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## ABSTRACT

Songs play an important role in the development of young children when learning a second language; for that reason, this investigation is focused on the use of songs for teaching children in EFL classes in order to develop children listening skills. It is considered as the most important skill to be developed in the early language teaching, and songs are regarded as one of the best techniques for practicing and improving the listening ability, especially with young learners. Therefore, this work is oriented to pay attention to the listening skill in general, and how songs can become an effective listening material for the English classroom. The main purpose of this theoretical study is to present a practical structure by reviewing the relevant information about the importance of the listening skill for young foreign learners and to discuss the effect that listening has in the moment to improve vocabulary, pronunciation, and even grammar patterns in elementary school students. In addition, this investigation discussed the teaching procedures of songs as listening activities. Finally, I have included a booklet in which there are some songs that could be taught in the classroom.

**Key words:** Listening Skills, Songs, Young Learners, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Grammar.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| ABSTRACT.....  | 1  |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS.....   | 2  |
| AUTHORSHIP .....   | 7  |
| DEDICATION.....  | 8  |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....  | 9  |
| INTRODUCTION .....   | 10 |
| CHAPTER I.....   | 12 |
| THE PROBLEM .....  | 12 |
| 1.1 TOPIC.....   | 12 |
| 1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM.....                                | 12 |
| 1.3JUSTIFICATION .....   | 12 |
| 1.4 OBJECTIVES .....   | 13 |
| CHAPTER II.....  | 14 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW .....  | 14 |
| 2.1 TEACHING AND LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.....                  | 14 |
| 2.2 PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPING THE LISTENING SKILL .....               | 15 |
| 2.3 LSITENING STAGES .....   | 17 |
| 2.3.1 PRE-LISTENING STAGE.....                                     | 17 |
| 2.3.2 WHILE-LISTENING STAGE.....                                   | 17 |
| 2.3.3 POST-LISTENING STAGE .....                                   | 18 |
| 2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF SONG FOR LEARNING A FOREIGN<br>LANGUAGE..... | 18 |
| 2.5 SONGS TO IMPROVE LISTENING.....                                | 19 |
| 2.6 ADVANTAGES OF USING SONGS IN THE CLASSROOM .....               | 20 |
| 2.6.1 TECAHING VOCABULARY TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH<br>SONGS ..... | 21 |



# UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

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|  |    |
|--|----|
| 2.6.2 TEACHING PRONUNCIATION TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH SONGS ..... | 22 |
| 2.6.3 TEACHING GRAMMAR TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH SONGS             | 23 |
| CHAPTER III.....   | 24 |
| METHODOLOGY.....   | 24 |
| 3.1 LITERATURE REVIEW .....  | 22 |
| 3.2 INTERVIEW.....   | 22 |
| 3.3 SURVEY .....   | 23 |
| CHAPTER IV .....   | 24 |
| RESULTS .....  | 24 |
| 4.1 INTERVIEW.....   | 24 |
| 4.2 SURVEY .....   | 27 |
| CHAPTER V .....  | 32 |
| CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....                              | 32 |
| 5.1 CONCLUSIONS .....  | 32 |
| 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS .....  | 34 |
| WORK CITED .....   | 35 |
| APPENDICES.....  | 38 |
| APPENDIX 1.....  | 39 |
| APPENDIX 2.....  | 40 |
| APPENDIX 3.....  | 42 |



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**FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN**

**CARRERA DE LENGUA Y LITERATURA INGLESA**

**“The Use of Songs to Improve the Listening Skill in Elementary  
SchoolStudents”**

**Tesina previa a la obtención del Título  
de Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación  
en la Especialización de Lengua y  
Literatura Inglesa.**

**Autora:** Diana Soledad Cuzco Monje

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### **AUTHORSHIP**

The thoughts, ideas, opinions, and information obtained through this research are the only responsibility of the author, Diana Soledad Cuzco Monje.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my husband, Nelson, who has given me his help and comprehension to reach my objective, and to my little angel, Danilo, who was my inspiration in order to make my dream come true.





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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

First, I would like to thank God for giving me the intelligence, the patience, and the strength to finish my career. I would also like to thank the Professors of the University of Cuenca for giving me the opportunity to become a professional. Finally, special thanks to my family, for giving me their support and advice to overcome every obstacle on the road.



## INTRODUCTION

The use of English as a Foreign Language has become very important in the learning- teaching context. The reason for this fact is that English is considered as an international language since it is used by most people around the world. In the pedagogical context, teachers can use many sources in the English classroom in an efficient way. If this material is used effectively according to the students' needs, it will help young learners to understand and recognize the main information of each lesson. This investigation is focused on songs as a resource to be used in the English classroom; therefore, the purpose of this research is to explain that music can be very influential when developing listening skills on young learners. In addition, children can improve their vocabulary and pronunciation, and also they have the opportunity to learn certain grammatical patterns.

This investigation was based on three specific objectives that were supported and organized according to bibliographic information. These objectives were to study the theoretical aspects about the importance of songs for developing the listening skill in elementary school; to suggest a practical strategy to teach songs for listening to children in EFL classroom; to compile useful songs for teachers in a booklet. Therefore, this research encourages teachers to use this resource to make their classes more dynamic and enjoyable.

In others countries, there have been several studies related to the use of songs as a resource to develop the listening skill in EFL classrooms; for example, Millington mentions that there are many reasons for songs to be considered as a valuable pedagogical tool. The most important one is that songs can be beneficial if they are used in a fun way since they help to motivate students in the classroom. Furthermore, songs help children to develop their listening skill and pronunciation, and also songs are a useful tool in learning vocabulary and sentences patterns (1134). Likewise, Al-Mamary in a study called "Using Songs



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to Promote Vocabulary Learning in Grade 1,” determined that the principal problem of teachers in the English classroom is how to motivate students to speak in the foreign language; therefore, songs are a useful tool to encourage students to use English. Also, when students listen to a song, they can identify words and meanings without problems if songs are reinforced with pictures and movements. Moreover, songs provide confidence to students in learning a new language (1). Finally, Machackove in an article called “Teaching Listening” adds that teachers have to consider three important things when they are going to work on listening. First, select an adequate listening activity. Second, choose a good activity. Third, compile a comprehensible lesson.

The principal beneficiaries of this investigation are teachers and students. Teachers, because with this material, they will be more motivated to use songs in their lessons with more frequency. Students, since using songs will help them to enjoy the learning process and to develop their listening skill at the same time. This research will serve as a base for future investigations that are focused on the benefits of songs in the classroom according to the children’s needs and the requirements of this changing educational system.



## **CHAPTER I**

### **THE PROBLEM**

This work has been designed to explain that music in the English classroom can be very influential to develop listening skills on young learners, and also to determine that through songs, students can increase their vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar patterns.

#### **1.1 TOPIC**

Nowadays, English teachers have at their hand a lot of resources to be used in the classroom; however, most of them are not used in a correct way. For this reason the topic that is proposed for this research work is “The Influence of Songs to Improve the Listening Skill in Elementary School Students.”

#### **1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM**

According to my experience as a student, I discovered that listening is the most difficult skill that people acquire when learning a new language since they are discovering new sounds which differ from their mother tongue. It is important that teachers find a correct technique to enhance this skill on children. An excellent strategy to help students to improve listening in an enjoyable way can be using songs in their English classroom.

#### **1.3 JUSTIFICATION**

It is important that people acquire English in their early years because it is becoming part of our lives. This language is basically taught in institutions where children are beginning their learning process.

I considered investigating this topic because kids could be the most suitable group of students that learn a foreign language since they acquire their mother tongue by listening to different sounds around them. So through this research, I want to analyze that songs can be a practical strategy to work with children and



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to motivate them to develop the listening skill in order to encourage young kids to learn vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in an English classroom. Moreover, I want to provide teachers with an effective guide to help them teach songs in a better way, and thus avoid the monotony in the classroom.

