Daily tips for Playful Learning at Home – Number 6

Awful Orchestra

Most children love to make a bit of noise! Today's idea is all about turning that into music. It may not sound great, but your child will not just be making a racket. Knowing about rhythms has been linked in research to later skill at reading. Stopping and starting is great for developing executive function – a whole set of skills that underpin attention and learning

Most importantly, making "music" is fun. It unites us, is good for our health and lifts the spirits. Have a go for as long as you can stand it! All the family can join in.

What do I need?

Some things that can be "musical instruments" for a day, such as:

- Metal pan lids – either as drums or cymbals (watch fingers!)
- Metal and wooden spoons, whisks
- Some small bags or plastic bottles or boxes with rattly things in like change, pasta or beads

What do we do?

This depends on your child, so follow their lead. Always make sure you have thought about safety issues

- Some children will tap and shake away happily. You can show them what to do if not, and see if they copy you
- When your child tries something, copy what they do. Talk about what you are doing, and the kinds of sounds they are making (loud, quiet, etc) – look out for a response from them
- Offer your child different "instruments" to try, and talk about how they are different
- Make a simple rhythm, can your child copy it back?

What will your child learn from this play?

- Rhythms
- Behavioural control

Coordinated movement
Stopping & starting

Turn taking & social play
Music & fun

How can you take it further?

- Hide behind a sofa or blanket and see if your child can guess which "instrument" you are using. Take turns
- Show your child how filling bottles with different amounts of water makes different sounds when you blow across the top – let them experiment with this and have a go (with care!)
- Try different materials and talk about what differences they make
- Pretend you/child are a conductor with a baton – put on a performance for family later!

Play & talk together
Be careful with too many questions

Pause and wait for your child to respond
Copy what they say and add to it