



Prodigies

# 5 PITCH PERFECT SECRETS FOR

# HOMESCHOOL Music Magic

EMPOWER YOUR HOMESCHOOL WITH THE TOOLS THAT MAKE  
LEARNING MUSIC FUN



BY MR. ROB YOUNG



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# PART OF YOUR WORLD



Dear Homeschooling Families,

I'm **so** excited to be sharing this special journey with you! As a parent, educator, or caregiver, you have an incredible opportunity to make music a part of your child's daily life. I'm a firm believer in the power of music and I truly believe these ideas will be so impactful that they reshape and reinvigorate your homeschool.

Music is a dynamic tool for growth. It doesn't just teach kids how to sing or play an instrument—it helps with language skills, math, emotional development and even perseverance. When your child learns music, they're honing skills that will stay with them for life. And the best part? It's fun! Music brings a sense of play that makes learning feel effortless.

This is a unique opportunity, to explore at your own pace and create a rich, musical environment that fits your routine. It's not about being a professional music teacher—it's about creating meaningful moments. The little things can make a **big** difference. It's these simple moments that add up and leverage the power of music into something transformative.

Let music be a part of your daily life—your routines, your playtime. Make it part of the family. The most important thing is that you're having fun and sharing the experience together. That's where the magic of music really happens.

Thank you for letting me be part of your homeschooling journey. On behalf of me, my team and (most importantly) your kids, thank you for being here. #HappyMusicing and I hope you enjoy **5 Pitch Perfect Secrets for Homeschool Music Magic**.



-Mr. Rob





## Welcome, homeschoolers!

Hey everyone! And welcome to another Prodigies PDF! In this guide, you'll find the secrets to making music an integral part of your homeschool routine. Whether you're new to music education or a long-time pro, you'll leave this packet empowered to make the most meaningful musical moments with your kids.

My name is Rob Young, aka Mr. Rob. I am a drummer, a long-time music teacher, a dad of two girls, and the host and creator of the Prodigies music program.

## In this guide, you will....

- Learn how the fundamentals of music can be taught using colors, hand-signs and Solfege to teach the musical alphabet and develop pitch recognition.
- Discover how early exposure to pitch and play-based learning fosters creativity and leads to early pitch development.
- Understand the social, cognitive and emotional benefits of music education and how it supports overall development.
- Explore the tools and techniques to teach kids musical notes, patterns and aural comprehension.
- Unlock the top 5 instruments for young kids and tips for creating a rich musical environment that accelerates learning.
- Gain practical insights on integrating music into daily homeschool routines to inspire creativity and encourage growth.

**"My youngest son developed perfect pitch before he was age 4 by using Mr. Rob's lessons! He is 5 now , and loves to point what notes his Dad is playing on the guitar.**

**When he can't think of the name of a note he wants to hear, he says stuff like "Mom, I want the song that starts with a G Note! Prodigies music lessons are amazing!"**



**Jenni  
Lemerand**

Mom

# WHY MUSIC IN HOMESCHOOL?



Studies show that music education enhances emotional regulation and empathy in children.



Learning music helps develop emotional intelligence by engaging areas of the brain involved in:

- processing emotions
- social interaction and
- self-awareness

Learning a musical instrument provides huge benefits—socially, cognitively and emotionally. It helps with academic and personal growth. But perhaps the most exciting reason to bring music into your homeschool is that it's fun!



## Music has the ability to:

- increase language skills, mathematical reasoning and spatial-temporal abilities
- build fine and gross motor skills through activities like hand-signing or drumming
- provide opportunities to develop perseverance and problem solving

This goes beyond music, these are life skills.

Music is a wonderful way to help children express their emotions. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is a key part of music education because music allows us to feel, express and talk about emotions. It helps us process our feelings, put labels on them and share in the human experience.

# HOMESCHOOLING MUSIC BENEFITS



At Prodigies, most of our customers are either K-5 school districts or homeschooling families. We used to think it was the K-5 classrooms who would need the hardest content and the most advanced music theory. But over the last decade, we've learned that it's actually the homeschooling families who progress through the material most quickly.

