**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: How many classes are in a semester?**

A: 10 weeks (one class per week) for the Fall, Winter, and Spring sessions; 6 weeks for Summer session

**Q: How old are the children in classes?**

A: Mixed age classes are designed for children from birth to five years old. Babies classes are for infants through 8 months.

**Q: How many children are in each class?**

**A:** 6 -12 children generally, unless a child or two is doing a make-up class.

**Q: How long is the class?**

A: 45 minutes

**Q: Why do classes have mixed ages?**

A: Researchers have found that a mixed-age group tends to foster a more natural, family style learning environment. Older children learn from being in a leadership role, younger children benefit from the example of an older child.

Siblings can attend class together, making it easier for parents to enjoy a true family experience.

We now know that children of the same age are not necessarily at the same point in their musical development so the mixed-age model is a natural opportunity for them to learn at their own pace.

Children benefit from opportunities for social interaction with other children of different ages.

**Q: What do classes look like? Can I try one out first?**

A: To view a class, schedule a demo on the demo scheduler at [www.sproutsongsmusic.com](http://www.sproutsongsmusic.com).

As for the classes, each lesson plan has a carefully planned sequence of songs and chants that include dance, fingerplays, instrument jams, small and large movement activities, singing, and exploring tonal and rhythm patterns. We have some ritual songs like the Hello song, lullaby, and Goodbye song to help the children know what to expect from week to week. Each week we do about 10 to 12 songs from the 25-30 songs in a session collection.

**Q: Do you have the same songs each session?**

A: No, there are nine different song collections so families can take Music Together® classes for 3 years without repeating material. The summer sessions, however, are a compilation of songs from the 9 different collections.

**Q: Can I skip a semester or enter class in any semester? (Are the song books consecutive?)**

A: You and your child can begin the Music Together program at any age from birth through the end of age 5 during any semester. We provide a “musical buffet” of concepts each semester that your child can choose to learn at his/her own developmental pace.

**Q: What is the music like?**

A: We offer children’s music you will love to listen to! Music Together® created research-based materials of the highest quality to carry the music from class to your home – a recording, a songbook, and educational information for parents.

The music is pitched in just the right range for children’s voices and includes songs, rhythmic chants, tonal and rhythm patterns, and instrumental play-alongs that are all in a rich variety of sounds and rhythms.

There are many original songs and unique, original arrangements of folk songs, graced by the playing and singing of outstanding performers on a variety of instruments.

**Q: Can I bring other visitors?**

A: Yes. Grandparents, nannies and other special grown-ups in your child’s life are always welcome.

Non-registered friends with children may arrange to visit a class as a demo by using the demo scheduler. Drop-ins are not otherwise permitted. Occasionally an older sibling may be out of pre-school or perhaps tracked out from year-round school. They may attend with your other child with permission from the director once or twice.

**Q: What kinds of instruments do you use?**

A:We use a variety of percussion instruments (drums, shakers, bells, sticks etc.) that are age appropriate for children and adults. We also use additional props to further learning such as the octaband, scrunchy band, parachute, scarves, balls, and ribbon sticks.

**Q: HELP! My child can’t sit still for an entire class?!**

A: No problem! We don’t expect children to sit still. Instead, children are welcome to sit and observe, move around, copy the adults or invent their own way to play–whatever style works best for them is accepted and welcome. Often we find that a child may not look like they are participating or are doing something different than the group. Then they go home and “practice” what they learned in class by re-enacting it! Moving around the room is completely acceptable as long as the children are safe.

Children at this critical stage of development are learning ALL THE TIME, whether it looks like it or not! We honor all types of learners.

The most important thing that parents and caregivers can do is be ready to fully participate and model how much fun you are having making music (in class and at home), which will inspire them to adopt your positive attitude. If you are having fun making music, your child will want to as well.

**Q: HELP! I’m not musical, can I still come with my child?**

A: You are your child’s most important role model, no matter what kind of singing voice or dancing feet you have (or think you have!!). It is less important how well you sing than it is to model making the choice to sing. By your example, children will learn that music is a natural, enjoyable and important part of their lives. You, the primary caregiver, are the only one who can give your child the gift of a positive attitude to make music. No CD can impart that! What your child loves and needs most is to hear your voice at home or in class. Throughout the classes you will also get more information on how to best support your child’s musical journey. You are helping to give your child the disposition for enjoying music.

**Q: Why do my child and I need music?**

A: It is at this critical time in early childhood that all the ground-work for future music learning can be laid down. The basics of rhythm and tonality can be formed in the child’s brain. This endows a child with the skill to be a life-time music-maker.

We believe that every child should be able to sing on pitch and keep a beat, (defined as Basic Music Competence) and feel confident enjoying the music of the culture, regardless of whether they go on to play an instrument. Classes provide an opportunity for this to develop naturally, in a developmentally appropriate and musically rich setting.

This setting is free from performance expectations and structured learning outcomes. By focusing on the process, NOT the performance of these young children, we provide them with a solid foundation for future musical choices.

Grown-ups enjoy the bonding experience with their child and also with other parents and caregivers. Singing together releases endorphins and makes us all feel better!

**Q: Are all those instruments you use germy?**

A: We ask that for your health and safety you do not bring yourself or your child to class if you or they have had a fever in the last 24 hours.

We ask that you please WASH HANDS BEFORE AND AFTER CLASS or use hand sanitizer on you and your child to minimize transmission of germs.

All instruments are wiped with food-grade safe cleaning wipes at the end of class.

**Q: Is my baby safe in a mixed-age class?**

A: We are a music COMMUNITY and all adults are expected to intervene immediately to prevent or stop unsafe activities. (For example: running, throwing, wrestling, jumping over children.) Please help by re-directing children back to musical behaviors. It takes a village.

**Q: What is your Cancellation Policy?**

A: A refund is available before the first day of classes ONLY. No refunds are available after materials have been opened or after the first class has been attended. Please come to a demo class if you would like to see a class before registering.

Missed classes will not be refunded, however two make-up classes are allotted for each child throughout the semester.

Class availability each semester is subject to sufficient enrollment.

**Q: What is the MUSIC TOGETHER® philosophy?**

A: I. All children are musical.

II. Therefore, all children can achieve basic music competence. We define basic music competence as the ability to sing in tune with accurate rhythm.

III. The participation and modeling of parents and caregivers, regardless of their musical ability, is essential to a child's musical growth.

IV. This growth is best achieved in a playful, developmentally appropriate, non-performance-oriented learning environment that is musically rich yet immediately accessible to the child's-and the adult's participation.

**Q: How can I find out more about Music Together?**

 A: For Music Together nationally, you may call the Main office at the Center for Music and Young Children in Princeton on 1-800-728-2692 or look up their website at www.musictogether.com.