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## THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARING CREATIVE MUSIC ACTIVITIES FOR PRE-SCHOOL PERIOD\*

(Research Article)

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARING CREATIVE MUSIC ACTIVITIES FOR PRE-SCHOOL PERIOD

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## Abstract

Music education provided in the pre-school period serves many purposes such as distinguishing sounds, using their voice correctly, expressing themselves, let children get familiar with different musical cultures, gaining a sense of music and rhythm, and supporting the creativity of children. Developing all these skills is only possible by making music enjoyable and productive and offering various music activities to children. In this study, it is aimed to design creative activities in order to enhance the musical skills of pre-school children and promote their musical acquisitions in different ways. Accordingly, different activities were prepared for pre-school music education in line with the general objectives of pre-school education set by MEB (Ministry of National Education). Opinions of the pre-school teachers were received on issues such as the implementation of musical activities prepared within the scope of this study in the classroom, the competencies of pre-school teachers related to the music lesson, and the contribution of these activities to pre-school children and teachers. In line with the opinions received, it was concluded that pre-school teachers find themselves sufficient in the field of music, but they encounter various problems while implementing musical activities, and that the activities prepared will benefit pre-school teachers and children.

*Keywords:* Pre-school period; music education in pre-school period; creative music activities; creative music activities in pre-school period

## 1. Introduction

The individual acquires musical behaviours such as listening, singing, keeping rhythm, analogy, making different sounds with his/her birth. These musical behaviours help the individual to develop skills such as self-expression, communication, and creativity. For this reason, it is thought that it is important to learn music, which benefits these developments, in the right way at an early age.

In order for music education to take place effectively and efficiently in the pre-school period, the quality of the activities to be implemented is as important as the teachers' proficiency in the field of music. It is easier and permanent to teach music practically at an early age. Therefore, musical activities will contribute positively to the development of the children's musical aptitude and musical skills, as well as increase their interest and desire for music.

### 1.1. Definition and Importance of Pre-School Period

The pre-school period covers the 0-6 age period from the time the child is born to the day s/he starts school. Pre-school education, on the other hand, is an educational process in which

the individual completes and shapes developmental areas such as mental, physical, psychomotor, social-emotional, and linguistic development in their later lives. It is also defined as early childhood education (MEB, 2008, p. 3; Aral, Kandır & Yaşar, 2003, p. 15). In addition, this period is also known as a social period that guides children in life conditions suitable for all their development, in accordance with the culture of the individual, and forms the foundations of social sensitivity and creative intelligence (Oğuzkan & Oral, 2005, p. 3). This is a period in which the child's skills and personality traits greatly develop. Pre-school education is of great importance in order to give the individual positive habits as a result of their lives and experiences, and to eliminate the situations where the individual is inadequate (Işın, 2008, p. 7; Başal, 2005, p. 16).

According to the latest changes in the education system, 0-36 months are called "Day Nursery and Day Care Centres", 36-69 months are called "Nursery School", and 48-69 months are called "Kindergarten". Day care centres usually include education for children with working mothers or special care needs. In nursery school and kindergartens, the development of the child's physical, mental, and social skills is emphasized, and the whole development of the child is tried to be supported through experiences such as games and activities in these areas (Oğuzkan & Oral, 2005, p. 3-4). Kindergartens are institutions within the structure of primary schools, which, like nursery schools, ensure that the development of children is carried out in a planned and systematic education (Aral, Kandır & Yaşar, 2003, p. 24).

Pre-school period constitutes the fundamental building block of child education. The environment and living conditions of the child, parental attitudes, and the education given greatly affect the child's readiness.

Since the children are not aware of their own interests and abilities in this period, the responsibilities of parents and teachers are great (Gül, 2012, p. 3-4; MEB, 2008, p. 3). The children's display of healthy and desired behaviour depends on knowing their developmental characteristics. If all these are not known enough, the individual has difficulty in expressing himself/herself (Gül, 2012, p. 3-4; MEB, 2008, p. 3). For this reason, pre-school education is important for the child to know himself/herself, to gain self-care skills and to use his/her body effectively (Aral, Kandır & Yaşar, 2003, p. 15).

#### 1.1.1. Music education in pre-school period

Children are born interested in music, they perceive rhythm and sound at a young age (Öztürk, 1996, p. 2). People's acquaintance with the first sounds begins in the womb. Studies have shown that hearing is one of the most developed senses of humans in the womb. Babies, who live in a sound universe from birth, begin to perceive and distinguish all the sounds around them over time (Altaş, 2006, p. 22; Göncü, 2002, p. 8).

Pre-school period is the period when children's creativity is at a high level. Music forms the basis for the development of this creativity. The use of music together with activities such as dance, drama, and improvisation develop the creativity of the child, and it also improves the child's development such as self-expression, socialization, and approaching events with different solutions (Uçal, 2003, p. 4). Singing by using the language correctly contributes to the linguistic development of the individual. Thanks to rhythm and musical rhyme, cognitive and mental processes such as retention are supported (Sığirtmaç, 2005, p. 15-17). In addition, the musical activities held in this period give the individual skills such as sharing the same feelings with their peers, cooperating, and producing together. In addition, it enables them to learn their own culture and other cultures (Türkmen, 2019). Thus, it is thought that

individuals with a developed culture and musical background will be raised (Topoğlu, 2012, p. 33).

Children express their feelings and thoughts in a comfortable way by singing. Their memory power improves and their vocabulary increases. They can recognize and distinguish different sounds. While playing any instrument, they can enjoy doing something on their own and they become happy (Güler, 2008, p. 125-127). In this period, musical activities such as singing, playing an instrument, musical dramatization, body percussion, rhythmic walking, etc. can be done easily. Children's acquaintance with music at an early age allows the individual to reveal their musical talent and at the same time relaxes them spiritually. In addition, it is thought that music education given at an early age affects the social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development of the individual positively.