## Homeschooling offers much more control over:

- **when** you introduce music
- **what** you work on
- **how often** you practice

Homeschooling families are the ones constantly coming back to us asking for more challenging material because they can accomplish so much in less time.



The homeschooled kids are developing perfect pitch and playing difficult melodies by age 6, and they're usually the ones asking us for **MORE** videos and more materials.



In your small group, you are not restricted by the one-size-fits-all approach often reserved for teachers managing hundreds of students weekly. You're able to offer a personalized & meaningful experience with music. This will resonate with your kids, especially as a primer to getting private lessons down the road.

In homeschool environments, there is a unique opportunity to tailor music education in a way that aligns perfectly with a children's interests, learning styles and developmental stages.

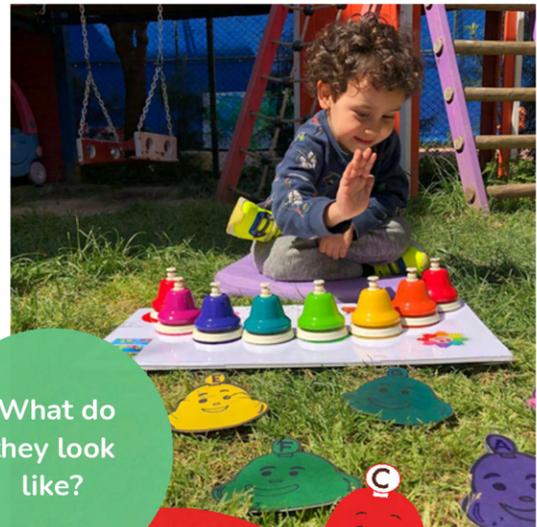
Give your kids an amazing, musical foundation and it will enrich their lives whether they continue to play an instrument or not. They'll become better learners and they'll unlock myriad internal benefits that come with a well-rounded music education.

# MEANINGFUL PLAY WITH PITCH



When you think about music lessons, you might imagine black & white sheet music, lots of note reading and teaching the piano. If you're going to teach your kids that, awesome! But that is not what I want you to focus on, especially because you're probably not a music teacher, and you might not know anything about reading black & white music.

Your main focus will be **meaningful play with pitch during the critical period for auditory development**. More simply, providing your kids to the fundamental building blocks of music during their most formative years.



What do they look like?

When we teach the alphabet and consistently sing the ABCs, we're giving our kids the tools they need to develop their language skills.

What do they sound like?

Identify these letters?

How do I pronounce them?



You **don't** have to worry about music history or reading black & white sheet music. You **don't** have to worry about learning a complicated instrument. You **just** need to focus on giving your kids **memorable experiences with individual sounds**.



# MEANINGFUL PLAY WITH PITCH



We do this through a combination of hand-signs, the colors, numbers and note names. We know it can feel a little overwhelming to have all these different labels for the same thing, and we hear you. There are some pros and cons to when we use one label versus another.

If I ask my 2-year-old to play me the note **B**, she'd probably look at me like, "I don't really remember which one B is." But if I ask her to play me the **pink** note, she's going to have no problem finding that pink bell.



**FIXED VERBAL LABELS** for the fundamentals of music provide a path to musical literacy, even without an instrument. For example, leveraging the understanding of colors to represent pitch.



Most kids, even toddlers, start out being able to identify colors before they can identify letters or numbers. Learning music with color-coded instruments gives us an opportunity to communicate concrete instructions that kids are sure to understand.





Unlocking the magic of music education begins with introducing the musical alphabet to children during their early developmental years. By making musical notes more accessible and engaging, we lay the foundation for a lifelong appreciation and understanding of music.

## Making Musical Notes Accessible



One effective way to demystify musical notes is by using **Solfege hand-signs**. These hand-signs transform abstract concepts into tangible actions, engaging both the body and mind. The **bilateral kinesthetic movement** stimulates both hemispheres of the brain, enhancing memory and understanding.



## The Power of Early Exposure

Early exposure to musical concepts is crucial for developing:

- **Perfect Pitch (Absolute Pitch)** The ability to identify or recreate a musical note without a reference tone.
- **Relative Pitch** Recognizing the interval between notes, understanding how they relate within a scale.