## 1.4 OBJECTIVES

### GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- To investigate that songs are useful in developing listening skills in children.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To identify the importance of listening skill in learning a foreign language
- To study the theoretical aspects about the importance of songs for elementary school students.
- To reflect upon the advantages of using songs in the classroom
- To compile useful songs in a booklet.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review contains scientific information about the use of songs to develop the listening skill in elementary school students. This information will be valuable and important for the research report. The first topic to be studied is teaching and learning a foreign language.

#### 2.1 TEACHING AND LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a foreign or second language is “a language that somebody learns to speak well and that they use for work or at school, but that is not the language they learned first.”

In an article, Yuliana notes that since English is considered as a global language, more and more people around the world learn this language in their early years (62). Furthermore, Khan states that a major fact for regarding English as a global language is that the world’s knowledge is usually preserved in English. It is a modern language; therefore, it is used by most people (1248).

The fact that English has become an international language forces English teachers to prepare constantly. Priyana notes that to learn a foreign language in an effective and efficient way, teachers have to understand the principles of teaching and learning a second language, and also to know how they have to put theories into practice in the classroom (1). Furthermore, Astudillo and Peralta state that the importance of teaching English as a second language is connected with some necessities that students have for getting a foreign language; for that reason, the teacher has to recognize some characteristics of his/her students that influence their learning process, such as age, learner’s differences, and motivation (8).



As we can notice, teaching English must be a concern for all teachers. They have to look for a good methodology in order to make the teaching learning process a success. Since this research is focused on how to develop the listening skill in elementary students through songs, the following are different areas that teachers should enhance with the use of music in the English classroom.

## 2.2 PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPING THE LISTENING SKILL

The following is a list of some common problems in listening.

- **Problems caused by pronunciation**

Cujkova quotes Rixon (n. pag) when he says that the first cause for this problem is "the weak relationship between sound and spelling." It means that there is a great difference between written and spoken language. Even for a native speaker, it is difficult to pronounce words in a right way when meeting them for the first time. Another cause is the "sounds in connected speech." It means that in natural conversations, words are not presented in isolation; for this reason, it is difficult for learners to identify certain words. Finally, an additional problem in pronunciation is produced by "different ways of pronouncing the same sound" (25).

- **Problems caused by the lack of control of a speaker's speech speed**

Cujkova cites Underwood (16) who claims that "" The greatest difficulty with listening comprehension, as opposed to reading comprehension, is that listeners cannot control how quickly a speaker speaks" (26). It means that in a natural conversation, listeners cannot understand the whole speech because some of them are trying to translate into the native language that they forget to pay attention to in the rest of the speech (26).



- **Problems derived from the lack of repetition**

Cujkova refers to Uri (n. pag.) who points out that students need to hear things over and over again in order to have the opportunity to understand the main information (26).

- **Problems caused by listener's limited vocabulary**

The vocabulary limitations is another cause for listening difficulties. This author also cites Underwood (17) who mentions that some people who learn a foreign language usually have a big problem in a natural conversation because sometimes they do not know all the words that the speakers are using. They are worried about translating the different words in their native language. It means that students focus on the language word by word if they miss something; therefore, they feel they are failing and get concerned and stressed (27).

- **Problems derived from the lack of concentration**

Cujkova also mentions Uri (n. pag) who points out that students get tired when they are doing the same listening activity for a long period, as a consequence they find difficult to concentrate. The students' concentration is connected with the topic of the listening. However, even if they find the topic interesting, the big effort they make in order to follow word by word make them more tired (29).

- **Problems caused the lack of visual support**

Finally, Cujkova adds that a good advantage for students to understand the speakers is the way that speakers use or provide the listener with certain non-verbal signs to the meaning such as body movements, facial expressions, and gestures.





## 2.3 LISTENING STAGES

Machackove points out that teachers should keep three important things in mind when they are going to work with listening activities.

- First of all, teachers have to select an adequate listening activity that catches students' interest.
- Second, teachers have to choose a good activity so students can practice the listening skill.
- Finally, the most important thing is to compile a comprehensible lesson (23).

Cujkova cites Rixon (n. pag) and Underwood (n. pag) when they distinguish these phases for "pre-listening, while-listening, and post- listening" (45).

### 2.3.1 PRE- LISTENING STAGE

As we could see before, students consider listening as a difficult skill to acquire; therefore, students are not able to understand the activity without a previous introduction of the topic. For that reason, Cujkova points out that before students practice their listening, they have to know the theme. Then students have to recognize the background of the speakers and some words that they will use (45). In other words, in the pre- listening stage, the students are previously working on what they are going to hear. Also Machackova cites Underwood (n. pag) when he said that "the pre-listening task can consist of a variety of activities, which can help the teacher to focus the students' minds on the topic by narrowing down the things that the learners anticipate to hear and stimulating relevant previous knowledge and already known language" (25).

### 2.3.2 WHILE-LISTENING STAGE

Machackova cites Rixon (n. pag) who claims that during the while-listening stage, students do activities in the course of the listening process. The main objective of these activities is to help students to understand the relevant information of the text (26). Cujkova adds that a principal task of while-listening



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activities is to allow students to identify how the new language sounds in order that they can use it as a model for their speech. This kind of activity is important when developing the listening skill is the objective. Teachers should select cautiously; otherwise, the routine activities can bore the students. Teachers have to contribute with the students (non-native listeners), helping them to use the same skills as they use in listening to their own language (48).

### **2.3.3 POST- LISTENING STAGE**

Cujkova quotes Underwood (74) who points out that “post-listening activities embrace all the work related to a particular listening text (whether recorded or spoken by a teacher) which are done after the listening is completed “(50). The same author also mentions that there are four purposes why teachers provide post- listening activities. The first one is that this kind of activity helps teachers to check if students were able to understand the listening text. A second purpose is to give teachers the opportunity to reflect on why certain students have failed in understanding specific parts of the text. The third purpose of the post- listening stage is that learners can be given a possibility to think about the attitude of the speaker or speakers since this can be found very difficult by the students. Finally, the last purpose of this stage is to broaden students’ knowledge about specific topics. This could be done by a decision making or asking them to express their views (51).

## **2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF SONGS FOR LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

First, it is essential to describe the influence that music has in every person. Geyer cites Phillips (100), when he states that music has natural powers since it can help to vary people’s humor or provide them energy. It happens in all stages of a person’s life from birth to death. Therefore, music has a significant purpose in the process of acquiring and using the native language (n. pag.).



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According to Millington in “Using Songs Effectively to Teach English to Young Learners,” there are many reasons that songs are considered as a valuable pedagogical tool. The most important is that songs can be beneficial if they are used in a fun way since they help to motivate students in the classroom. Furthermore, songs help to develop children listening skills and pronunciation and also, songs are a useful tool in learning vocabulary and sentence structures/patterns (134).

In addition, Al-Mamary cites Orlova (n. pag) who recognizes other advantages of using songs in learning a foreign language. For example, in the classroom, the principal problem that teachers have is how to motivate students to speak in the foreign language; therefore, songs are a useful tool to encourage students to use English. Also, when students listen to a song, they can identify words and meanings without problems if songs are reinforced with pictures and movements. Moreover, songs provide confidence to students in learning a new language (1).

In reference with the use of songs to improve students’ vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar patterns, it is important to describe each one of them.

## 2.5 SONGS TO IMPROVE LISTENING

Reina cites the definition of listening by Oxford (206) as “a complex problem solving skill and it is more than just perception of the sounds. Listening includes comprehension of meaning words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and connected discourse.” Moreover, the author refers to Saricoban (n. pag) when he states that listening is one of the most important skills since through it, people acquire the major amount of their information, their knowledge about world and human issues, their principles, sense of values, and their appreciation (123).



