

Reprinted from *Reverberations*

Playing with the Seasons

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Note: This lesson was originally shared in the International Sunday Sharing via Zoom. The lesson idea below is taken from the session notes and offers opportunities to extend this play over multiple remote or socially distanced teaching sessions.

Warm-up: Because this lesson uses hands for creative expression, we begin by warming up our fingers, hands, and wrists; stretch/relax; fingers greet each other. (This activity originally comes from *Meister Wangs Fingerspiele*, an out-of-print German publication.)

Video – Finger Warm-up: <https://vimeo.com/474242839>

Listen to the melody: When you model this for your students, choose from your classroom instruments to accompany the song. The score for the song is shared below.

Video – Melody accompanied by Kantale: <https://vimeo.com/474245055/3ffd661023>

Video – Melody accompanied by sticks and shells: <https://vimeo.com/474245253/122049f30e>

Video – Melody accompanied by Glockenspiel: <https://vimeo.com/474245249/73e97b80b6>

Learn signs from American Sign Language for the four seasons: If you have students who already know ASL, invite them to be the teachers.

Video – ASL Signs for 4 Seasons: <https://vimeo.com/474253838/345e21dc2b>

Imagine each season: Think of two or three gestures that represent something about the season. Record the children's ideas. The list below is just a suggestion to start the process, encourage children to brainstorm as many as they can. As you complete a list for a season, sing the corresponding verse while the children demonstrate their favorite gestures.

- Winter - sledding; being cold; drinking hot cocoa; etc.
- Spring - rain; flowers blooming; birds/butterflies; etc.
- Summer - feeling hot; swimming; playing baseball; etc.
- Fall - raking leaves; putting on a sweater;

The lesson might conclude here for the first session: The teacher can sing the verses while the students introduce each season with the correct hand sign and then show the gestures they have created for that season. Invite students to hum along with the chorus.

Teacher Tip - Notice how many times the children have already heard the melody. This prepares their ears for singing before the lyrics are added.

More movement play: Review the ideas explored in the previous session. Display the list of student generated gesture ideas for each season and repeat singing with the students performing their hand movements. Then explore further...what happens if you:

- Change the tempo.
- Make the gestures larger (use of space).
- Hold a gesture longer and then gradually move to a new shape.
- Repeat the same gesture...but perhaps with change of level, or a regular alternation of gestures.
- Make gestures small and focused...then large and fluid.

Refrain: Learn ASL for selected words from the refrain (*come, play, with, me, over, meadow*)

Video – ASL of Signs for Refrain: <https://vimeo.com/474253859/6c94847015>

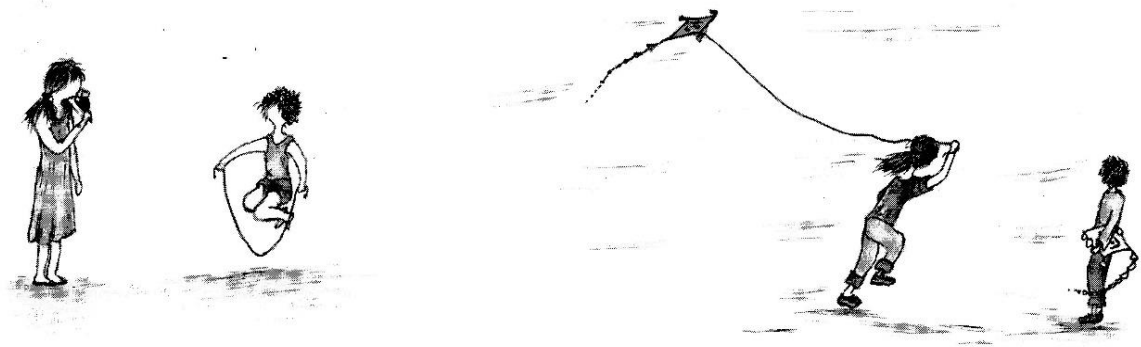
Sing with signs: The teacher sings the refrain as the children add the ASL. Tell children it isn't necessary to show each sign; encourage them to comfortably move through the signs they have learned so far. Then encourage them to hum or sing along with you as they show the signs again.