#### 1.1.2. Importance of creative music activities in pre-school period

Creativity is defined as the process of coming up with new things. In addition, developing different ways, producing original ideas, developing a product is also a product of creativity (Torrance & Goff, 1989, cited in Öncü, 2003, p. 222). Creativity carries the individual to a higher level in social life. Achieving a quality life is through creativity. It is important not only with education, but also for success in every field. It is necessary for creativity to look at life from different perspectives, not to be afraid of making mistakes, to take risks, and to be happy with different ideas (Öncü & Ulutaş, 2014, p. 14-15).

Pre-school period forms the basis of creativity. During this period, children are curious and want to know what is going on around them. They develop their research and problem-solving skills with a sense of curiosity and produce original products. By combining all these products with areas such as games, drama, painting, and dance, they gain high-level thinking skills. Another area that fosters creativity is music. Keeping rhythm, singing improvised, dancing according to the music, creating different melodies, etc. are musical studies that are suitable for music education and support creativity. While doing these studies, the individual acquires permanent knowledge by learning by doing and experiencing, as well as improving their creativity. In the light of all this information, it is thought that in order to develop "creativity", activities that support the creativity of the individual should be organized in accordance with the modern education understanding and different activities should be applied for this.

0-6 years is a critical period for children. In this critical period, the acquisition of some skills by children affects their further lives. This whole process is directly effective with the proficiency of the teacher and the methods used in the period in which these skills will be acquired. Among these skills, musical studies are seen as one of the important areas where teachers that are not professional in this field have a little more difficulty. Taking into account the development of children in the pre-school period, preparing activities that improve their creativity will provide assistance to pre-school teachers in music education. For this reason, in this research, the question "How to prepare creative music activities in pre-school period?" constituted the main problem of the research. The sub-problems identified in relation to the main problem are as follows:

1. How do pre-school teachers benefit from musical activities in their lessons?
2. What are the general problems that pre-school teachers encounter while applying musical activities?
3. What are the opinions of the pre-school teachers about the prepared activities?

## **2. Method**

This research is a descriptive study about creative activities prepared for use in pre-school music studies. Descriptive Method is the summary and interpretation of the obtained data according to the determined data, which is used in the interview and observation processes. The purpose of the descriptive method is to present the organized data to the reader. It consists of creating a framework for descriptive analysis, processing data according to this framework, defining and interpreting findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 239).

In the research, the pre-school education program was examined, and creative activities and the visuals of these activities were prepared. 15 pre-school teachers were interviewed about their thoughts about the prepared activities and what kind of musical activities the pre-school teachers did. Interview is a technique of obtaining feelings and thoughts from people about a certain subject (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2018, p. 185). In the research, the semi-structured interview model was used. Semi-structured interview is the answering of the opinions of the people about the research conducted by partially modifying the questions prepared by the researcher beforehand (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2018, p. 185).

### **2.1. Research Study Group**

The study group of the research consists of 15 pre-school teachers whose opinions were consulted to get their opinions on the creative activities prepared. Interviews were held in the fall of 2019. All of the teachers are female. Each interview was conducted individually, and one interview lasted approximately 15-20 minutes.

### **2.2. Data Collection**

In the research, the Ministry of National Education pre-school education program was examined, and certain days and weeks were determined. 55 activities were prepared for 36 weeks in accordance with the curriculum and visuals were created for the majority of the activities prepared. Afterwards, an interview form was prepared about the activities, how the pre-school teachers carried out their music studies, and what the difficulties they faced are. While preparing the interview form, worked hard to make sure that the questions were understandable to everyone and that they did not include any direction. The interview form prepared as a draft was presented to the experts (1 Professor and 2 Assistant Professors specialized in music education, 1 Associate Professor working in the Faculty of Education, and 1 Instructor conducting the music lesson of pre-school teacher candidates) and necessary corrections were made in the form in line with the comments and corrections of the experts. There are 11 questions in the interview form. The teachers were interviewed were given detailed information about the study and an informed consent forms were signed by all teachers. The interviews were conducted at the schools where the teachers work.

### **2.3. Data Analysis**

For the analysis of the data, the data obtained from the interview were transferred to the article and the responses of the participants were processed with the descriptive analysis method. In descriptive analysis, the data are summarized and interpreted under pre-determined titles. The data can be classified according to the research questions or it can be arranged in light of the preliminary information obtained during the data collection steps. The purpose of this analysis is to put the raw data in a shape that the readers can understand. The data obtained for this purpose was put in a logical order first, then these descriptions (classifications) are interpreted and the results are obtained (Altunışık et al., 2004, p. 234). In this type of analysis, direct quotations are included to dramatically reflect the views of the individuals interviewed. Quoting from data sources is also useful for the reliability of the study (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 239; Altunışık et al., 2004, p. 234). In this study,

meaningful and interrelated classifications were made according to the research questions and explained systematically in the findings section. While presenting the findings, direct quotations from the statements of the teachers interviewed were also included.

### 3. Findings

#### Findings Regarding the General Problem

“How to prepare creative music activities in pre-school period?” Examples selected from the findings related to the main problem identified as the following are given below. Among the 55 activities prepared for the main problem, 8 sample activities selected for rhythmic games, instrument making, teaching various concepts, and song-teaching are included in this study.

#### 3.1. Sample Activities for Rhythmic Games

##### 3.1.1. Acquaintance game

Children are asked to form a circle. A ball is handed to a child in the circle (a musical instrument, block toy, etc. can be used instead of the ball). The ball circulates from hand to hand to the accompaniment of music. Whoever held the ball spinning with the music when the music stopped, that child stands up and introduces himself/herself. The process of stopping the music for each child is arranged by the teacher and all children meet with each other.