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Sevik states that a person, who learns a foreign language, begins hearing, then talking, and finally reading and writing (328). To support this, the author cites Linse (27) who states that the most important fact to teach listening is that this skill can be the base for the other abilities. Furthermore, the author quotes Linse (27) who refers how language skills are built on listening. “You need to hear a word before you can say it; you need to say a word before you can read it; you need to read a word before you can write it” (330)

Additionally, Sevik cites Saricoban (n. pag.) when he mentions that for students, listening is the way how spoken language develops input. It means that listening is the principal step of learning a second language. This occurs when learners listen to the teacher, listen to a recorder, or simply listen to other students (330). Also, Millington cites Purcell (n. pag) who states that when students try to comprehend the meaning of new words or expressions in context, listening to a conversation or narration again and again tends to bore them. On the other hand, if students listen to the same song over and over again, the learning process can seem less repetitive because of the rhythm and melody (135). Finally, Millington states that songs can be a useful tool to enhance listening skills since “they provide students with practice listening to different forms of intonation and rhythm.” Also Millington cites Murphey (3) who considers that music has the influence to stick itself into our minds, affirming that “songs work on our short-and long-term memory;” therefore, they are a suitable material for working in the classroom (135).

## 2.6 ADVANTAGES OF USING SONGS IN THE CLASSROOM

The most common advantages for students when they are using songs in the classroom are: songs increase knowledge on vocabulary and some grammar patterns, and also students can improve their pronunciation.



## **2.6.1 TEACHING VOCABULARY TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH SONGS**

Chengquian points out that the principal element for learning a language is vocabulary. Although attention is frequently placed on language structure, vocabulary is a major factor as well, perhaps the most important for learning a foreign language. People can read faster and communicate in English only by acquiring a great amount of words. However, the main problem for elementary learners is vocabulary retention (4). Chengqian also agrees to the fact that some students do not have interest in learning vocabulary, and it reduces confidence in learning English, so learners gradually renounce studying a second language. Therefore, it is important that children no longer feel that learning vocabulary is boring (4).

Millington mentions that music offers a good chance for vocabulary training. Songs can be used within a context in teaching new words. It means that songs can be learned based in a specific subject. For example, some songs are used to teach parts of the body, and others help to explain the color names. The majority of children's lyrics are distinguished because they have short words. These words are constantly repeated; therefore, the act of repeating these expressions helps students gain greater knowledge in learning vocabulary (135).

Al-Mamary says that songs provide vocabulary learning to students by repeating chunks of language. Repetition is important since it helps students to remember words. Therefore, songs can become a good technique that can help children keep vocabulary in their minds in order for them to repeat words naturally, although at first they do not understand them (2). It is supported by Chengqian who states that learners can link some words with the music. It helps students to increase their interest in knowing some foreign words (17).



## **2.6.2 TEACHING PRONUNCIATION TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH SONGS**

Pronunciation is another essential sub- skill that is developed in learning a second language. Villalobos states that for a positive communication, it is important that students acquire a good pronunciation when they learn a foreign language. Therefore, learners have to encourage their pronunciation ability to make the learning a new language successfully. Nevertheless, teachers give more importance to other skills because they consider pronunciation the least important ability to include in their classes (99). Also, Villalobos quotes Miyake (n. pag.) when he says that “Pronunciation has been called the Cinderella in ELT (being locked away and out of sight). One criticism about teaching pronunciation refers that it is thought to be boring” (99).

Yanuarsih states that because people do not pronounce the words in the same way, it is difficult to teach pronunciation. This is so because people come from different places and different environments. For these causes, it is difficult for students to express themselves in English since they feel ashamed to pronounce words in a wrong way (n. pag). It is supported by Villalobos who agrees that “students learning English as a second or foreign language might have difficulties in pronunciation depending on their native language and how similar its sounds are to those of the target language” (100).

Geyer points out that to vary the sometimes boring pronunciation in the classroom, it is a good technique to use song and chants in the classroom (3). Yanuarsih adds that a song can be useful in learning pronunciation since it encourages and motivates learners, especially young learners. Furthermore, songs can help students to express their ideas, feelings, and thoughts to other persons in a better way (n. pag.)



## **2.6.3 TEACHING GRAMMAR TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH SONGS**

Smith points out that music has tones, melodies, rhymes, rhythms, and measured expressions, in contrasting with spoken conversation that helps learners to remember grammatical structures and understand the complete meaning easily (76). Also, the author quotes Falioni (101) who states that "The new structures that may seem isolated or out of context in pattern drills, are seen in a different perspective when they are part of a song" (76).

According to Smith, the most important contribution of songs is fluency, since certain songs give themselves to the casual review of grammatical patterns or verb tenses. There is no doubt that songs are beneficial to memorize syntactic constructions because songs help to acquire them more easily rather than grammatical examples. Songs establish reliable language use while supporting syntax (76).

According to Millington, some children's songs contain easy grammatical patterns that can stick in the minds of the students. Songs can be useful to support questions that are taught in the classroom (136). The author also states that frequently, children's songs have short phrases and simple language (136). Furthermore, the author cites Murphey (n. pag) when he states that it is important to note that songs have long pauses after each phrase, which give students the opportunity to process the information in real time. However, teachers should be careful when they choose a song since certain songs have irregular sentence structures that are not commonly use in a real conversation (136).



## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This monographic research is based on literature review since this investigation has bibliographic information. It is also based on field research through an interview to collect major information from an expert who has experience working with children. This information helped to analyze the use and importance of songs in English classroom to support children to enhance listening. It was also elaborated a survey which was applied to some English teachers in order to know the importance that they give to songs in their lessons.

#### **3.1 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The types of sources that were used to collect the information were printed and web material. They were books and articles which were analyzed carefully to support this research work.

#### **3.2 INTERVIEW**

To develop the interview, it was considered many aspects that guided me to obtain relevant information for this topic. Lcdo. Jaime Mejia Peña was the person chosen for the interview; he has a lot of experience working with children. He is the Director of Santiago de Compostela School, and he has been working as an English teacher for about 45 years. For this interview, It was elaborated a questionnaire in which there were included ten questions. They were yes/no questions and Wh- questions. These questions were directed to gather valid information for the research. The purpose was to find out how songs are useful in the classroom to develop the listening skill and how children learn vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar at the same time. This interview was done personally. It took place in the teacher's office. The questions were answered one by one. (see appendix 1)





### 3.3 SURVEY

The survey was another instrument to gather information. It was elaborated and applied with the purpose of knowing how songs are used in English classes, and what importance teachers give to them in the moment of developing the listening skill in children. This survey was applied to ten elementary school English teachers from different institutions, aged from 30 to 50 years old. They have more than five years working with children. They were male and female teachers. The survey was elaborated in English and it had six questions. They were multiple choice questions to find out if teachers really use songs as a part of their lessons, and also to know the importance of songs in listening activities. Another objective of this survey was to know about the ways that teacher uses to teach the songs. Each question has some options and teachers had to choose the best answer for them. After that each school principal gave the corresponding permission, the English teacher of each institution received the necessary explanations about the questions. (see appendix 2)



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

In the interview was used a qualitative method because the answers explained the importance of songs in learning a foreign language.

Furthermore, it was used the quantitative method, so the answers were ranked according to their importance, from the most to the least important. The survey's results were tabulated to show the high and low scoring items.

This analysis has shown us that this topic is valid for future research.