In English-speaking countries, perfect pitch appears in roughly 1 in 10,000 individuals. However, in tonal language cultures like Mandarin Chinese, this skill is more prevalent due to early and frequent engagement with pitch variations in language. This highlights the importance of introducing pitch recognition activities during early childhood.



## Exploring Chords

Introduce children to fundamental chords, such as the **C Major Chord**, which consists of:

- **Do, Mi, Sol** (1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the C major scale)
- **Red, Yellow, Teal** (using color associations)

## Singing and Hand-Signs

Use familiar melodies like "**Mary Had a Little Lamb**" to teach notes through:

- **Solfège** Singing the notes (Mi, Re, Do)
- **Colors** Associating notes with colors (Yellow, Orange, Red)
- **Note Names** Identifying the actual note names (E, D, C)
- **Scale Degrees** Understanding the numerical position of notes in a scale (3, 2, 1).

## Listening Games

- "**What Song Is It?**" Play the beginning of a song using bells or a musical instrument and have children guess the melody. This enhances their ability to recognize tunes and improves auditory discrimination.
- "**What Note Is It?**" Play a single note (concealing the instrument if possible) and ask the child to identify it. Use prompts and gentle guidance to help them if needed. Over time, this activity sharpens their pitch recognition skills.



By understanding these building blocks, children can:

Recognize patterns in music

Develop a deeper comprehension of musical structure

Play simple songs using chords



# SECRET #1 IMPLEMENTING THE TANEDA METHOD



## Exploring Chords

The Taneda Method recommends a structured timetable for teaching the three main chords:



1. **Months 0-3** Introduce the **C Major Chord** versus random sounds
2. **Months 3-6** Add the **G Major Chord** to the listening exercises
3. **Months 6-9** Introduce the **F Major Chord** alongside C and G chords.

By progressively adding complexity, children can:

Build a solid foundation in aural comprehension

Develop acute listening skills

Differentiate between chords

## Encouraging Play-Based Learning



Children learn best through play. Allow them to:

Experiment with instruments

Incorporate musical play into everyday activities

Use bells and colors in creative ways

The goal is to **make music enjoyable and engaging**, fostering a positive and lasting relationship with musical learning.

## Resources for Further Learning



- **Solfege Hand-Sign Poster** A visual tool to reinforce learning, which can be placed in common areas like classrooms or playrooms.
- **My First Songbook: Volume 1** A collection of simple songs with visual aids like Solfege hand signs and color associations.
- **Prodigies Bells App** An interactive app featuring virtual bells and built-in listening games to practice pitch recognition on the go.

By integrating these strategies and resources into your teaching, you're not only making music accessible but also igniting a passion that can last a lifetime.



Creating a rich musical environment is essential for nurturing a child's love for music and enhancing their cognitive development. By thoughtfully selecting the music they are exposed to and engaging them in interactive activities, you can significantly impact their musical growth.

## The Three Buckets of Musical Exposure

To effectively cultivate a musical environment, consider introducing music through three distinct "buckets" or categories, each serving a unique purpose in a child's musical journey.



**1. Focused on Single Notes** “Why single notes?,” you may ask. Simply, we’re breaking it down into **fundamental building blocks**. Just as learning individual letters is crucial for reading, understanding single musical notes lays the foundation for musical literacy.



This gives the learner a **deep understanding** of how we communicate the **language of music**. Focusing on one note at a time helps children grasp the characteristics and sounds of each note.



## Reinforcement Activities

- **Sing and Explore Individual Notes** Spend time singing and playing a single note, discussing its sound, pitch, and how it feels to produce it.
- **Note Recognition Games** Use flashcards or instruments to help children identify and remember different notes.





**2. Simple Melodies and Patterns** The second bucket is where we find a lot of classic kids' songs like "Mary Had a Little Lamb" or "Hot Cross Buns." These songs are a bit more advanced because we're now combining a few things at once. There are patterns emerging and some musical grammar happening, but it's still pretty digestible for most kids.

We do a lot of work with these songs because combining musical notes in groups of three and five is really powerful. So many children's songs lean on simple three-note combinations like Do, Re, Mi or Mi, Sol, La. We love using these combinations to make songs that are memorable but still pretty simple for young learners.