##### 3.1.2. Echo game

The teacher asks the children to form a circle, holding hands. The question “what do you think is the echo?” is posed to the children. Answers are received from the children, and then the teacher explains what echo is. The teacher makes different sounds by hitting his/her body and asks the children to repeat the same as an echo. The activity starts with the understanding of the concept of echo by the children. The teacher claps once with his/her hand. Then all the children in turn clap once, going from the right side. When it’s the teacher’s turn, the teacher claps twice. With two claps, the round will be reversed (starting with the child to the left of the teacher). A few rounds of this exercise will help children understand the game (one clap to the right, two clap to the left). Afterwards, children can start the game.

#### 3.2. Sample Activities for Instrument Making

##### 3.2.1. Drums from yogurt container

A hollow yogurt container can be wrapped with strings, covered with craft paper, or painted with watercolour. Decorated yogurt containers can be played with rhythm sticks or pens.

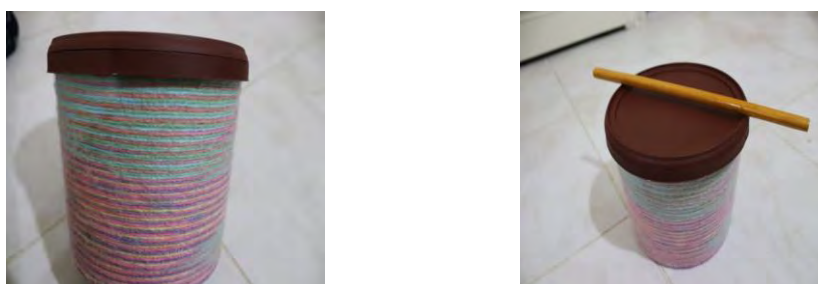
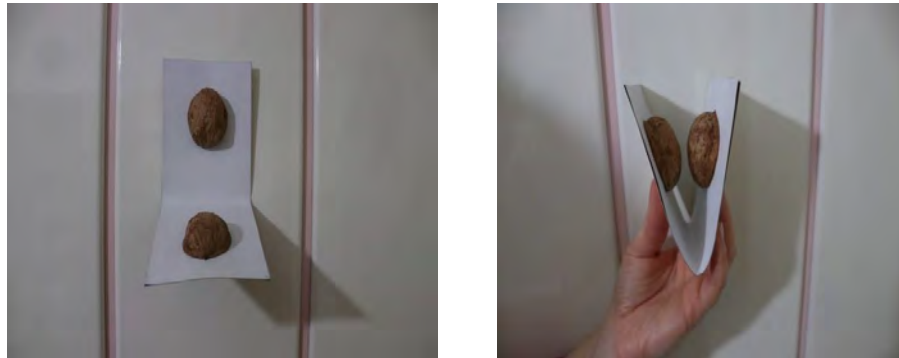


Figure 1. Drums from yogurt container

### 3.2.2. Castanet from walnuts

Rectangles are drawn and cut from a piece of cardboard, large enough to fit in the palms of the children (white hard cardboard is also preferable instead of cardboard). The cardboard is folded in half. Walnut shells are cut in half in the middle (a plastic spoon can also be used instead of a walnut shell. The handle of the plastic spoon is cut off and the spoon part can be used) and glued on both sides of the cardboard to coincide with each other. After the instrument is made, the children can be encouraged to chat about what the name of the instrument could be. The name of this instrument is “Castanet”.



*Figure 2. Castanet from walnuts*

### 3.3. Sample Activities to Teach Various Terms

#### 3.3.1. Rhythmic patterns from fruit names

Two large cartons are used. Two rhythmic patterns are prepared and glued to each carton. Each rhythmic pattern is given a fruit name and the rhythmic patterns are divided according to the syllables of the fruits. These rhythmic patterns are tapped by children with rhythm sticks or by hand. Rhythms are studied until they are consolidated. Then the class is divided into 2 groups (each group becomes a rhythmic pattern). Whichever group the rhythmic pattern shown by the teacher is, that group plays it, and the practice is repeated by changing the groups. Then the class is divided into 3 groups and then 4 groups. The fruit names given to the rhythmic patterns form the names of the groups. The first group is named “plum”, the second group is named “melon”, the third group is named “banana”, and the fourth group is named “watermelon”. The teacher shows the fruits on the cardboard as mixed and whichever group is the fruit, that group plays the rhythmic pattern. All groups interchange within themselves and thus all the rhythmic patterns are played by children.



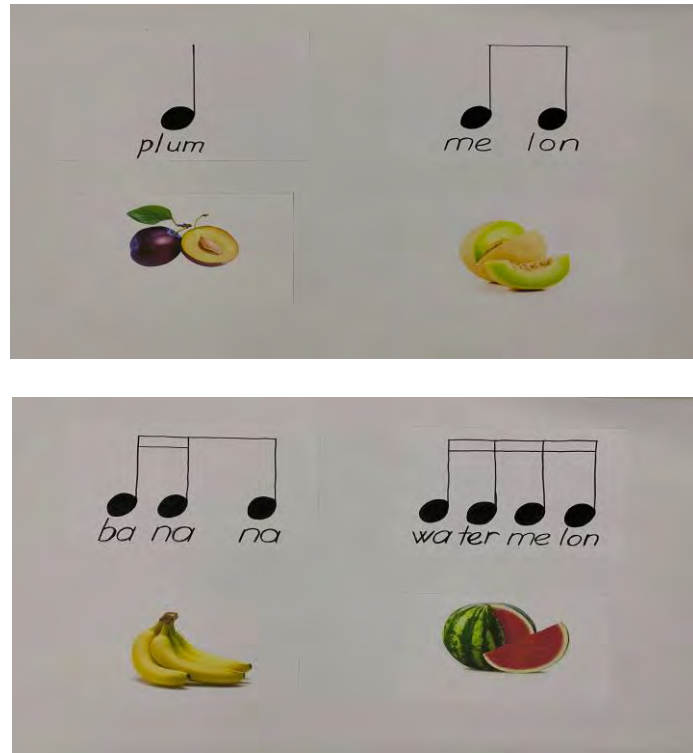


Figure 3. Rhythmic patterns from fruit names (in English)