#### 4.1 INTERVIEW

This interview was established to find out more details on the influence of songs in teaching listening and how it can help in my research. Teacher Mejia agreed that songs can influence in the development of the listening skills, especially in children since music is an important tool in the classroom. He also said that it is better to teach a song within a context; however, it is not necessary that children learn the whole song; three or four lines are enough for them. Songs are a very good strategy to maintain the discipline in the classroom. Mr. Mejia stated that to teach a song, it is necessary to spend several sessions until students get familiarized with it. But the teacher also mentioned that teachers have to know the song perfectly in order to transmit a feeling of security to pupils. However, he also noted that translating a word into Spanish is a bad idea since it becomes an obstacle to teach vocabulary to children. Mr. Mejia argued that all songs are not adequate for all children; teachers have to use songs according to the level of the children. Mr. Mejia said that songs should be used for about 10 minutes of the whole lesson. Through songs children acquire knowledge about vocabulary, grammar structure, and pronunciation. Nevertheless, the teacher emphasized that songs are only a support to teach grammar since pupils have to learn certain grammatical rules. Finally, he agreed



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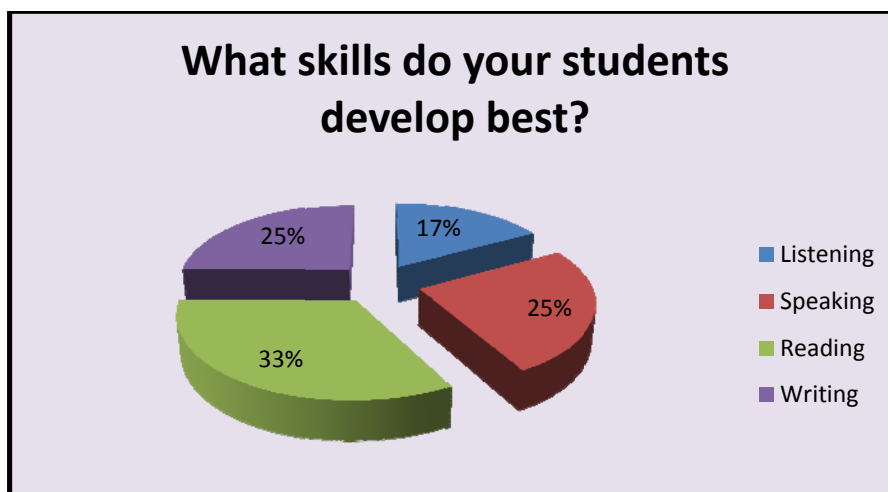
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that songs are a good strategy to be used in the classroom, mainly in the enhancement of the listening skill if they are used constantly in the classroom.

As a conclusion, we can see that definitely songs are a powerful tool to develop the listening skill in children. Also, this interview shows us that through songs, the teacher can maintain a productive and positive environment in the classroom. In addition, it was important to find out that songs are not effective for all ages, so that children have to use songs according to the children's levels. (see appendix 3)

### 4.2 SURVEY

The survey was another way to collect information about the use of songs in the classroom to develop the listening skill in children. The following graphics shows the results of each question.



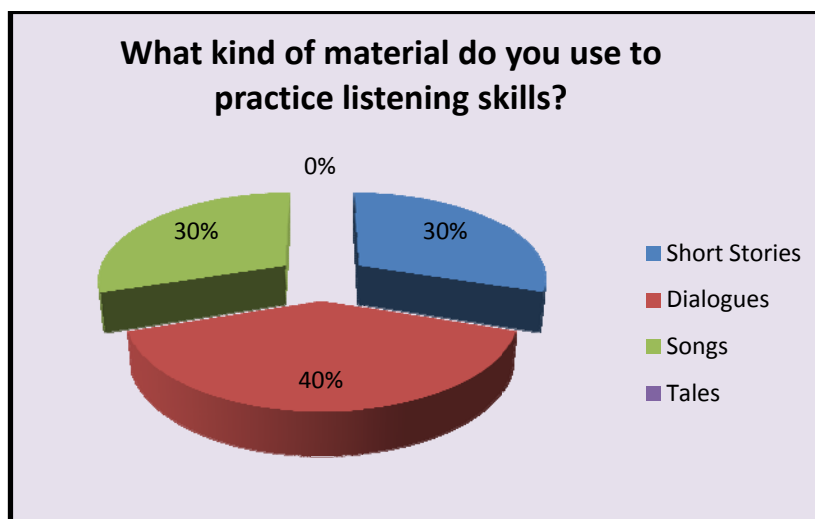
The graph above shows the result of the first question. As it can be seen, 33% of the polled teachers agreed that speaking is the skill that their students develop most in contrast with the rest of the abilities. It can also be seen that listening is in the lowest range of this survey with only 17% percent of teachers



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reporting that students have developed their ability to hear better than the other skills. It means that teachers must use a different method to raise students' interest in listening activities in order for them to improve their listening skill.



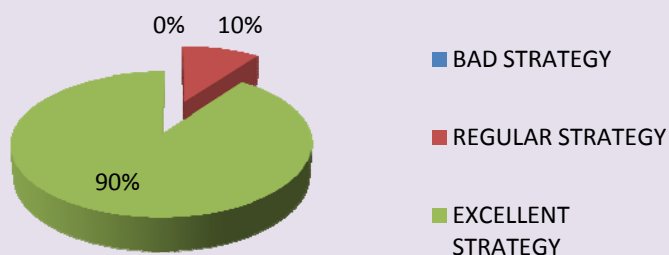
This time, according with the second question, the results presented in this graphic show that most of the teachers (40%) use dialogues in their classroom to practice listening. On the other hand, both songs and short stories have 30%. Although dialogues are the most-used technique, there is not much difference with the use of songs in the classroom. It means that songs are used by teachers as a part of their class routine.



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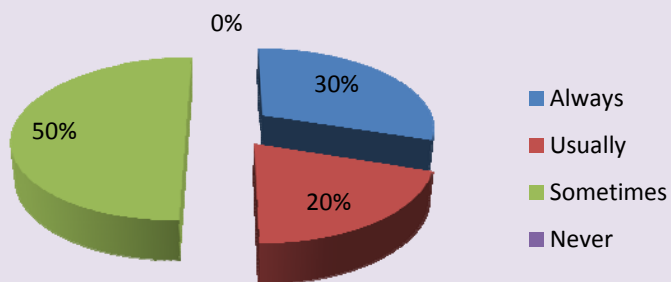
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### What do you think about the use of songs to develop the listening skills?



In this graphic, it can be appreciated that 90% of teachers consider songs as an excellent strategy to be used in the classroom, and only 1 teacher that corresponds the 10% stated that listening is a regular strategy to help children to develop their listening skill.

### How frequently do you use songs in your regular lessons?



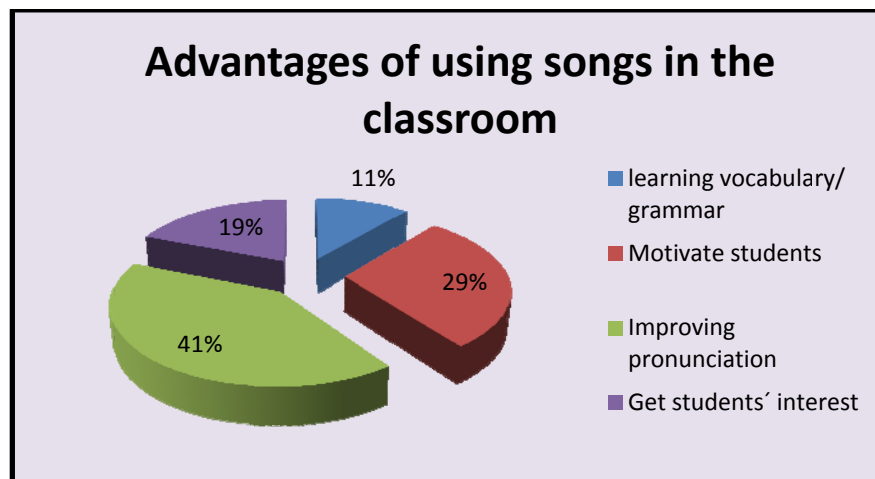
According to the gathered information, only 30% of teachers “always” use songs in their classes, while 50% of them “sometimes” use songs. It is a little contradictory because as it could be seen in graphic number four, most teachers



