

I Got the Rhythm

A CLEL Bell Award Book for SING

by Connie Schofield-Morrison; illustrated by Frank Morrison

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From storefront to sidewalk to park, an exuberant girl rejoices in the sounds and music she hears during a busy city day. Her actions show children how to listen closely to the world around them. The story's rhythmic language and rhyming words help build phonological awareness skills.

Activity Ideas for *I Got the Rhythm*:

- Make simple instruments with children, for example: empty oatmeal containers make wonderful drums, paper towel rolls can be pretend trumpets, pan lids can be cymbals, and for older preschoolers, rubber bands can be stretched across an open shoe box to be strummed. March and dance using the instruments to keep the beat and rhythm. Share nonfiction books about the orchestra with the children, making note of the names of all the instruments and comparing the pictures to the ones the children make. Children will learn how instruments can work together to create music. The more background knowledge children gain about the world around them, the easier it will be for them to understand and make connections with what they read.
- After you read *I Got the Rhythm* with the children, help them make observations about what they see in the pictures as the girl moves through her neighborhood: streets and signs and trees and buildings. Take a walk around the block with the children and talk about what they see in their own neighborhood. Do they see the same things? Different things? Making connections between their own lives and the books that they read helps children build comprehension skills and motivates them to keep reading.
- Have a dance party! Select music of various genres and speeds and surprise the children when you turn them on. Ask them to dance and move while the music is playing, and to freeze when the music stops. Following instructions while playing games helps develop children's executive function skills, such as planning, waiting, and self-control. These skills play a part in learning how to read by increasing children's ability to resist distraction and focus on a task.

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org> and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.



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