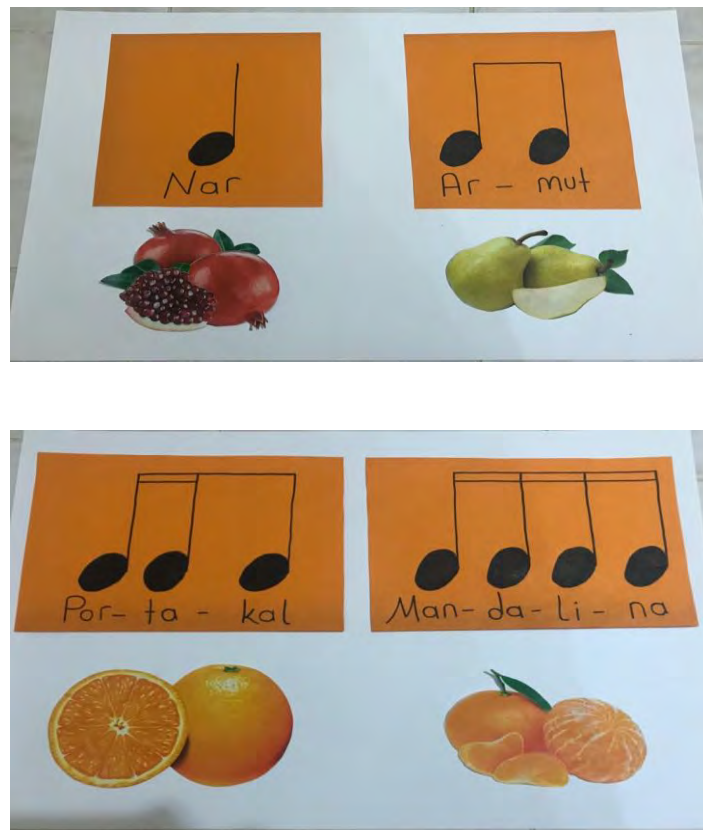


Figure 4. Rhythmic patterns from fruit names (in Turkish)



### 3.3.2. High or low?

#### Play 1

The teacher opens different audio recordings to the children (examples of high and low voices). It is discussed what kind of differences there are between these different audio recordings played. Low and high sounds are played by a musical instrument (xylophone, organ, block flute) preferred by the teacher. Children sit on the floor, tap their feet together when they hear the low sound, and when they hear the high sound, they raise their hands in the air, and clap. Thus, it is ensured to distinguish between high-low sounds.

#### Play 2

After children have grasped the high and low sounds, another activity can be started. The works prepared in advance by the teacher are hung on the board. In this study, a circle is drawn on a piece of paper. These circles are drawn mixed on the top or bottom of the paper. The circle at the top of the paper represents the high sound, and the lower one represents the low sound. Four different patterns are prepared from the papers and glued to the board. The teacher plays the hanging papers in order (organ, xylophone or block flute can be preferred) so that the children understand how the pattern sounds. S/he then plays these patterns in a shuffle and asks the children to find out which one s/he played. As a result of this activity, children are provided to classify the sounds they hear as high and low sounds.

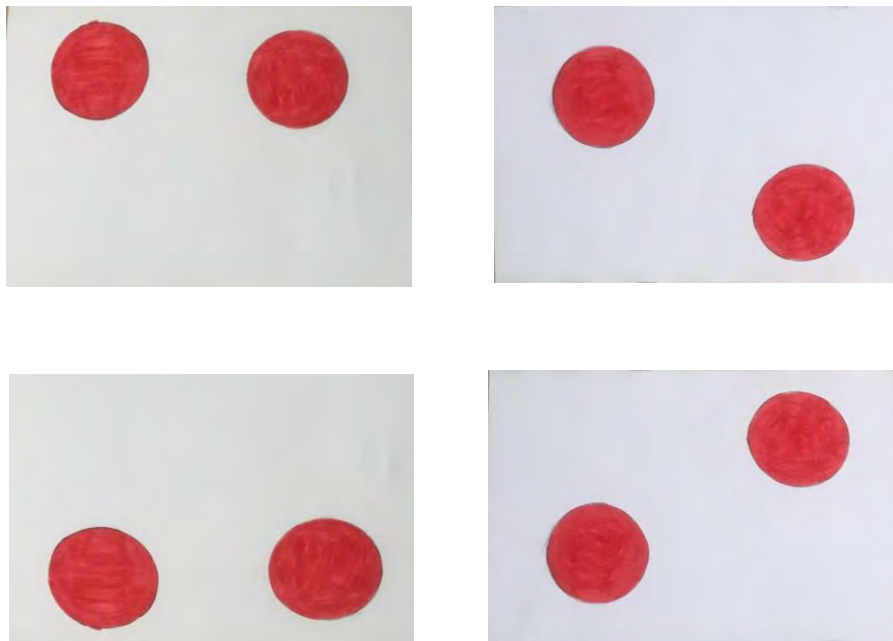


Figure 5. High or low?

### 3.3.3. Tempo terms with animal pictures

Tempo terms in music are explained to the children and they are exemplified by animal names (allegro-fast-cheetah, moderato-moderately-dog, andante-almost slow-turtle, largo-slow-snail). A game is played to explain these tempo terms. The target line is determined by the teacher and the class is divided into two. One person is selected from the first and second groups. An animal is selected from the “tempo terms with animal pictures” cardboard that the teacher has prepared in advance. With the imitation of the animal, both groups start walking

at animals' walking tempo. The teacher can hold the metronome tempo as applause. In this study, it is important that children grasp the terms of tempo while having fun, not racing.



Figure 6. Tempo terms with animal pictures (in English)



Figure 7. Tempo terms with animal pictures (in Turkish)

### 3.4. Sample Activities for Teaching Songs

#### 3.4.1. Parachute game

The teacher prepares a “parachute” by combining garbage bags for musical dramatization (cloth can also be used instead of garbage bags). All children form a circle around the parachute. Everyone holds one side of the parachute, and the teacher turns on the music. Movements are made together with music. Thus, children can easily learn the words of the song and easily distinguish the connections between the tune at the beginning of the music and the tune in the chorus. It transforms music into body language. This work can be presented as a performance at school.