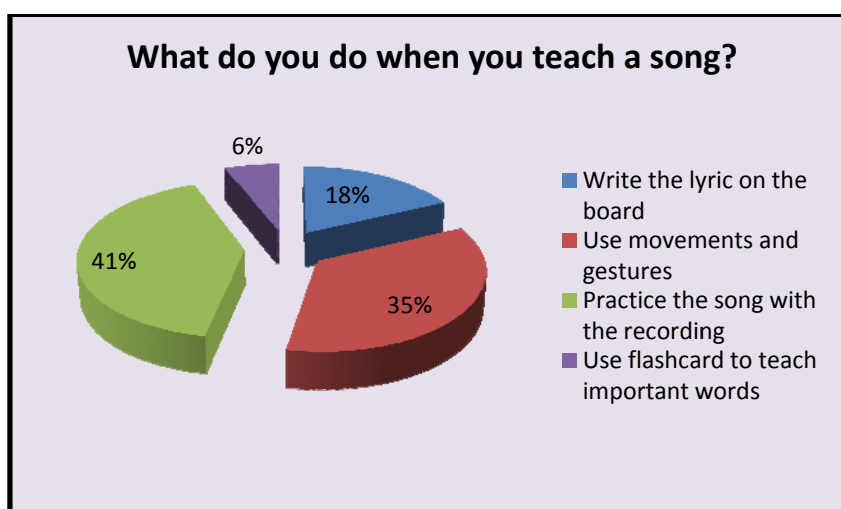
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considered songs as an excellent strategy to be used in the classroom; however, only 30% of the interviewed teachers use songs constantly in their listening activities.



According to the question that refers about the advantages of using songs in the classroom, this graphic shows that 41% of teachers agree that songs are a useful way to improve learners' pronunciation, while 29% of them think that songs are a good motivation tool for children. Meanwhile 11% of teachers agreed that learning vocabulary and grammar are not considered advantages when using songs in the classroom.





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Finally, it can be noticed that the most useful way for teachers to practice songs is with the recordings. The graphic shows that 41% of teachers agreed with this answer; however, the 35% of interviewed teachers also used movements and gestures as a good way to present a song to the students; while 18% write the song lyrics on the board. Only the 6% of teachers use flashcards to introduce the songs to the students.

This survey demonstrates that songs are part of a lesson, but teachers do not give much importance, especially to the enhancement of listening skill in children, since they are not used constantly. Teachers are conscious about the importance of songs; they know that songs are a powerful tool of motivation for children, in order they are involved in the learning process. Moreover, it is interesting to know that teachers use the tape recorder to teach a song; however, teachers should look for another way to present songs to their pupils in order the development of listening skill to become successfully.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 CONCLUSIONS**

- From the quantitative and qualitative information, it could be seen that listening plays an important role in the educational process because it is considered as the first stage of language learning. Therefore, the importance of the listening skill seems to have a main concern in teaching English to young learners related to the others skills such as speaking, reading, and writing. The reason for this fact is that the listening skill is commonly studied as a receptive skill; however, it is not a passive activity, so children must be actively involved in listening activities.
- The main technique that will guide students to express themselves in a foreign language in a right way is through the use of adequate recorded sources, and if they are used appropriately, they will offer a rich input for any person who wants to learn a language. Listening activities in class should go together with visual images and physical motions. For this purpose, when songs are selected carefully and implemented consciously, they easily offer such opportunities. The use of songs as listening activities provides young learners with a sufficient amount of input and interaction since they are learning and enjoying at the same time.
- Songs can be used as a beneficial resource in the English classroom since they provide both students and teacher opportunities to generate a good atmosphere and connection among them. Additionally, songs are an excellent way for children to improve vocabulary and pronunciation. Also, they have the chance to acquire knowledge about some grammatical patterns during the learning process. This is because young





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learners are working with authentic material. Therefore, it is possible to say that songs in the classroom are the most important tool that brings great results during the teaching-learning process.

- Singing a song is one of the most effective language learning strategies that most teachers should use. However, if songs are presented in an ineffective and insignificant way, they definitely become boring for the students, and they lose interest in their class activities. Thus, the obligation of the teacher is to know how songs could be well incorporated into the lesson. Although there are different ways to present a song to young learners, this investigation was focused on the most common ways that is through the three stages: pre- listening, while- listening, and post- listening.



## • 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

After having gathered all the information about the use of songs to improve the listening skills in elementary school students, it is important to recommend that besides working only with textbooks and whiteboard, there are additional resources that can be used in the classroom. Songs are one of these supporting materials, so they must be used more frequently by the teacher since songs are a good complement in the English lesson.

Moreover, it is necessary to recommend teachers that when they are going to work with songs, they must select the appropriate one, always taking into account their content. It means that teachers must choose the song according to the students' interests and also according to the topic, so children can understand what they are learning.

Finally, nowadays it is easy to find a great variety of songs in our environment. However, teachers should be able to select the correct ones to teach children in a better way. Therefore, teachers could use a good guide, just like the one I have prepared in my work. (see appendix 4)



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# APPENDICES



## APPENDIX 1

### QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

**The following questions were made in order to get valuable information for my research work.**

1. - Do you think that songs can influence in the development of children's listening skill?
2. - Do you work with songs in your classroom routine? How?
3. - What are your strengths and weakness using songs in the classroom?
4. - Children like listen to songs. How can teachers use songs in an EFL class and not lose the class control?
5. - Tell me about which are the different songs that you use in your classroom and how students response to them?
6. - When you work with songs as a task in your class. What do you do after, during, and before the activity?
7. - I know that it is possible to teach vocabulary on the basis of English songs. What do you think about it?
8. - Do you think that songs are more effective to teach grammar structures and pronunciation than memorization in isolation? Explain
- 9.-Does songs help teachers maintain a positive and productive environment in the classroom? Explain
10. –Finally, what is your opinion about the using of songs in the classroom? Are really useful?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**



## APPENDIX 2

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO ANALIZE THE INFLUENCE OF SONGS TO IMPROVE THE LISTENING SKILL IN ELEMENTAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

This questionnaire will be applied to English Teachers of Elementary Schools.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please, be honest with your answers

#### 1) What skills your students develop best?

- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Speaking
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Writing

#### 2) What kind of material do you use for practice listening skills?

- ☐ Stories
- ☐ Dialogues
- ☐ Songs
- ☐ Tales

#### 3) What do you think about the use of song to develop the listening skills?

- ☐ It is a bad strategy
- ☐ It is a good strategy
- ☐ It is an excellent strategy

#### 4) How frequently do you use songs in your English lessons?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Usually
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never





**5) What are the advantages of using songs in the classroom?**

- ☐ Students learn vocabulary and grammar
- ☐ Motivate students in the classroom
- ☐ Students improve their pronunciation
- ☐ Increase students' interest in the lesson

**6) What do you do when you teach a song to your students?**

- ☐ Write the lyrics on the board
- ☐ Use movements and gestures
- ☐ Sing the song without the recording
- ☐ Practice the song with the recording
- ☐ Use flashcard to teach important words from the song

**Thank you for your cooperation!**



### APPENDIX 3

#### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

I: Good Morning! What is your name?

T: Good Morning! My name is Jaime Mejia

#### **1. - Do you think that songs can influence in the development of children's listening skill?**

I think that songs are really important for children because they are listening all the time, not only in English lessons. Music is in all parts. We can find it in any television or radio advertising, so when any person including children is listening, they try to recognize certain patrons until they can identify some words from the songs. However, it is important to mention that songs are more useful if they are used within a context. I am referring for example when I am teaching an x topic, for example animals, I prefer to use a song, in which animals being mention. But I want to explain that songs should be known by students before because it is little difficult to teach a song and work with it at the same time. Moreover it is not important that children know the whole song. It is better to teach them the two or three lines of the songs because it's too hard for them to learn a complete songs.