More imagining: What sounds do you associate with each season? Can you add vocal sounds, found sounds, objects, or instruments that represent qualities for each season. Sing the song again for the children as they add a soundscape for each verse. Encourage them to review the ASL for the chorus each time it happens.

Putting it all together: Sing the whole song one more time and allow the children to select a part to add to the performance. For example:

- Sing the refrain with or without the signs.
- Clap the rhythm of the verse/refrain.
- Sing the melody.
- Sing a bordun accompaniment.
- Add gestures for one or more seasons.
- Add a soundscape for one or more seasons (perhaps as an introduction to the verse)

You also may want to explore this song season by season rather than all four seasons at once. This allows for some creative play as part of a lesson and an opportunity to revisit the song and ideas over time.



Text: Shirley Salmon

The Seasons

Gerda Bächli

Dm A

Fall is here the leaves are chang - ing, danc - ing in the mead - ow,

Dm (A) Dm

O - range, yel - low, red and brown, danc - ing in the mead - ow.

Dm A

Come and play with me, o - ver in the mead - ow,

(A) Dm

Come and play with me, o - ver in the mead - ow.

Fall is here the leaves are changing
Dancing in the meadow.
Orange, yellow, red and brown
Dancing in the meadow.

Winter's here and snow is falling
Over in the meadow.
Snowflakes swirling shining white
Over in the meadow.

Come and play with me
Over in the meadow.
Come and play with me
Over in the meadow.

Spring is here and plants awakening
Over in the meadow.
Leaves and petals slowly growing
Over in the meadow.

Summer's here the sun is shining
Over in the meadow.
Children dancing, playing, skipping
Over in the meadow.



The additional ideas listed below offer further ways to explore the concept of seasons.

Sensory awareness

- Choose objects related to different seasons e.g. pinecones, leaves, flowers. Feel them with closed eyes; feel different qualities and textures.
- Recognize them with closed eyes.
- Listen (and recognize) sounds from nature – e.g. different types of rain, waves, waterfall, wind, thunder, etc.

Movement:

- Experiment with movements for each verse using different parts of the body – e.g. falling leaves, dancing snowflakes, flowers growing, mosquitos flying.
- Find ways to accompany your own movements or someone else's movement with voice or instruments.
- Create movement sequences and record them.

Voice and language:

- Learn ASL signs for words in the verses.
- Use just voices and vocal sounds for the soundscapes. Improvise around the melody.
- Discuss aspects of each season: colors, animals, weather, nature, etc.
- Learn each verse; invent new verses.
- Find poems or rhymes about all or one of the seasons; find ways of interpreting them.

Instruments:

- Use body percussion to play the beat or the rhythm of the words.
- Create ostinati from the text; e.g. come and / play with me /over in the meadow, etc.
- Use instruments or found sounds to create atmosphere of each season.
- Accompany using a bordun (using no harmonic progressions).
- Accompany using I V accompaniment.
- Learn to play part (or all) of the melody on an instrument .
- Invent upper or lower parts to accompany the melody.

Notation:

- Find sounds to represent parts of the song; e.g. leaves falling, snowflakes dancing, plants awakening. Find ways of notating these sounds.
- Create pieces using these sounds and notate the piece (represent pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre...); interpret someone else's score.
- Look at different types of graphic notation

Listening:

- Listen to the song sung in the major key – does it work/not work? Why?
- Find and listen to other songs, pieces of music about one or all of the seasons from different eras, cultures, genres, styles

Shirley Salmon taught "Music and Movement in the Community and Inclusive Education" at the Orff Institute, Mozarteum University Salzburg and is co-director of the postgraduate Special Course. She studied music and educational science and also trained as a Kindergarten and primary school teacher. She has taught children and adults of different abilities and disabilities in mainstream classes, groups of mixed ability, institutions for special needs, Kindergartens, and schools. She gives workshops, lectures, and seminars nationally and internationally and is the author of books, a DVD and numerous articles in journals. Shirley is president of the International Orff Schulwerk Forum Salzburg. sdaysalmon@gmail.com