## Reinforcement Activities

- **Learn Classic Children's Songs** Teach your child simple songs that use limited notes to build confidence and familiarity.
- **Pattern Recognition** Encourage them to identify repeating patterns or sequences within the songs.

# SECRET #2 CULTIVATE A RICH MUSICAL ENVIRONMENT



**3. High Information Music** Now, the third bucket is this idea of high information music, and it's almost like playing music that's way above your kids' pay grade to help expand their minds and their musical imagination. Think of it like when you put on talk radio for your kids in the car—they probably don't understand what's being discussed, but they're hearing how people converse, picking up on bigger words and faster sentences. That's the idea of high information music, it's like eating your musical vegetables.



Search for artists like Aydin Esen, Charlie Parker, or Rachmaninoff, you'll find music that's using all of the musical notes in some pretty wild and intricate ways. This kind of complexity broadens kids' understanding of what's possible in music and expands their musical imagination.



A great way to incorporate this is to play high information music in the background while your kids are drawing, coloring, or doing other activities. It continues their music education even when they're not actively focused on the musical notes. You can also talk with them about the different instruments, rhythms, and emotions in the music to deepen their understanding and appreciation.

Create a musical atmosphere at home by making instruments accessible, setting dedicated music times, incorporating music into daily routines, and encouraging your child's exploration.

# SECRET #2 CULTIVATE A RICH MUSICAL ENVIRONMENT



Now, it's important to remember that everything we've talked about so far is rooted in Western music—the 12-note scale, Solfege, all that standard stuff. But if you dive into different musical traditions, you'll find entirely new approaches to rhythm and melody. Many cultures around the world have unique musical systems with their own scales, instruments, and styles that differ greatly from Western norms. Exposing your kids to these diverse musical styles enriches their auditory experiences and inspires them to think about music in new and exciting ways.

Introducing your kids to diverse musical traditions like African drumming, Gamelan music, and Indian sitar performances immerses them in unique sounds and rhythms beyond Western music by:

boosting creativity

sharpening their listening skills

fostering a deep appreciation for the rich diversity of global music

My final thought on cultivating a rich musical environment revolves around the concept of **intraverbals**—essentially, fill-in-the-blank or finish-the-sentence activities. As parents, we often sing the same songs to our kids over and over again. So, if your kids are in a "**Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star**" phase, try this: sing "Twinkle, twinkle, little..." and then pause to let them fill in the blank with "star." It's a fantastic way to prompt their singing and encourage them to participate, even as early as age one or two. Incorporating these fill-in-the-blank moments will get your kids singing earlier than you might expect.

Children love repetition. Embrace their favorite songs and routines, don't hesitate to repeat them. Once they're comfortable, introduce slight variations to keep things engaging.



Imagine a child's face lighting up with joy as they make sounds on their first musical instrument—a spark that could ignite a lifelong passion. But with so many instruments out there, how do you choose the one that's perfect for your young musician? We can help. In this section, we'll discuss the top 5 instruments that combine the best parts of learning, having fun and are age appropriate.

## Number 5: Drums

- **Fun & High Energy** Drums are engaging and perfect for beginners
- **Simple Rhythms** Starting with beats like **boom boom cha** from **We Will Rock You** makes it easy for kids to follow along
- **Ease of Use** Using a low drum and a high drum (like a floor tom and snare) simplifies learning
- **Limitation** Drums focus on rhythm but lack musical notes, missing a key component of musical education



## Number 4: Ukulele

- **Kid-Friendly Size** Smaller and easier to handle than a guitar
- **Simplified Chords** Often requires pressing just one string to play a chord, reducing physical demand
- **Gentle on Fingers** Nylon strings are softer, preventing blisters and discomfort
- **Transferable Skills** Techniques learned on the ukulele easily apply to the guitar



Choosing instruments that are easy to play increases your child's chance for success in learning music. Instruments that are simple remove barriers, allowing your child to focus on exploring and enjoying music right from the start.



## Number 3: Color-Coded Instruments (excluding Deskbells)

Boomwhackers and color-coded xylophones pros:

- **Visual Learning** Colors help children associate and remember notes
- **Interactive Play** Fun and engaging for kids.
- **Limited Notes** Hard to play more than 2 or 3 notes at once
- **Mallet Use** Requires coordination to strike the right note

Overall, these are great tools but not as user-friendly as deskbells for very young children.