#### **2. - Do you work with songs in your classroom routine? How?**

Yes, I do I work with songs definitely. I have a pamphlet with many children songs. I use the same song in every lesson until the students learn it, therefor I try to teach a song to children as soon as possible. I spent almost fifteen days to teach "The Jingle Bell" to my students but only the first four lines. It is difficult especially with the first and second levels because English songs have strange sound for them so it is important at first they familiarize with this sounds. I use songs principally for relaxing and motivation. Songs help to maintain discipline in the classroom because children love to sing.



### **3. - What are your strengths and weakness using songs in the classroom?**

My principal strength is that I know the song perfectly. It is important to be familiar with each word of the song and thus I can transmit the song to my students in a correct way. Other strength is that I never translate any word of the song into Spanish, I prefer to use synonyms or pictures to teach an unknown word and thus the children learn a new vocabulary at the same time. A teacher must become in a comic or an actress to can interpret the songs in an enjoyable manner to avoid the monotony in the classroom. Teaching a song demonstrates ability because you know how to use the song, the subject, the resources, etc.

### **4. - Children like listen to songs. How can teachers use songs in an EFL class and not lose the class control?**

All children loves sing a song, for that reason is strange that a child doesn't pay attention to the lesson. It could be because he/she is sick or has serious problems at home. According with your questions if a teacher is secured about his/her knowledge in the song; it is impossible to lose the class control. Also it is important mention that while children are doing another activity such as paint, cut, or draw teacher should repeat the song. You can give rhythm to everything in the classroom; you are the responsible of your classes so that you can work in the way that you prefer. For example when you work with songs you could adapt the lyrics of any song to the rhythm of another. In my classes when I find a child who is not paying attention I try to sing the song with him or her and thus I get that the child incorporate to the activity again.

### **5. - Tell me about which are the different songs that you use in your classroom and how students response to them?**

We can get much kind of songs, but it is important to know what songs are really useful for your lesson. Your songs must be according with the topic in which you are working on, but don't forget that songs should be according with the level of the students. You can't teach the same song a child who is in fifth



level than a child who is in second level. Don't worry at the moment to use songs in your classes since children love to sing and be sure that they will enjoy your classes.

**6. - When you work with songs as a task in your class. What do you do before, during, and after the activity?**

Ok. The use of songs is part of teacher's obligation. English teachers have to use song every day in the classroom. A teacher who does not make children sing is a boring teacher. However, when I work with songs; before the activity I draw on the board, or point out some flash cards trying to explain the content of the songs to my students. I am conscious that children especially those of the lower grades don't read neither write; for this reason I try to give a little introduction before I use the songs in the classroom, but be aware, a song cannot take place in a complete hour of the class. It set up as an introductory resource for the classes; and spends about 10 minutes of each English lesson. It is the starting point for the rest of the lesson.

**7. - I know that it is possible to teach vocabulary on the basis of English songs. What do you think about it?**

It is true, children not only learn vocabulary through songs they also learn pronunciation, grammar structures, intonation, etc. when children are listening a song they are memorizing certain words, it is because they repeat constantly these words until they stick in their minds. Besides songs provides many possibilities for continuous repetition and revising as an important mechanism of the language acquisition.

**8. - Do you think that songs are more effective to teach grammar structures and pronunciation than memorization in isolation? Explain**

I think that grammar structures are not learning through listening songs; for me the use of songs are only supports to teach grammar. I think that to clarify



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grammar structures is necessary to explain children rules. It's true that children can memorize certain patterns; however through songs they are not able to understand certain general grammatical rules; so that I think that it is necessary to teach students rules, in order they memorize them. But if you find a good song that includes the grammatical structure that you are teaching will be excellent. For example if you are working with the present continues you can use the song "Are you sleeping", this song is very interesting to work in grammar structure and at the same time you can work with substitution drill. For example instead of use the verb "sleeping" you can use for example "eating". On the other hand, I agree that a good pronunciation is acquired by using songs. Practicing pronunciation through songs is mostly funny and very effective.

### **9. - Does music help teachers maintain a positive and productive environment in the classroom? Explain**

I think so, music is an effective tool to increase children's attention; songs are an effective method to maintain a positive and productive classroom environment. Because when you use songs in your classroom routine you motivate to your students to develop interest in the new language. However, it is important to clarify that songs should be teaching in an enthusiastic way and thus the teacher can transmit confidence and interest for the lesson.

### **10. - Finally what is your opinion about the using of songs in the classroom? Are really useful?**

Songs are a fundamental tool in the development of lessons especially to enhance listening in children. When a teacher not uses songs in their classroom as a part of his/her routine I considered him/her as a bad teacher since songs can become a power element to work with children. We can find many types of songs however we should realize which of them are really useful in the classroom. Actually English teachers are the only responsible to provide children



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an effective learning process; especially if they make songs as a complement of teaching.



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## APPENDIX 4

# BOOKLET



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# SONG FORCHILDREN



# BOOKLET





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## INTRODUCTION

In this booklet I compile some children songs that can be used in the English classroom. Also I am going to describe some activities that teachers can develop before, during, and after to teach the song to young learners.

The songs that are included in this booklet are the following:

- Five Brown Teddies
- Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes
- Sing a rainbow
- Fivecurrantbuns



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# FIVE BROWN TEDDIES





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## FIVE BROWN TEDDIES

Five brown teddies sitting on a wall

Five brown teddies sitting on a wall

And if one brown teddy should accidentally fall

There'd be four brown teddies sitting on a wall

Four brown teddies sitting on a wall

Three brown teddies sitting on a wall

Two brown teddies sitting on a wall

And if one brown teddy should accidentally fall

There'd be three brown teddies sitting on a wall

One brown teddy sitting on a wall

One brown teddy sitting on a wall

And if one brown teddy should accidentally fall

There'd be no brown teddies sitting there at all

## LANGUAGE GOALS

- Vocabulary
- Numbers
- Verbs
- There is/ There are

## MATERIALS

- Toys Flashcards
- Numbers Flashcards
- Teddies
- CD recorder
- "Five Brown Teddies" Song
- Circle papers of different sizes
- Paints
- Glue
- Elastic



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# PRE- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

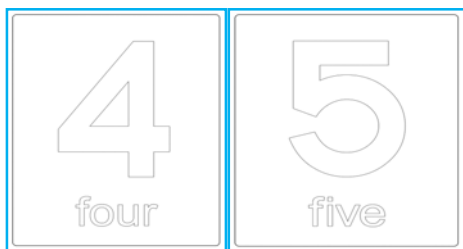
**ACTIVITY 1** Ask *What would you like for your birthday?*

This question helps to introduce new toy vocabulary using flashcards or real objects (doll, car, ball, teddy bear, and train).



**ACTIVITY 2** Now, sticks numbers flashcards on the board and count with the class from 1 to 5.





**ACTIVITY 3** Put the toy flashcards below each number and asks the class:

*How many toys are there?* Count together and say *There are five toys.*

After that, remove the toy and number flashcards one by one starting from five. Then, ask *How many toys there are?* Until all flashcards are gone.

**ACTIVITY 4** Students have to familiarize with the song, so take a teddy bear and ask: *What is this? Is it a ball? Is it a car?* Try the students produce the answer and confirm: *Yes, it is a teddy.*

Then put five teddies in a row and ask *How many teddies there are?* Count with the class in order to demonstrate that there are five teddies.

## WHILE- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Tell the students that they are going to listen to a song. Tell them that in the song there are numbers included. They have to pay attention to them, and each time they hear a number, they will have to show the number with their fingers.