Bir Dünya Bırakın / Leave Us a World

Lyrics: Adnan ÇAKMAKÇIOĞLU Composition: Salih AYDOĞAN

Oynaya oynaya gelin çocuklar  
El ele el ele verin çocuklar

Turn with the parachute.  
(Twice)

Bir vatan bırakın biz çocuklara İslanmış olmasın göz yaşlarıyla Oynaya oynaya gelin çocuklar El ele el ele verin çocuklar	Ventilate the parachute up and down. (Twice) Turn with the parachute. (Twice)
Bir bahçe bırakın biz çocuklara Göklerde yer açın uçurtmalara Oynaya oynaya gelin çocuklar El ele el ele verin çocuklar	Ventilate the parachute by crouching on the ground. (Twice) Turn with the parachute. (Twice)
Bir barış bırakın biz çocuklara Ulaşsın şarkımız güneşe ve aya Oynaya oynaya gelin çocuklar El ele el ele verin çocuklar	Drop the parachute to the ground, place your hands on your chest and lift the parachute into the air (Twice) Turn with the parachute. (Twice)
Bir dünya bırakın biz çocuklara Üstüne yazalım sevgili dünya Oynaya oynaya gelin çocuklar El ele el ele verin çocuklar	Hide yourself by entering under the parachute. (Twice) Turn with the parachute. (Twice)

English Version of Leave Us a World:

Children, come play with each other  
Children, come hand in hand

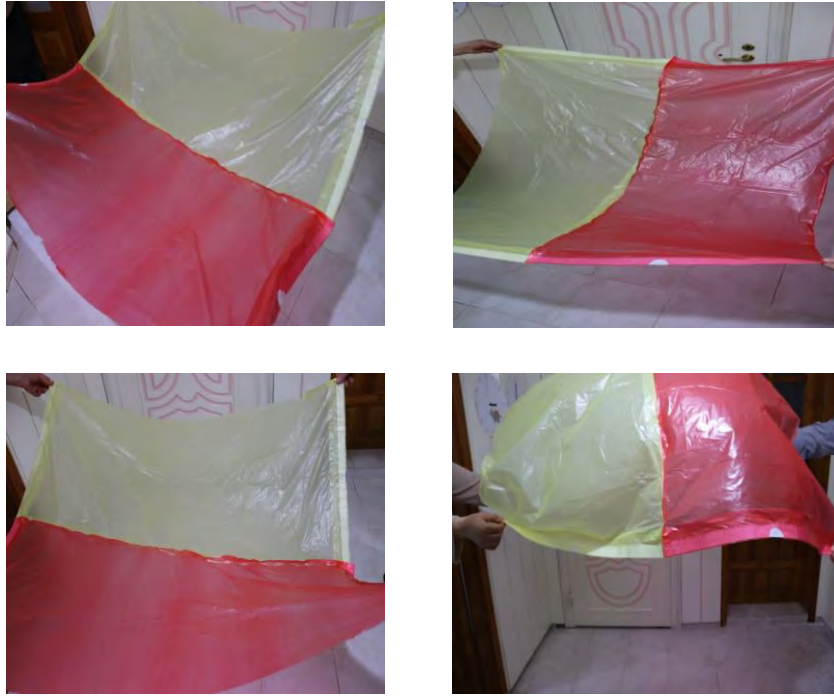
Give us a homeland  
Not watered with tears  
Children, come play with each other  
Children, come hand in hand

Give us a garden  
With a room for kites on the sky  
Children, come play with each other  
Children, come hand in hand

Give us peace  
Let our song be heard by the sun and the moon  
Children, come play with each other  
Children, come hand in hand

Give us a world  
Let us inscribe on it “dear world”  
Children, come play with each other  
Children, come hand in hand

Note: Instead of this piece, other pieces can be used by considering the harmony of lyrics and movements.



*Figure 8.* Making parachute from garbage bags

#### 3.4.2. Snowman

The teacher inflates two different sizes of balloons and prepares the towel papers in advance. The teacher asks the children, “What do you think we will do with the balloons and towel paper in my hand?” The teacher waits for the children to guess. Then the snowman song is opened, and a snowman is made according to the words of the song. First, the balloons are covered with towel paper. Balloons are glued together, and the snowman's body is formed. Then carrots are cut from a paper for its nose and pieces of charcoal-coloured paper are cut for its eyes. According to the lyrics of the song, the snowman is completed by wearing a hat and scarf. The steps are repeated by the children and the song is sung with the class. After the singing process is over, the class is divided into two and everyone is given an instrument. While the first group sings the beginning of the song, the second group accompanies with their instruments, while the second group sings the chorus, the first group accompanies with their instruments. Each verse is studied in this way, so that both the lyrics of the song are learned, and the children enjoy the rhythm practice.

This work can also be done as a school activity by going out if there is snow outside. Children can also crumple small newspaper sheets to make snowflakes. Artificial snow can be done by throwing snowflakes prepared by the teacher to the children from a high place.

Kardan Adam / Snowman Song, lyrics and composition: Mahir DİNÇER

Note: Other songs about snowman can also be preferred.



Figure 9. A snowman made from balloons

### 3.5. Findings Related to First Sub-Problem

“How do pre-school teachers benefit from musical activities in their lessons?” Findings related to the first sub-problem determined as the following are as follows:

#### 3.5.1. Teachers’ inclusion of musical activities in their lessons

According to the interviews, all pre-school teachers allocate a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 45 minutes to music activities every day. These time intervals differ for each pre-school teacher. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

**PST 3:** “Yes, I include. I spare 45 minutes.”

**PST 14:** “Yes, I include. The duration changes during the day and from activity to activity. I generally spare 15-20 minutes.”

