



A Guide for Using Music and Movement with Seniors

Emmie Perkins

Miss Mississippi

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Introduction

*Music is an art imbued with power
to penetrate into the very depths of the soul -Plato*

Music is a vital part of human life even from the very beginning. It connects to all life from the rhythms of nature to a mother's heartbeat. Music is an art form that crosses over all races, creeds, and cultures. As a universal language, it has the power to involve the whole person regardless of age. Studies have shown that music promotes better health through the enjoyment of listening, dancing, and singing.

The purpose of the shared activities in the Music is Medicine Guide is to focus on Senior adults and the positive impact music can play on their lives. Although everyone can benefit from music, the following activities are ways music matters to Seniors and help to improve their quality of life. The most powerful music activities used with Seniors will be the music they connect to the positive memories in their lives.

Psychological Benefits

The process of playing music or listening to music can provide a total brain workout by activating many parts of the brain! When Seniors listen to music they enjoy, it can stimulate positive memories. Music has shown to activate the brain where memories are stored.

Seniors can be drawn together to interact, communicate and improve their socialization through music activities. By sharing songs and memories, Seniors have an opportunity to connect with each other and create new memories. Also, the experiences that Seniors share with music, provide them an opportunity to laugh and enjoy one another.

Listening to music regularly can reduce stress. Research has demonstrated that listening to music not only reduces stress, the process increases the feeling of relaxation as well as reduces tension and anxiety.

Physical Health

Receptive and active listening to music can produce better physical health. Research has reported Seniors who listen to music regularly enjoy better sleep, less pain, and better physical recovery time from injuries or illness. In addition, studies have demonstrated that listening to relaxing music can slow heart rate and lower blood pressure. The power of listening to music may lower stress levels and improve one's immune system.

Some of the active parts of sharing music with Seniors can get them moving to the music and can result in improved coordination and increased mobility. Seniors can get active with foot tapping and arms moving and other Seniors may want to get up and sway or dance to the music. The strong rhythms help them to feel the music with their whole body.

Music fills our spirit to help heal, encourage and inspire.

So let us join together and lift our voices in song and share music to help support physical and emotional healing!


This guide is to be used in addition to a person's regular routine. Please only do movements and activities that are safe for the participants. Although music can lift

spirits, and make people feel good, it should not take the place of doctor's treatments or medication.


Activity Guide for Seniors


Activity Title: ELVIS


Supplies: Maracas <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-Maracas>


Other rhythm instruments  Makin' Instruments: Rhythm Sticks


Images of Elvis or other items from the time period.

Elvis Songs  Shake, Rattle and Roll

 Elvis Presley - All Shook Up (Official Audio)

 Elvis Presley - Jailhouse Rock (Official Audio)

 Don't Be Cruel

 Elvis Presley - Hound Dog (Official Audio)

Activity: While Seniors are seated, use maracas or other rhythm instruments to encourage Seniors to move and/or stretch to the music. The Leader demonstrates movements and the Seniors can follow by shaking the maracas to the rhythm. Movements can go from the front, left, and right sides to up and down. Some Seniors may want to move the maracas in a circular motion and other Seniors may want to dance to the music. Seniors can stand behind a chair or be sure a chair is near them to use as support if needed. The combination of connecting with people, movement, and memories triggered by their past music experiences, is an important mind, body, and spirit exercise for growth.

Activity Guide for Seniors

Activity Title: Triple **S** - **Seniors Sway with Scarves**

Supplies: 2 scarves per Senior

▶ Music engagement activity for seniors using scarves

Music recordings:

▶ *Dion - The Wonderer*

▶ *A Teenager In Love-Dion and The Belmonts-Original Song*

▶ *Ben E. King - Stand By Me*

▶ *Tennessee Waltz (1959) - CONNIE FRANCIS - Lyrics*

▶ *Singing In The Rain - Singing In The Rain (Gene Kelly) [HD Widescre...*

▶ *Elvis Presley - Love Me Tender (Official Audio)*

▶ *Andy Williams - Moon River*

Activity: Have Seniors seated and give each Senior 2 scarves for this activity. The Leader is seated so everyone can see the movements of using the scarves with the music. In addition, the Leader describes to the group the movement and demonstrates it while the music is played. Singing along with songs can produce many benefits. The Leader should encourage the Seniors to sing along to the music.

“ I don't sing because I'm happy, I'm happy because I sing.” William James, Psychologist

Modifications and Extensions

If a Senior from the group wants to lead the group in movement using the scarves the Leader needs to assist the volunteer Senior.

Activity Guide for Seniors

Activity Title: Motown - Rhythm Play Along

The Motown sound is a style of rhythm and blues recorded by Motown Records in Detroit, Michigan.


Supplies: Tambourines


Rhythm Sticks


Maracas


Motown Songs


 Motown greatest hits full album 🎵🎵 100 greatest motown songs 🎵🎵...