**ACTIVITY 1** Play the song “Five Brown Teddies” and sing it motivating the children to pronounce the important words. They have to focus only on numbers.

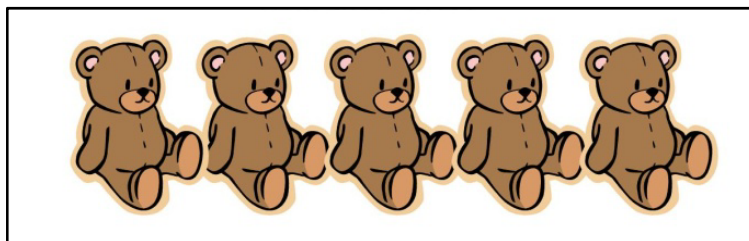
**ACTIVITY 2** Concentrate on the real teddies and put them in a row and ask the class *How many teddies there are?* Request the children to say the



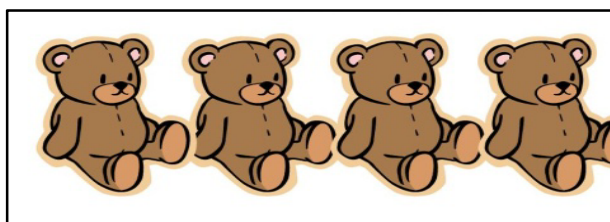
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number and represent it with their fingers. Then say:  
**five brown teddies sitting on the wall.**



Take one away and ask again: **How many teddies are there?** Count with the students and say **Four brown teddies sitting on the wall.** Keep up the activity until there is not any teddy at all.



**ACTIVITY 3** Play the song once again. Sing along and be sure that this time students perform the some actions using the verbs sit and fall.

## POST- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

**ACTIVITY 1** Group work. Children form groups of five. They have to create their own teddy mask. Provide students with necessary materials.



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**ACTIVITY 2** Ask one group to come to the front of the class and sit in a row. Children have to wear their masks in order to imagine they are teddies. Explain that they are going to represent the song while the rest of the class sings the song and shows the numbers with their fingers at the same time. The activity lasts until every teddy falls. Finally, thanks the group and ask another group to come to the front.

### HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES, AND TOES





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### HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES AND TOES

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes,

Knees and toes

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes

Knees and toes

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose,

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes,

Knees and toes



### LANGUAGE GOALS

- Vocabulary (BodyParts)

### MATERIALS

- Bodypartsflashcards
- CD recorder
- Song "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes."

## PRE-LISTENING ACTIVITIES

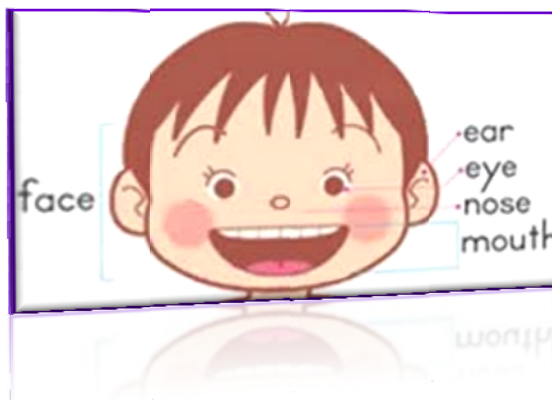
**ACTIVITY 1** Revise vocabulary using different parts of the body flashcards. First of all, use the face flashcards to review face parts with the students.



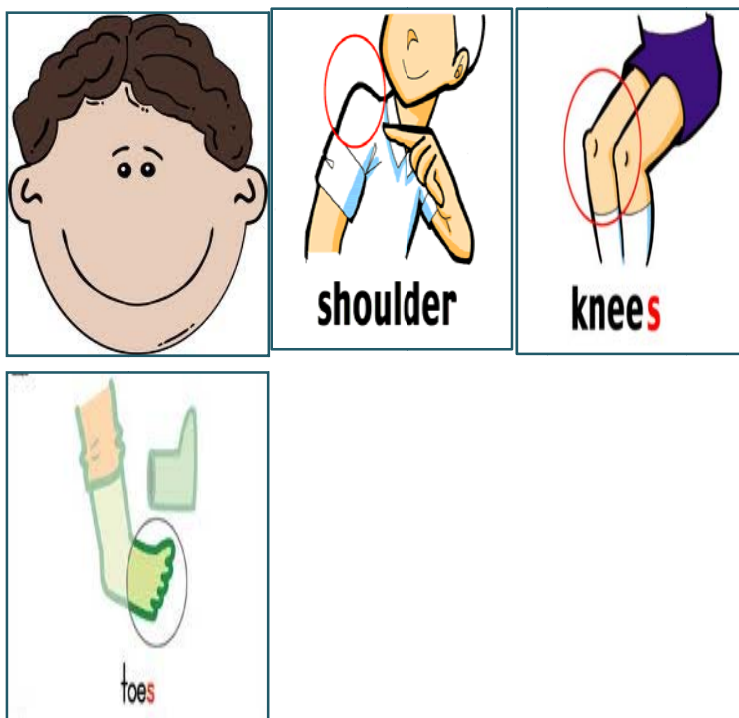


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Now, add to the learned head flashcards other ones about head, shoulders, knees, and toes. Then stick all flashcards on the board.



**ACTIVITY 2** When the students feel comfortable with the new vocabulary, you have to play a game. This game is called “Simon says”. It could be with a difficult. You can use your own body for this activity; you have to say a



word that refers a body part while you touch another part to make the game more interesting.



## WHILE- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

**ACTIVITY 1** Tell the students that they are going to hear a song in which the different body parts are includes, and when they listen to a word that refers to a body part, the students have to point to the correct flashcard on the board.

Reproduce the song, pay attention, and point to the flashcard on the board.

**ACTIVITY 2** Ask the students to stand up and inform them that they have to perform the actions of the song by touching some parts of their body.



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Perform the first part of the song as an example for the children. Do it slowly at first, and then speed the movements according to the rhythm of the song. Sing the first part of the song and do the actions at the same time. Break the song and repeat the different body parts that the students hear in the song. Do the same thing with the second part of the song.

**ACTIVITY 3** Sing the whole song accompanied with actions. Monitor if any student has difficulty performing the activity in order for you can help him or he



## POST-LISTENING ACTIVITIES

After you have taught your children about the body parts, try the following game as a review of the lesson.



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**ACTIVITY 1** Draw a person's face with all the parts you have taught. Point to a part and ask the students **What is it?** If they are correct, erase that part, if the students are wrong, leave it there. Continue with the activity until all the face parts have been erased.

FACE



The students find this activity interesting since they will try to say the correct word until the person's face is completely gone from the board.

**ACTIVITY 2** Give the students a sheet of paper with different body word scrambled, the students have to identify each one and write them in the correct order.

Body Worksheets  
Body Word Scramble

Look at each body part picture and unscramble the letters and write the name of the body part on the line provided.

|   |  |
|---|--|
|  nahd<br>_____ |  are<br>_____   |
|  yee<br>_____  |  otof<br>_____  |
|  soen<br>_____ |  uthom<br>_____ |



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## SING A RAINBOW



### LANGUAGE GOALS

- Vocabulary (Colors)
- Weather

### MATERIALS

- Colors flashcards
- Sunny and Rainy weather flashcards
- Rainbow picture
- CD recorder
- "Sing a Rainbow" song
- Coloring pictures
- Crayons



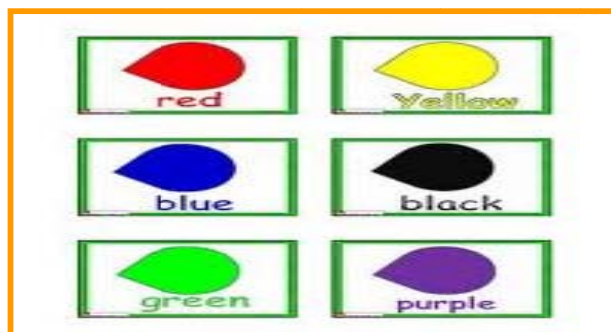
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## PRE-LISTENING ACTIVITIES

**ACTIVITY 1** Use color flashcards to teach vocabulary to children.



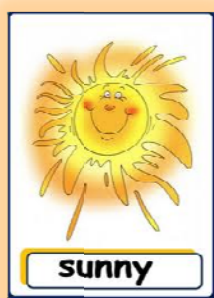


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**ACTIVITY 2** Activate students' knowledge, saying a color and asking the children to point to the things of that color they can see in the classroom. Then point to an item and request students to say the color. Be sure that students feel secure with the pronunciation.