While the fifth pre-school teacher stated that she used music in the transition between activities and did music activities every day, the sixth and eighth pre-school teachers stated that they arranged the music activities according to the plan of that day. Considering that pre-school teachers include musical activities in their lessons, it is thought that the activities presented in this research may be beneficial for pre-school teachers.

#### 3.5.2. Pre-school teachers’ use of school songs in music activities

In line with the opinions of the pre-school teachers, it was determined that the children enjoyed the music studies and teachers’ chose the songs considering the expected learning outcomes that week. Pre-school teachers’ song choices generally consist of the most preferred songs on social media. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

**PST 11:** “I can give *Kırmızı Balık (Red Fish)*, *Beş Küçük Şişe (Five Little Bottles)* songs as examples. I teach them with their movements. First, I do the movements. Then we do it together with the children and we sing.”

**PST 15:** “I teach songs such as *Evvel Zaman İçinde (Once upon a Time)*, *Kelebekler (Butterflies)*, *Meşe Palamudu (the Acorn)*, *Bir Gün Okula Giderken (One Day as I go to School)*, *Meyve-Sebze (Fruits and Vegetables)*. I sing first, then the children repeat after me. Finally, we do the movements.”

The sixth pre-school teacher stated that she used the song “Ahtapot” (Octopus) in teaching the number 8 and that she taught both the song and the number 8. The fourteenth pre-school teacher stated that she taught by associating the week when schools opened with the song “Okula Başladım” (I Started School). In general, the teachers stated that the children would learn both the music and the concept to be taught easily by associating the pieces. Music studies can be taught in many different ways by playing, singing, and turning them into body movements. It has been determined that pre-school teachers teach songs by transforming them into movements appropriate to song lyrics. In addition to this, the third pre-school teacher stated that she makes her students listen to the song first, then she sings it, and lastly, they sing the song together with their movements; the fifth and fourteenth pre-school teachers stated that they used musical instruments apart from the movements. Presenting music with different activities in music studies can make the work enjoyable by saving it from monotony.

### 3.5.3. Teachers’ involvement in music activities outside of class

According to the data obtained, all the pre-school teachers stated that they participated in at least one of the activities such as school programs, spring festivals, certain days and weeks. In such activities, they include musical activities in the form of choir, dance, ronds, rhythm works. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

**PST 3:** “We include music events on certain days and weeks. We give place in the form of choir, rhythmic practices, sign language.”

**PST 4:** “We include music works at formal events and social activities. For example, we do works such as dance and oratorio. In addition, a teacher from outside the institution made choir practices in the first semester, and we performed it as a year-end graduation ceremony.”

The first pre-school teacher stated that she used music in areas such as dance and competition, the fourteenth pre-school teacher included stereotypical music activities in her extracurricular activities, and the sixth, seventh and eighth pre-school teachers included musical activities with family participation. It is considered important that parents who play musical instruments are invited to the class and perform live, in order to encourage children to play a musical instrument.

### 3.5.4. General competence of pre-school teachers about music

According to the data obtained, it was determined that seven pre-school teachers participated in activities such as in-service training, courses, and seminars. These trainings, in which pre-school teachers participate, are the trainings organized by Bomed, Orffestra and MEB (Ministry of National Education). It has been determined that three pre-school teachers want to attend trainings on courses, in-service training and seminars related to these fields, and they also carry out different studies, and five pre-school teachers do not participate in activities such as in-service training, courses, and seminars. It is thought that all these trainings will give teachers different ideas about musical activities and help them to bring themselves to a certain level in music. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

**PST 2:** “I applied for external expert support. I also asked a secondary school music teacher. S/he came to our school and gave a concert in the qanun. Apart from that, one of our candidate teachers who played the baglama gave a concert. We enjoy listening to such works with the children.”



**PST 3:** *“I provided instruments myself. I applied for the course, seminar events, but I did not receive any response. If there are music-related events, I will participate.”*

**PST 8:** *“I participated in educations such as Bomed, Orffestra.”*

The first, fourteenth and fifteenth pre-school teachers stated that they included family participation in their work, the twelfth pre-school teacher received expert support from outside, and the thirteenth pre-school teacher stated that the intern gave a baglama concert in her classroom. It is thought that family involvement and external support help teachers in situations where they are inadequate and provide pre-school children with a more effective working opportunity by offering different practices. In addition, the twelfth pre-school teacher stated that she exchanged ideas by taking the opinions of the coterie teachers. It is thought that the exchange of ideas between the coteries will provide convenience in the programs organized at the school.

### **3.6. Findings Related to the Second Sub-Problem**

“What are the general problems that pre-school teachers encounter while applying musical activities?” Findings related to the second sub-problem determined as the following are as follows:

#### **3.6.1. Pre-school teachers' self-efficacy regarding music discipline**

According to the data of the interviews, it was determined that four pre-school teachers did not see themselves as sufficient, four of them were at an intermediate level, and seven of them saw themselves as sufficient. Pre-school teachers who consider themselves sufficient stated that their class learns music well, they follow new and different studies, and they apply different activities in their classrooms. Pre-school teachers, who see themselves at an intermediate level in music, stated that they are open to improvement in music studies and stated that they do not see themselves as sufficient in playing musical instruments and that they can attract children's attention by playing musical instruments. The fact that the pre-school teacher can play at least one musical instrument will ensure that the lesson is more musically efficient. In addition, it is thought that it will provide the teaching of different songs by playing the melodies that the melody does not know by ear. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

**PST 1:** *“I don't think I am enough. I see myself as intermediate. I think I have some deficiencies about music and drama. I would like to participate in seminars or courses related to this. I have never participated before.”*

**PST 4:** *“I don't consider myself as sufficient. If there was a training in this field, I would like to attend.”*

**PST 11:** *“I consider myself sufficient. I constantly follow the trainings.”*

From the pre-school teachers who do not consider themselves sufficient, the third pre-school teacher stated that she had difficulty in remembering the rhythmic structures of the songs, the fifth pre-school teacher stated that the education about music was not adequately supported, and the fourteenth pre-school teacher stated that she considered herself inadequate because she always adhered to a tool.