## Number 2: Piano



- **Universal Instrument** Widely used for composition, film scoring, and music notation
- **Straightforward Layout** Notes are in a straight line with one of each note, making it easier to visualize chords and memorize melodies
- **Wide Range** Offers both very low and very high notes, playable with two hands
- **Ease of Sound Production** Simply pressing a key produces sound

## Number 1: C Major Deskbells (Chromanotes Deskbells)

We've learned so much about the myriad cognitive, emotional, and social benefits of music education for kids. Solidifying these efforts demands the right instrument. Through all of our experience and research, the **C Major Deskbells** stand out as the premier instrument for young children. Their simplicity, design and versatility make them an invaluable addition to your homeschooling journey.

By choosing the **C Major Deskbells**, you're providing your child with an instrument that is perfectly suited to their developmental needs.



## Immediate Engagement



- **Ready Right Out of the Box** From the moment you open them, your child can dive straight into making music.
- **Simple to Play** A gentle tap is all it takes to produce a clear, sustained note.
- **Designed for Little Hands** No complicated techniques—just instant musical gratification.

## Visual Appeal



- **Vibrant Colors** Each bell is a different color, making them visually appealing and engaging.
- **Color-Coded Notes** Helps children easily recognize and remember different notes.
- **Labeled with Note Names and Scale Degrees** Reinforces learning as they play.

## Versatile and Fun



- **Arrange and Organize** Kids can line up the bells in rainbow order or numerical order (1-8), enhancing sequencing skills.
- **Interactive Songs** Greet each bell with a song like "Hello Red," boosting both musical and social development.
- **Musical Cleanup** Turn tidying up into a fun activity with songs like "C ya later!" while putting the bells away.

## Quality, Value, Support

- **Superior Sound and Durability** Well-tuned and built to withstand enthusiastic play.
- **Affordable Excellence** Offers the benefits of a premium instrument at a fraction of the cost of similar classroom instruments.
- **Supporting Your Musical Journey** Comes with a 2-year, 3-bell replacement policy when purchased from us, showing our commitment to your child's musical growth.



## A Life-Changing Instrument

- **Over 20,000 Sets Sold** We've shared the joy of these bells with thousands of families and educators.
- **Central to Learning** They have become a cornerstone in inspiring young minds and fostering a lifelong love of music.

As a music educator, discovering these bells was a game-changer. They transformed not only my teaching approach but also the way my students connected with music.

# SECRET #4 MUSIC AND MOVEMENT



Music and movement activities are a beloved part of early childhood education. While these activities are fantastic for developing rhythm and motor skills, they often miss **critical elements of musical education**, such as pitch and melody.

In this section, we'll delve into the role of music and movement in your child's musical journey and explore how to balance them with foundational musical concepts.

## Understanding the Role of Music and Movement

Music and movement activities like stomping to the beat, throwing scarves, or performing action songs such as "The Wheels on the Bus" and "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" are excellent for:

- **Developing Rhythm** Helps children feel and move to the beat
- **Enhancing Motor Skills** Improves both gross and fine motor coordination
- **Encouraging Physical Activity** Allows kids to burn energy and stay active
- **Promoting Enjoyment of Music** Makes learning fun and engaging



Incorporating pitch turns playful movement activities into powerful musical learning experiences



Though these activities are beneficial, they often lack focus on essential musical elements like pitch recognition, melody and harmony. This gap means that while children are enjoying music, they're not necessarily developing a deeper understanding of musical concepts.

# SECRET #4 MUSIC AND MOVEMENT



## Balancing Movement with Musical Education

Music and movement should be one aspect of a comprehensive musical toolkit. Here's how to integrate them effectively:

- **Combine Movement with Pitch** Introduce songs that involve movement but also highlight different pitches. For example, moving up & down to match high & low notes.
- **Use Instruments During Movement** Incorporate simple instruments like bells or shakers to connect physical movement with musical sounds.
- **Strategic Placement** Use high-energy movement activities at the beginning to capture attention or at the end to leave on a high note, but ensure the core of your lesson includes musical fundamentals.



