Up ahead there was a spooky old house

The door to the old house creaked open

Suddenly the door slammed shut

Loud footsteps could be heard

Our hearts were beating like a drum

All you could hear was the ticking of the clock

We ran for our lives!

Dance: Put together a compilation of dance songs typically from their young, adult years, hits from the 40’s, 50’s and 60’s. Move to the music together. Incorporate discussion questions: Where people would go to dance. What would they wear to go dancing? Who would they go with to dance? What dance moves were popular?

Exercise: Select music with a strong, steady beat making it easy to follow, such as Sousa marches, swing music, polkas, Dixieland music, etc. In addition select music that fits the desired action, speed, and duration.

Musical Bingo: Select about 30 resident-preferred songs. Randomly write the song titles in each of the blank bingo squares, changing around the order of the songs for some of the bingo cards making the game more interesting instead of having all the same cards. Explain to the participants that this game is little like “name that tune” and “bingo” put together. The leader will hum a tune from the preferred song list and see who can name the title of the song. Once the group knows the title, they can search for it on the bingo card. After everyone has put a marker on the title, the group can sing the song together. The leader should always give cues/assistance as needed or utilize willingness of other helpful residents. Repeat these steps until game is complete.

Song Toss: With large font, print resident preferred song titles onto an 8 1/2 X 11 sheets of paper, one song per sheet. Once all of the residents are seated, put songs sheets onto floor and then one at a time have residents toss a bean bag onto a sheet of paper. Sing the song the bean bag landed on unless the person has expressed a dislike for the song and have the person try again. Alternative: You could also have specific questions instead of

songs. (Be cautious of residents walking over sheets of paper if they are leaving the group to avoid falls)

Music Crossword Puzzle: Think of questions related to songs or musicians. (What did Yankee Doodle stick in his cap? *Feather*) Arrange the answers into a crossword puzzle (using Puzzlemaker.com) and have the blank puzzle on a large poster board for the group.

Painting to Music: Representational songs- Flight of the Bumblebee, 1812 Overture
William Tell Overture, Stars & Stripes Forever

Conversations through Music- Theme Examples

Names of people: *Donna*
Hit the Road, Jack
Sweet Georgia Brown
Tom Dooley
Mr. Sandman
Georgia on my Mind
Sherry (Frankie Valie)
Help Me Rhonda
Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider
Daisy, Daisy
If You Knew Suzie
The Band Played On (Casey)
Meet Me In St. Louis (Louie)
Sweet Adeline
My Gal Sal
K-K-K-Katy
M-O-T-H-E-R
Sweet Rosie O'Grady
My Wild Irish Rose
Won't You Come Home Bill Bailey
Wait Till the Sun Shines Nellie
Nancy with the Laughing Face

Best Friends: *Getting to Know You (King and I)*
My Gal Sal, Side By Side,
You've Got a Friend, Bridge Over Troubled Water
There is a Tavern in the Town
Deal Old Pal of Mine
I Don't Need Anything But You (Annie)
Sentimental Journey

Seasons: Spring Songs *Easter Parade*
Younger Than Springtime (from South Pacific)
Take Me Out to the Ballgame
Singing in the Rain
April in Paris, April Showers

	<i>When You Wore a Tulip</i>
	<i>Springtime in the Rockies</i>
	<i>It Might as well be Spring</i>
Summer	<i>In the Good-old Summertime</i>
	<i>Summertime (and the livin' is easy)</i>
	<i>Summertime Blues</i>
	<i>June's Bustin' Out All Over</i>
Fall	<i>Autumn Leaves</i>
	<i>September Song</i>
Winter	<i>Let it Snow, Here Comes Susie Snowflake</i>
US Cities and States: (Travel)	<i>This Land Is Your Land</i>
	<i>What a Wonderful World</i>
	<i>The Yellow Rose of Texas</i>
	<i>Deep in the Heart of Texas</i>
	<i>On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe</i>
	<i>Carolina in the Mornin'</i>
	<i>California, Here I Come</i>
	<i>California Girls</i>
	<i>Sweet Home Chicago</i>
	<i>City of New Orleans</i>
	<i>Around the World</i>
	<i>I Left My Heart in San Francisco</i>
	<i>King of the Road</i>
	<i>Under the Boardwalk</i>
	<i>Any Patriotic Song</i>
Broadway Tunes:	<i>Oh, What A Beautiful Mornin'</i>
	<i>Shall We Dance (King and I)</i>
	<i>Get Me to the Church on Time (My Fair Lady)</i>
	<i>I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face (My Fair Lady)</i>
	<i>I Could Have Danced All Night (My Fair Lady)</i>
	<i>Oklahoma</i>
	<i>The Surrey with the Fringe on Top (Oklahoma)</i>
	<i>Hello Dolly</i>
	<i>It Might as well be Spring (State Fair)</i>
	<i>I'm Gonna Wash that Man right out of my Hair</i>
	<i>There is Nothing Like a Dame (South Pacific)</i>
	<i>Some Enchanted Evening (South Pacific)</i>
	<i>My Favorite Things (Sound of Music)</i>
	<i>Edelweiss</i>

**Disclaimer: Some of these ideas are not meant to be implemented during a pandemic. Please take all Covid-19 precautions during activities and follow facility and state guidelines.*