#### **3.6.2. Problems faced by pre-school teachers in music activities**

According to the data obtained, it was determined that all of the pre-school teachers, except one, had at least one problem in music studies. Some of these problems are that



children's attention is immediately distracted, the activities are not enjoyable, and there is a lack of interest, adaptation and self-confidence. It is thought that all these problems can be solved by choosing interesting, entertaining activities that are offered to the child and in which all children can participate.

Among other problems, the first, twelfth, fourteenth and fifteenth pre-school teachers stated that they had problems in translating the lyrics into music during song teaching, and that they had difficulties in creating the rhythmic and melodic structure of the pieces while singing the songs they knew before or heard for the first time. They also stated that they received help by using the internet. Another issue that the sixth, seventh and eighth pre-school teachers see as a problem is that the children do not sing the song at the same time during the chorus. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

*PST 4: "I'm having problems. If I played any musical instrument professionally, I could attract the attention of children more. In addition, lack of material is a big problem I encounter."*

*PST 6: "I'm having problems. I'm having trouble getting the kids to sing the song at the same time. In addition, it is a problem for me that children are impatient, and they don't wait for their turn in rhythmic practices."*

*PST 11: "I'm having problems. Not every child wants to participate. I'm having trouble with attention, adaptation. I find it difficult for children with a lack of self-confidence to participate."*

Based on all these problems, in the question "At what level do you consider yourself competent in the discipline of music?", it was seen that pre-school teachers who see themselves at a sufficient level also have problems and difficulties in music practices. It is thought that all these deficiencies of pre-school teachers in music can be eliminated, with the music education they will receive, as well as activities prepared with a professional perspective, and also that pre-school teachers can benefit from these activities.

### **3.7. Findings Related to the Third Sub-Problem**

"What are the views of pre-school teachers about the prepared activities?" Findings related to the third sub-problem determined as the following are as follows:

3.7.1. According to pre-school teachers, whether prepared activities attract the attention of children and contribute to their development

As a result of the interviews with the pre-school teachers, it was concluded that the prepared activities attract the attention of the pre-school children and contribute to the development of the children. While the seventh pre-school teacher stated that the activities could attract the attention of children due to their visual support, the ninth pre-school teacher said that the activities also attracted her attention and that she wanted to apply them in music practices. The third, thirteenth and fifteenth pre-school teachers stated that the activities contribute to the development of the musical aptitude and sense of rhythm in the child. Accordingly, it is thought that the prepared activities will help children make music more meaningful and carry their existing talents forward.

Among the problems stated by the pre-school teachers in the question "Do you have any problem in music activities?", problems such as children's attitude towards music studies, interest, attention, and adaptation draw attention. The fourth, fifth, twelfth and fourteenth pre-school teachers think that with the prepared activities, children will develop a positive attitude towards music studies on subjects such as interest, adaptation, and attention. It is thought that ensuring children's participation in studies by doing different activities to attract

attention and interest in music studies in the pre-school period will make learning effective. In addition, the fourth, fifth and fourteenth pre-school teachers also stated that the activities would contribute to the social, emotional, spiritual, and mental development of children. It is a fact that music will make positive contributions not only to the musical development of the individual, but also to the multi-faceted development of the individual. In general, the opinions of pre-school teachers are that these activities will contribute to the musical development of children and support their creativity. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

**PST 4:** *“It’s interesting and contributing. It provides mental development in children. It improves attention and intelligent. It develops musical culture. The fact that it is concretized makes it easy to learn.”*

**PST 9:** *“It attracts the attention of the child and contributes to the children. Personally, it also intrigued me. I would like to apply it in my lessons. It supports children's creativity and allows them to have a fun time.”*

**PST 12:** *“Since there are activities that attract the attention of children, it helps them to focus and creates permanent learning. Music reveals teaching in different situations by means of association in the change of environment and time.”*

### 3.7.2. Contribution of the prepared activities to the pre-school teacher

According to the answers given by the teachers, it was determined that the prepared activities would contribute to the pre-school teachers. The first and second pre-school teachers stated that they could benefit from the activities at the points they did not know; the third, fifth, sixth, eighth, ninth and eleventh pre-school teachers stated that the activities would be a source when they were missing or insufficient; and the fifth pre-school teacher stated that the activities would help the teachers to discover the children in their class. The fifteenth pre-school teacher stated that the activities would make a difference to the teacher and encourage the teacher, the twelfth and fourteenth pre-school teachers stated that they would increase the variety of activities. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

**PST 4:** *“These activities motivate us. When we receive feedback from students in the activities we do, we become happy, and we do our work with pleasure.”*

**PST 7:** *“These activities provide us variance. It is beneficial to try to teach music differently and how we should include music in our lessons.”*

**PST 15:** *“These activities save teachers from monotony. It encourages the teacher. Even now, I am thinking of doing different activities by only seeing these activities.”*

According to these opinions, the activities will help the pre-school teachers who do not see themselves as competent in this field or who have difficulties in this field, in music, and will contribute to the teachers' self-development and to obtain instructive studies about music.