Don't let movement overshadow music—**balance is key** to nurturing a well-rounded young musician.



Regular practice and positive reinforcement are essential components of your child's musical journey. While this might seem like common sense, understanding how to implement these effectively can make a significant difference.

## Maximize Practice Time

Tailor each practice session to your child's attention span and try to avoid common hurdles faced in any learning environment.

- **Age-Based Guideline** Multiply your child's age by five to estimate their optimal attention span in minutes.
- **Finish on a High Note** Aim to conclude practice sessions before your child becomes tired or frustrated.

This ensures each session ends positively, keeping them excited for the next one. Overextending can lead to negative experiences, reducing their enthusiasm.

## Emphasize Process Over Product

It might sound la-di-da but by simply focusing on the joy of making music you create a learning environment that is inherently less stressful.

- **Encourage Exploration** Let your child enjoy playing their instrument without the pressure of perfection.
- **Celebrate Effort and Creativity** Praise their attempts and creativity, this reinforces their confidence and willingness to continue learning.
- **Be Their Biggest Cheerleader** Your enthusiasm fuels their motivation. Show genuine interest and excitement in their musical activities.



Focusing on the process, not just the end result, nurtures a lifelong love for music.



## Enhance Motivation Through Experiences

- **Inspire Them with Live Music** Attending concerts exposes them to the excitement of live performances and can significantly boost their enthusiasm for learning. Choose artists they enjoy to make the experience more relatable. Take it from me, watching professional musicians perform can be mind-blowing and deeply inspiring.

## Model the Behavior You Want to See

- **Lead by Example** you can participate together in practice sessions, attempting the same pieces or even playing duets. Demonstrating a positive attitude—approaching challenges with determination and a smile—sets a strong example for them to emulate. Your involvement showcases commitment and underscores the importance of practice and perseverance.



Whew. So, those are the 5 Secrets to Homeschool Music Magic!

We've covered a lot in this guide, and I hope you found these secrets to homeschooling music both enlightening and educational. Remember, this resource is here for you to revisit anytime.

If you're looking for a structured curriculum or additional resources to implement these strategies, we invite you to explore Prodigies. You can find us at:

[prodigies.com](https://prodigies.com)

and all of our kits and instruments are available at:

[shop.prodigies.com](https://shop.prodigies.com)



# OUR LITTLE SECRET TO GET STARTED



## Helping kids sing, hand-sign and play their way to an incredible music education



As a special thank you for participating in this journey with us, we're offering an exclusive discount. Use the code **HOMESCHOOL15** at checkout to receive 15% off your purchase. This code is only available through this guide and is our way of supporting homeschooling families who are often working within tight budgets. Whether you're signing up for a monthly membership or purchasing instruments like our beloved deskbells, this discount is our little secret to help you get started.

We understand the challenges that come with homeschooling and acquiring quality educational materials. As a small family-run business, we're committed to supporting you every step of the way. That's why we offer:

- **Free Shipping** On all orders within the contiguous United States.
- **30-Day, No-Hassle Return Policy** If you're not completely satisfied, we're here to make it right.
- **Exceptional Customer Support** Reach out to us anytime with questions or concerns.

Your dedication to enriching your child's life with music means the world to us. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your homeschooling journey. We hope these secrets empower you to create magical musical moments at home.