 The Temptations - Get Ready

 Diana Ross & The Supremes - Stop! In The Name Of Love

 Runaround Sue

 I Heard It Through The Grapevine

 Stevie Wonder Superstition


Activity:


Play a selected Motown Song and have Seniors use their hands to clap or tap to the rhythm of the music. Then, distribute maracas, rhythm sticks, and/or tambourines to the Seniors and play a Motown song and have the Seniors play along with the rhythm of the music. The Leader demonstrates the rhythm by keeping the beat of the music and encouraging the Seniors to sing along with the songs. Be sure that the Seniors feel the rhythm of the music and encourage movement for flexibility and enjoyment.

Activity Guide for Seniors


Activity Title: What a Wonderful World


Supplies: Paper and markers
Rhythm Sticks
Tambourines

 What a Wonderful World (Remastered)

 Hello Dolly (Remastered)

 When You're Smiling (The Whole World Smiles With You) - Louis A...

 The Very Best Of Louis Armstrong HQ - Louis Armstrong Greatest ...

 Louis Armstrong - When The Saints Go Marching In

Activity: First, play What a Wonderful World and have the Seniors name the things Louis Armstrong lists in the song. Then, play the music again and have Seniors draw something the music makes them think about while listening to the words of the song, *What a Wonderful World*. Next, have everyone share their paper or discuss what they thought about while listening to the music. Use rhythm sticks and/or tambourines with the other Louis Armstrong songs.

Benefits of Activity Listening to music creates many moods and feelings. Seniors will express different emotions from listening to various songs. Discuss with the Seniors how we connect with songs and ask them to name some of their favorite songs.

Extensions: Each participant starts drawing when the music begins, when the music stops, they pass their picture to the person seated to their right. Each participant will add to their neighbor's picture (like musical chairs). The music and drawing, stopping, and passing artwork will continue until the song ends.

Activity Guide for Seniors

Activity Title: Sunny Day

Supplies: Scarves

Rhythm Sticks

Maracas

Songs about the Sun

▶ Jimmie Davis - You Are My Sunshine (1940).

▶ The Beatles - Here Comes The Sun

▶ Katrina And The Waves - Walking On Sunshine (Lyrics)

▶ John Denver - Sunshine On My Shoulders (Official Audio)

▶ I Can See Clearly Now

▶ Ray Charles That Lucky Old Sun

▶ Louis Armstrong "That Lucky Old Sun"

Activity: The Leader plays a ukulele or guitar and sings the song "You are My Sunshine" while encouraging Seniors to sing along. Seniors can do hand motions to the song while singing it. Next, share other songs that Seniors would enjoy about a sunny day. The Leader can use scarves, rhythm sticks, or maracas with the various songs.

A Variation of the activity would be to have the Seniors fill in the blanks as you sing parts of the song.

Ex. You are my _____, My only _____, You make me _____
When skies are _____, You'll never know _____,
How much _____ Please don't _____


Activity Guide for Seniors

Activity Title: Music for Wellness “Mozart Effect”

Mozart’s music is beautiful and cathartic (psychological relief)

Some experts say it goes beyond his music, studying emotions and actually inducing healing in the listener.

Suggested Music

- ▶ Mozart: Sonata for Two Pianos in D major, K. 448 - (II) Andante
- ▶ Mozart - Piano Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488 [complete]
- ▶ 3 Hours Classical Music For Brain Power | Mozart Effect | Stimulation Concentration...
- ▶ Beethoven - Für Elise (Piano Version)
- ▶ Bach Study Music Playlist  Instrumental Classical Music Mix for Studying, Conce...
- ▶ Relaxing Music with Nature Sounds - Waterfall HD

Benefits Music and movement may help Seniors perform tasks more efficiently.

Studies have shown that music can help to calm, relax, and reduce stress. The University of California Irvine conducted a study that demonstrated music enhances memory when listening to Classical Music.

The Leader can use Classical Music for relaxation in a group setting by having the Seniors seated with their eyes closed. The selected music is played and the Seniors are encouraged to relax after an active group session. Listening to soothing music is a good way to start or end the day!

Activity Guide for Seniors

Activity Title: Shake Rattle and Roll

Supplies: Rhythm Sticks
Maracas

▶ Shake, Rattle and Roll - Bill Haley and his Comets

▶ Old Time Rock & Roll Bob Seger

▶ Shake, Rattle and Roll Big Joe Turner

▶ BB King - Let The Good Times Roll (From "Legends of Rock 'n' Roll...")

▶ Little Richard - Lucille

▶ Johnny B. Goode

▶ Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On

Activity: The Leader plays songs with strong rhythm beats and gives directional instructions for clapping while demonstrating to the Seniors (clap in front, the left, and right, overhead, and in a circle). The Leader can use maracas and have the Seniors shake them to the rhythm of the music while having fun together. The Leader can use Let the Good Times Roll as a good song to have Seniors sing along and use an echo response as they sing with BB King. Also, the Seniors can express themselves by tapping their feet or dancing based on the comfort level of the Senior.