**ACTIVITY 3** Introduce the notion of the song. Show the students a sunny-weather flashcard. Point to the sun and say *It is sunny*. Then show the rainy-weather flashcard and say *It is rainy*.



After that, hold up the rainy-weather flashcard and ask: *Is it sunny?* Get the right answer and say: *No, it is rainy*.

Now, show the flashcards together and say: *It is sunny and It is rainy*. Then stick the pictures on the board. After that, show a rainbow made by you, stick it on the board for the children to look at.





Explain that there is a rainbow and make an arc with your arms. The purpose of this activity is that students can understand that a rainbow appears when you have sun and rain at the same time

## WHILE- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Explain to the students that in the song “Sing a Rainbow” they are going to hear different colors. Tell them listen to the song carefully because they have to tell you the colors they hear afterwards.

**ACTIVITY 1** Play the song and let students listen and enjoy it. After that, ask students about the colors they could hear in the song. When a student says the color, stick the right color flashcard on the board. Put the pictures in a different order from the colors of the song.

**ACTIVITY 2** Play the song again. Ask the students to point to the flashcard on the board while they hear the song. At this time, put the flashcards that the children have identified in the same order as the colors appear in the song. Finally, point to the rainbow picture and ask the children *What is it?* and make the semicircle shape using your arms and say *I can sing a rainbow!* Make the arc as you say rainbow. Say it again in order the children can recognize the word and the action.





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# POST-LISTENING ACTIVITIES

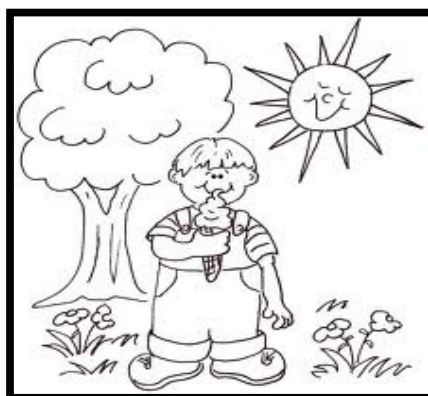
Choose one coloring page that you think your children like most, write on the top of the page the phrase “Follow the Leader,” and print out enough copies for each student, plus one for yourself.

Now, explain the children about what “Follow the Leader” means.

**ACTIVITY 1** Tell the students that you are the leader today and that you are going to ask them to follow directions. Give a copy of the picture and crayons to each student. Tell them to listen and watch carefully to follow directions exactly. Then give verbal, written, or visual directions.

Finally, when you finish the activity, ask the students to hold up their drawings and compare it to yours.

## FOLLOW THE LEADER



**ACTIVITY 2** Give the students a sheet of paper with some color, they have to identify each one and match with the correct name.






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Word Recognition - Colors

Look at the words and the blocks of color below. Draw a line to match each color name with the block of color.

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| red    |  |
| blue   |  |
| green  |  |
| yellow |  |

## FIVE CURRANT BUNS





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## FIVE CURRANT BUNS

Five currant buns in a baker's shop

Round and fat

With a sugar on the top

Along came a boy with a penny one day

Bought a currant bun and took it away

Four currant buns...

Three currant buns...

Two currant buns...

One currant bun in a baker's shop

Round and fat with sugar on the top

Along came a boy with a penny one day

Bought the currant bun and took it away.

## LANGUAGE GOALS

- Food (Fruits)
- Numbers
- How many
- There are/ is

## MATERIALS

- Food flashcards (banana, apples, pears, pineapples, oranges)
- Baker's shop flashcards (optional)
- CD recorder
- "Five Currant buns" song

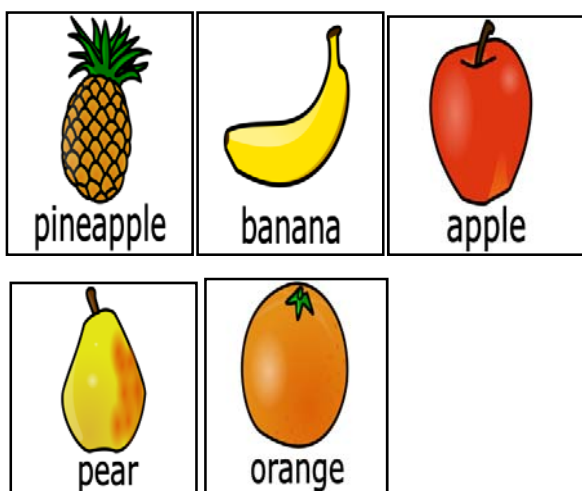


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# PRE- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

**ACTIVITY 1** The teacher must use flashcards to introduce vocabulary to the students.



**ACTIVITY 2** Draw a simple currant bun and mention what it is. You can say *mmmm: I like currant buns!!!* Draw four more currant buns and say *how many currant buns there are?*

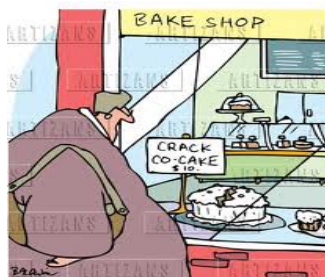


Explain that students would find the currant buns in the baker's shop.  
Draw a picture of it.



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Ask how many currant buns and count together. Then confirm there are *five currant buns in a baker's shop*. Next, say *with sugar on the top*. Make sure that students understand the sugar word by making mime powdering sugar on the top of something with your hand.

Tell the students that you need money to buy currant buns, so explain what penny means.

## WHILE- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

**ACTIVITY 1** Tell the students that they are going to hear a song. Tell them that there are numbers in the song, and motivate to listen out for them. Every time they hear a number, they should hold up their fingers to show it.

**ACTIVITY 2** Play the song for the children while they show their fingers for the numbers.



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**ACTIVITY 3** When the song finishes look at the currant buns on the board again. Ask, *How many currant buns?* Count together and tell the children to hold up their fingers as they say the number. Agree and say: *Five! Five currant buns in a baker's shop.* Take away one and ask: *How many currant buns?* Count with the children and say, *Four! Four currant buns in a baker's shop.* Continue with this activity until you have erased all currant buns.

**ACTIVITY 4** Play the song again and sing along, encouraging the children to sing, too. Each time the verse ends, erase one of the buns on the board.

Teach the action of the song

## POST- LISTENING ACTIVITIES

Put the food flashcards previously taught on the board. Take one and say: *Bananas. I like bananas. I've got bananas in my shop.*

**ACTIVITY 1** Tell the children to choose one of the fruit, and ask them to draw the figure five times. Now the children should use their food drawings for a role play.

**ACTIVITY 2** Demonstrate the activity with five volunteers. Say: *I've got bananas in my shop.* Count the bananas with the class. The volunteers should come one by one and say, *One banana, please.* Mime the exchange of money and goods. Both shop man and customer say Thank you.



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In groups of six, they take it in turns to be the shop man. Then five successive customers come and buy the products, until all the products are sold.