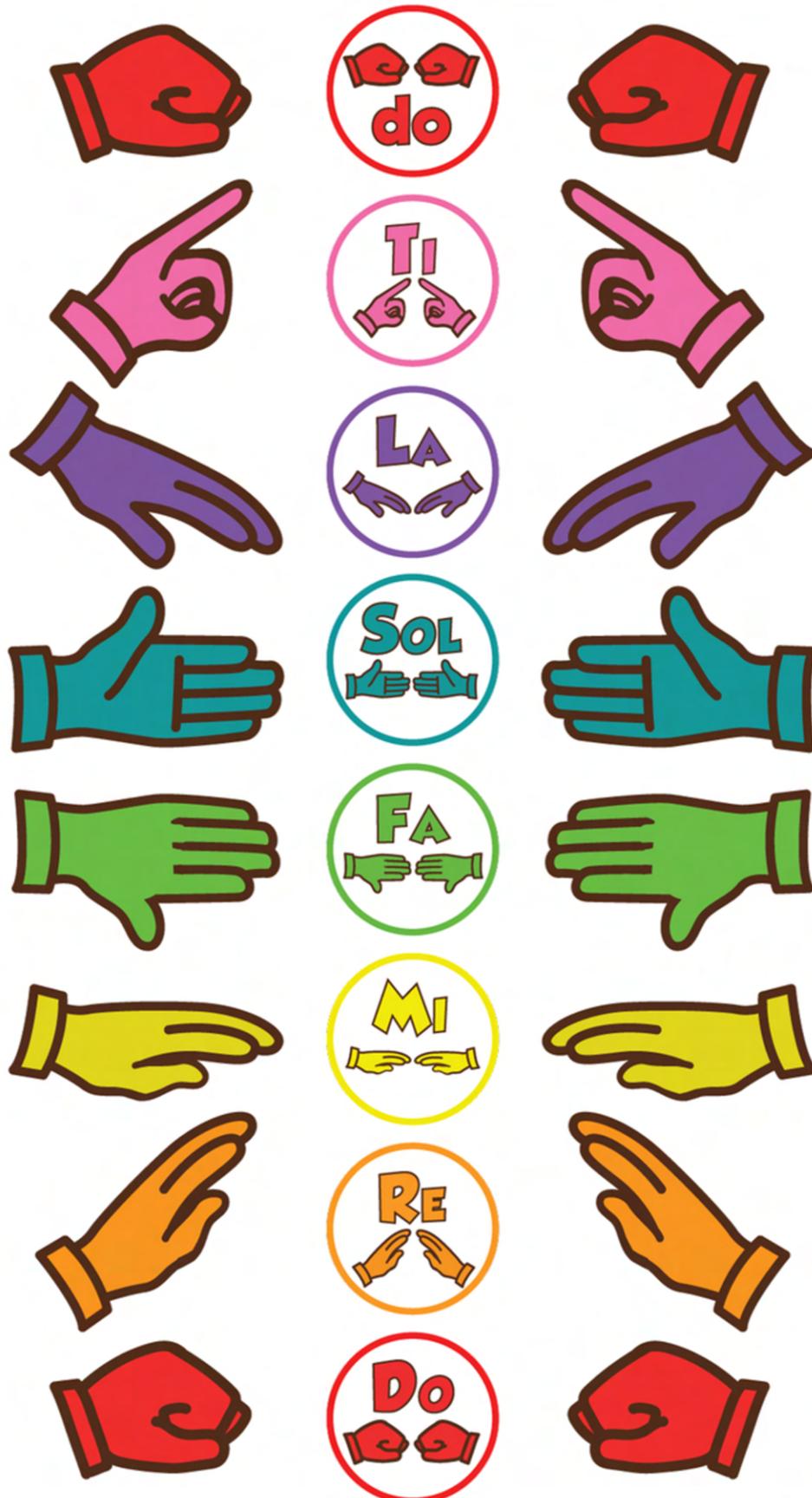
On behalf of me, my team and YOUR KIDS (who probably don't thank you enough) thanks for checking out this pdf. #HappyMusicing and until next time I will...

Cya later, cya later, cya, cya, later!!

-Mr. Rob & the Prodigies team



Prodigies  
SING, SIGN, PLAY





**SING, SIGN, PLAY**

A musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The staff contains eight notes: C (red), D (orange), E (yellow), F (green), G (teal), A (purple), B (pink), and C (red). Each note is accompanied by a hand sign: C (thumb up), D (thumb and index up), E (index up), F (index and middle up), G (index, middle, and ring up), A (index, middle, ring, and pinky up), B (index, middle, and ring up), and C (thumb up).

A row of eight circular icons, each containing a solfège syllable and a corresponding hand sign: DO (red, thumb up), RE (orange, thumb and index up), MI (yellow, index up), FA (green, index and middle up), SOL (teal, index, middle, and ring up), LA (purple, index, middle, ring, and pinky up), TI (pink, index, middle, and ring up), and DO (red, thumb up).



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