Activity Guide for Seniors


Activity Title: Luau - Hawaii


Supplies: Hawaiian Leis


Grass Skirts

Hawaiian style Music

 "Love Letters in the Sand" Pat Boone

 Sol Hoopii / My Little Grass Shack In Kealahou Hawaii

 Louis Armstrong With Andy Iona And His Islanders - On A Little Ba...

 Hawaiian Music & Hawaiian Music Ukulele: Isle of Aloha FULL ALB...

Activity: Hula Dancing: The Leader plays music and demonstrates hand and arm movements to the music. Movements could be done from a standing or sitting position. Some Seniors may want to stand and sway to the music while other Seniors may want to stay seated and do hand and arm movements to the music. The Leader can provide fun and entertainment with this activity. Some Seniors may want to wear the Grass Skirts and demonstrate Hula Dancing.

Activity Guide for Seniors

Activity Title: Name That Tune

Supplies:

Playlist of Music

- Example songs:
- ▶ Doris Day - Que Sera, Sera (Whatever Will Be Will Be)
 - ▶ Sixteen Tons Tennessee Ernie Ford
 - ▶ Bobby Darin - Mack the Knife (Lyrics On-Screen and in Des...)
 - ▶ Elvis Presley - Love Me Tender (Official Audio)
 - ▶ Old Time Rock & Roll Bob Seger
 - ▶ Bill Withers - Lean On Me

Activity: Play short clips of the music (audio only) and have the Seniors guess the titles and/or the artists. Then, select which songs the Seniors want to listen to the complete song and replay their requests. Consider using songs from different genres (country, rock, classical, jazz) and music from different decades. The Leader should encourage the Seniors to clap their hands and tap their toes as they feel the rhythm of the music as it played. Encourage the Seniors to sing along or just hum the tune.


Listening to old favorite songs can bring back joy, positive memories and entertainment. An individual playlist of songs will resonate and have more personal meaning to the Senior. In order to develop a personalized playlist, have the Senior share their favorite type of music and/or songs they enjoy hearing. If the Senior has difficulty naming some songs, research when they were born and look at the music charts from their era such as, 1940s and 1950s. Generally, the greatest music impact on the Senior will be during the teenage years.

Activity Guide for Seniors


Activity Title: Doo Wop


A genre of rhythm and blues music that originated in African American communities during the 1940s, mainly in the larger cities in America


Supplies: Rhythm Sticks
Maracas

 One Fine Day The Chiffons

 The Silhouettes "Get a Job"

 Book Of Love by The Monotones

 In the Still of the Night - Fred Parris and The Satins

 Frankie Lymon & The Teenagers - Why Do Fools Fall In Love?


Activity: The Leader selects songs from the Doo Wop sound and the Seniors wanting to move to the music should dance or move to the music. Those who would be more comfortable seated, encourage them to tap their feet/clap their hands to the rhythm. Some of the Seniors will enjoy singing along with the songs and if they do not know the words, have them hum along to the tune. The Leader can help the Seniors to decide how they want to be active by offering various options. The Leader can get the Seniors more active by using rhythm sticks or maracas while the music is played.

Activity Guide for Seniors


Activity Title: Rock Around the Clock

Supplies: Rhythm sticks

Tambourines

 [Bill Haley & His Comets - Rock Around The Clock \(1955\) HD](#)

 [Great Balls of Fire](#) Jerry Lee Lewis

 [Old Time Rock & Roll](#) Bob Seger

Activity: The Leader introduces the activity by using a call and response pattern for clapping. The Leader taps a rhythm pattern and the Seniors respond by clapping the pattern back to the Leader. Do several patterns as a warm-up for this activity. Distribute the rhythm sticks or tambourines to each participating Senior. Play the music Rock Around the Clock and the Leader will demonstrate and encourage the Seniors to produce the rhythm of the music and encourage them to sing along, as well.

Activity Guide for Seniors

Activity Title: Big Time with Big Bands!

Supplies: Rhythm Sticks

Tambourine

▶ "MOONLIGHT SERENADE" BY GLENN MILLER

▶ Benny Goodman. Stompin' at the Savoy -.wmv

▶ "SING, SING, SING" BY BENNY GOODMAN

▶ GLENN MILLER & HIS ORCHESTRA String Of Pearls

▶ Glenn Miller - In The Mood [HQ]

▶ Chattanooga Choo-Choo (Remastered)

Activity: The Leader plays Big Band music and has the Seniors pretend they are playing various instruments. For a variation, the Leader can pretend to be the conductor and the Seniors can join in by moving their arms and tapping their feet while seated. The Leader can use rhythm sticks and /or tambourines to add variation to the activity.

"You've gotta dance like there's nobody watching, love like you'll never be hurt,
sing like there's nobody listening,
and live like it's heaven on earth." William W. Purkey