### 3.7.3. Pre-school teachers’ thoughts on the activities

Pre-school teachers stated that the prepared activities are productive, remarkable, different, and beautiful activities that will attract the attention of children. Regarding the activities, the fifth pre-school teacher stated that they would attract the attention of the children due to the different materials and activities, the sixth pre-school teacher stated that the children could participate more actively in these activities, the eleventh pre-school teacher stated that the activities were creative and cognitively supportive, and the thirteenth pre-school teacher stated that the children could participate more actively in these activities. They stated that it

would be highly effective on music and that children would develop different attitudes towards music. In line with these views it is thought that the prepared activities will contribute to pre-school children. Examples of answers given by pre-school teachers are presented below:

*PST 1: "The activities are beautiful. I would like to benefit from this subject."*

*PST 8: "It will attract the attention of children because materials are used and there are activities in which children are actively involved."*

*PST 12: "The activities are all very beautiful and adapted in different ways. It is also nice that they include musical instruments in the activities."*

Some pre-school teachers expressed their opinions about the difficulties that may be encountered while implementing these activities, as well as the niceness of the activities. The second pre-school teacher stated that the activities might be difficult due to the differences in the levels of the children, the fourth pre-school teacher stated that the activities would be more suitable for the older age group in the pre-school, while it would be more appropriate to keep the time shorter in the younger age group. Flexibility was provided in the prepared activities in the light of this information, and changes were made according to the ease-difficulty of the activities.

#### **4. Conclusion and Discussion**

This research was carried out in order to support the development of children by making a difference in the music studies given in the pre-school period, and to bring musical acquisitions such as musical perception and knowledge, listening-singing-playing, musical creativity and music culture to the pre-school children.

According to the results obtained from the research;

All pre-school teachers include music studies. It has been concluded that they spend an average of 20 minutes. It was observed that all of the teachers benefited from the internet in terms of using different resources. It has been concluded that pre-school teachers benefit from social media, books consisting of music activities and their own knowledge. All pre-school teachers include school songs in their music activities. It has been concluded that they prefer the songs that everyone knows or the most listened to in song selection and that most of the teachers teach the songs with their movements. Gölbaşı (2013, p. 56) concluded in her research that most of the pre-school teachers are good at song repertoire, but 40% cannot write the names of songs suitable for all ages. Gölbaşı's finding is similar to the finding in this study that pre-school teachers prefer songs over the song that everyone knows or the most listened song. Gölbaşı, who considers it important that the song selection is suitable for the level of the children, thinks that this situation may cause the children to become alienated from the music.

It has been concluded that pre-school teachers include music activities outside of the classroom, official programs, spring festivals, certain days and weeks, family participation, and music in the form of dance, chorus, rhythmic practices, and rond in these studies. In addition to the general equipment and practices for music activities, the facts that one teacher received expert support from outside; three teachers made people from outside give concerts in their classes such as parents, music teachers, trainee teachers; five teachers did not participate in in-service training, courses, seminars; while seven teachers have participated at least one of them found out in the results. In her research, Dere (2008, p. 78-81) concluded that 80.66% of kindergarten teachers did not attend in-service training, and 76.25% did not attend in-service training on music. In addition, in Dere's research, it was stated that pre-

school teachers wanted to participate in in-service training but could not. This finding is consistent with the finding of this study.

It was concluded that four pre-school teachers do not see themselves as sufficient, four of them see themselves at an intermediate level, and seven of them saw themselves at a sufficient level. Besides, teachers generally had problems such as not being able to read musical notes, playing an instrument, having difficulty remembering the rhythmic structures of songs, and adhering to a tool continuously. Güler (2006, p. 80-83) is of the opinion that teachers have difficulties in areas such as basic music knowledge and skills, practicing musical activities, playing musical instruments. The majority of teachers think that they are insufficient in these areas and cannot perform effective music education. Güler's finding that pre-school teachers have deficiencies in the musical field overlaps with this research finding. Özkut and Kaya (2012, p. 177-178) stated in their research that pre-school teachers have difficulties with different methods and techniques regarding music activities. In this study, the inadequacy of pre-school teachers in creating the rhythm and melody of songs and playing musical instruments makes these two research findings similar. In addition, Özkut and Kaya suggest in their research that it is necessary to cooperate with music teachers.

It was concluded that all but one of the teachers faced at least one problem in music studies, among these problems, children's indifference and reluctance towards music studies, children's inability to sing the song at the same time in the choir, and the teachers' inability to see themselves as competent in the field of music can be given. In their study, Sali, Akkol, and Oğuz (2013, p. 90) think that the inability of preschool teachers to provide interest and motivation in the practice of music activities creates a problem in classroom management.

Teachers stated that the prepared activities were interesting, different, applicable, productive, and beneficial for the children. Yazıcı and Topalak (2013, p. 202-203), stated that creativity starts at a young age and takes place at all levels of education and that it should be discovered in the pre-school period and contribute to the personal/academic development of children. In this direction, they emphasize that creative activities should be included in music studies and that the teachers should be made aware of creative thinking and knowledge. According to Yazıcı and Topalak's research, constituting creative activities in the pre-school period will help pre-school teachers to think creatively and raise awareness. Yazıcı and Topalak's thoughts on the need to include creative activities in music studies reveal how necessary this research is.

It is thought that supporting all these activities with materials will benefit the learning of pre-school children. In her study, Ördəkçi (2016, p. 73) concluded that the visual materials she prepared for the 4th grade of primary education support music education, provide the individual with skills such as making the information permanent, providing attention and interest, facilitating learning, and making the process effective and efficient. These findings of Ördəkçi and the aims of this study to provide material support for the activities in the preparation process of creative activities, to eliminate the inadequacy of musical instruments, to teach the information to the child easily, and to make the process enjoyable and fun. In addition, Atılgan and Gürman (2020, p. 1378) stated in their study that various teaching materials prepared in line with the objectives of the course would be more effective on student learning.

It has been concluded that the activities will provide positive contributions to the development of children's musical aptitude, increase their creativity, interest, and attention span, and provide fun music practices. Besides, it is thought that the activities will provide benefits not only to children but also to teachers, such as providing a variety of activities and improving themselves in areas where they are insufficient. In addition, the research also

revealed that teachers need training in the field of music. In her research, Güler (2006, p. 83) stated that pre-school teachers consider creative music activities important, and they need activities and training to help in this regard; Çeviker (2010, p. 130-131) stated that pre-school teachers need support in preparing music-related activities and planning them by considering the developmental characteristics of children. The findings of Güler (2006) and Çeviker (2010) overlap with the findings of this study.

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