

# THE ENRICHMENT PROJECT

Badge Program

larajla.com



## Action Songs

*It's time to get up and move! You don't have to be the best singer to have fun. Sometimes, your actions may take your whole body, but action songs can also include fingerplays and sign language.*

## ACTION SONGS

### Steps

#### PREPARATION

##### 1. Tunes and actions.

Before you can teach it, you need to know it. You can find videos and instructions online to help you learn songs or refresh your memory. A few links can be found in "Sites to Explore" to start your adventure.

To help your search, check out the Enrichment Project provided supplement *SUPP\_Action Songs Sheets.pdf*. It has the words plus actions for about 20 songs.

##### 2. Song list.

If you are working an event, meeting or class, make sure you have a song list ready to go.

To determine your song list, review these factors:

- Age of audience
- Attention span of audience
- Length of time you need to fill
- Area you have to move in

You will also want to choose slower songs at the beginning and end to warm up and cool down. The middle should feature really moving tunes!

If you're planning an event with multiple activities, quieter songs also help signal the audience that you're passing the leadership role on to the next person.

##### 3. Change the words.

As songs are shared, the words are frequently changed. If you find lyrics that are not what you normally use, adjust the materials you find online to match what you already know. You do not want to be tripping over unfamiliar words or turns of phrase while you're singing with others.

##### 4. Note cards.

Create your own cheat sheets or note cards to help cue you to words or actions. You can design these for your own use or for others helping you.

Take one of your songs and create cards. Try doing the song with and without them. Decide if you need to provide the cards to your participants as well.

You may want to come up with a way for your audience to participate with the cards like handing them out so each person has a card and leads the action. This gives your audience a sense of ownership and encourages cooperation.



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#### 5. **Practice.**

While this step sounds like a “no brainer”, don’t convince yourself that you’ve sung your song(s) enough that you’ll remember the lyrics, tune and actions on the spot. I have had people ask me to go over a song I previously shared only to forget a part. It’s very confusing for your audience if you’re adding things in that you “forgot” and backtracking to that spot.

Watch yourself in the mirror when you are practicing your songs. If you don’t like what you see, change it before you share with your audience.

#### 6. **Record it.**

To allow you to practice, recordings help. This may be a file you downloaded from YouTube, a recording you made at an event or even yourself singing the song. Explore creating and playing recordings of songs.

#### 7. **Song sheets.**

Prepare song sheets for your audience. Depending on the age of your audience, you may want to hand these out before you start or afterwards. Giving the sheets out before starting may help your audience follow the words. They may spend more time looking at the pages than paying attention to you while you’re showing the gestures or working on the tune that goes with the words. This choice will depend on you.

### HELLO, AUDIENCE!

#### 8. **Be enthusiastic and confident.**

If you’re excited about sharing a song, they’ll be excited too! Your audience will pick up on your emotions. Smile. Relax. Have fun! If you’ve practiced and made your cards, you’ll look more confident and that will also be conveyed to your audience.

#### 9. **Start with a song they know.**

Starting out with a success boosts their confidence. They’ll be more willing to try new songs if they’re already on their feet and enjoying themselves.

#### 10. **Signals.**

Create signals to stand up, start singing, etc. People who are not paying close attention or are too far away to see your subtle physical clues will appreciate you raising your hands above your head to ask them to stand up.

#### 11. **Keep it slow.**

When you’re teaching a completely new song, keep it slow and repeat your actions enough so that everyone gets them. If you have someone struggling, pair them up with someone who grasps the song and actions quickly.

#### 12. **Keep old favorites handy.**

If your audience has a favorite, keep it handy in case someone really wants to do it. You may be tired of singing a particular song, but they may not be.

#### 13. **Be willing to share.**

If someone knows a song and wants to share, step back. Let them take the lead. Don’t confuse your audience with multiple leaders. Instead, focus on your group and the person leading. You’ll be able to tell by their body language when it’s time for you to take back the lead.

Always thank other volunteers for helping out. If the song is not one you have, ask your volunteer for a copy of the song or a place you can find it on the Web so you can include it in your personal songbook.



#### 14. **Contact information.**

Make sure you give your audience a way to contact you. They may try to do an action song on their own and need encouragement, may have lost materials, etc. They may even want you to come and sing with them again!

Also, getting their contact information allows you to forward on any additional recommendations made by the audience or share dates with them when you'll be singing again.

#### 15. **Adding your own actions.**

Sometimes teaching a new song is difficult. Adding a few actions can help be a memory trigger. At this point, you're now creating an action for a song that didn't have one before. As you listen to songs, think about what actions you could add to help share the song.

#### 16. **Finding a partner.**

If you're uncomfortable doing action songs or you are doing a very large event, find a partner(s) may be the answer. Often, young people will volunteer to help you teach others songs. Placing additional volunteers in different areas will allow you to work with a larger audience. Remember, if you have partners, you'll need to practice even more so you're all doing the same thing.

#### 17. **Share.**

Share your favorite links and songs with others so we can benefit from each other's collections.

### **Supplements**

SUPP\_Action Songs Sheets.pdf

*Song sheets with lyrics and actions*

### **Sites to Explore**

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) (search for "action songs for children with lyrics")

[www.boyscoutstrail.com/song\\_search.asp](http://www.boyscoutstrail.com/song_search.asp)

[julianmorgan.tripod.com/id2.html](http://julianmorgan.tripod.com/id2.html)

[dragon.sleepdeprived.ca/songbook/songs3/songs3.htm](http://dragon.sleepdeprived.ca/songbook/songs3/songs3.htm)

[songsforteaching.com/movement.htm](http://songsforteaching.com/movement.htm)

[www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/songs.aspx](http://www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/songs.aspx)

[www.scoutsongs.com/categories/action-songs.html](http://www.scoutsongs.com/categories/action-songs.html)

***Check out [larajla's](http://larajla.com) Enrichment Project to start your own adventure.***