

Hymns to Sing Praise

Part 1 of a curriculum series
written by Krista B. Lovell, CCE.

kristalovell@comcast.net

Used by permission
when author is credited

Sing Praise

Author: Rhonda Gowler Greene

Illustrator: Janet Broxon

Augsburg Fortress Press

ISBN: 9780806651200

Psalm 148 & Psalm 150

Main Idea:

Psalm 148 begins and ends with "Praise the Lord!" as it lifts up the wonder and miracle of God's creation and calls all of creation (from heavenly hosts to sun, moon, and stars, to sea monsters from the deep, to fruit trees and cedars, to creeping things and flying birds, to kings, princes, rulers and all people young and old) to worship. Our God is not only a magnificent Creator, but a faithful God as well who has provided the whole of creation for us! How do we respond to such creative power? We leap to our feet and raise our hands and voices in joyous praise!

Objectives:

Through this lesson the students will have the opportunity to...

- Experience hearing and playing a variety of instruments
- Read together scripture and a book that inspires joyous praise
- Enjoy hearing various types of music
- Create their own dance moves in praise to God
- Make an instrument (optional)
- Experience the spiritual practice of Breath Prayer
- Participate in a dancing benediction

Something to Remember:

"Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!"
Psalm 150:6

Lesson Quick View

We GATHER as the people of God

- Play a variety of instruments to explore sounds and techniques
- Worship with music filled praise and Psalm 150

We HEAR God's Word

- Read *Sing Praise* by Rhoda Gowler Greene
- Read together Psalm 148

We RESPOND creatively

Dance and move to a variety of music

- Make your own instrument - rain stick, drum, tambourine.... (optional)

We DEPART to serve

- Pray together using a Breath Prayer
- Experience a Dancing Benediction

Additional enrichment activities are provided on the last page of this lesson plan.

You Will Need

Gather

- Variety of musical instruments ranging from simple rhythm types to classical
- Musicians who can help demonstrate instruments
- Worship Center items – brightly colored cloth, candle, matches, snuffer, Bible

Hear

- Bibles
- Book - *Sing Praise* by Rhoda Gowler Greene

Respond

- Audio recordings of a variety of music - slow, fast, upbeat, etc
- Instrument making supplies (optional)
- Rain stick- cardboard tubes, aluminum foil, aquarium gravel, pencil, tape/glue
- Drum - empty canisters (oatmeal, coffee) with plastic lids, paper to cover containers
- Tambourine - heavy weight paper plates, stapler, staples, hole punch, chenille sticks, jingle bells
- Shakers - small containers with lids, small pebbles or aquarium gravel, paper to cover container

Depart

- CD of upbeat music suitable for dancing

Special Note to Leaders

You may find it helpful to read the book review of this book as part of your planning for this session.

Storypath: Connecting Children's Literature With Our Faith Story is part of the Union Presbyterian Seminary Library website offering resources for parents, educators, and pastors.

This book review can be found at

<http://storypath.upsem.edu/reviews/book-reviews-a-z>

Suggested Audience

- Preschool - Grade 5
- Multiage - preschool-elementary
- Intergenerational

Suggested Settings

- Mid-week gathering
- Summer Sunday School
- Family retreat/workshop
- VBS



We GATHER as the people of God

You Will Need

• Nametags

Greet everyone by name as they arrive and welcome them to the session. If appropriate in your setting, give each person a name tag to encourage everyone to learn each other's names. Introduce newcomers to the rest of the group and invite everyone to make them feel welcome.

You Will Need

- A variety of musical instruments ranging from rhythm instruments to classical instruments.
- Musicians and/or others who can help demonstrate how to play the instruments you've gathered.

Musical Instruments

Invite the children to explore the instruments you gave gathered. Allow them to play the instruments and encourage them to experiment with a variety of techniques to create sounds. YES - this will be noisy and chaotic so be prepared to enjoy the sounds and go with the flow!

Encourage your musicians and other volunteers to work with the younger children to show them easy and safe ways to play the more classical instruments.

Make sure everyone gets a chance to try each of the instruments.

You Will Need

Worship Center:

- Brightly colored cloth
- Christ candle
- Matches & Snuffer
- Bible

Before the Session

Set up the worship center in a location where everyone can make a circle around it. A small table or piano bench works great.

Opening Worship

When most or all of the children have arrived and everyone has had an opportunity to play the instruments, gather everyone together around the worship center you have created asking each person to bring an instrument to this time of worship.

Invite everyone to join you in worship as you **light the Christ candle** saying, "Jesus says, 'I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'" (John 8:12)

Read Psalm 150 as a Musical Litany, reading each verse separately followed by a round of impromptu music created by the instruments you've brought to the worship circle.

Reading Note: If your group is multiage, you can divide the reading to six readers asking each reader to read one verse.

Music Note: If your group is large or you have too large an assortment of instruments, you may want to direct certain instruments to play after individual verses.

- Verse 1 - drums
- Verse 2 - all instruments
- Verse 3a - horns, kazoos, etc
- Verse 3b - strings
- Verse 4 - tambourines, strings, horns
- Verse 5 - cymbals
- Verse 6 - all instruments

Invite the group to join you as you pray the following prayer or one of your choosing:

Dear God of wonder and might, we praise you for all the wonderful things you have created. We thank you for including us in your creation and for gifting us with music. Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!"

Close your opening worship time by extinguishing the Christ candle as you say, "The Light that was in one place, is now in every place." Collect the instruments and put them away.



We HEAR God's Word

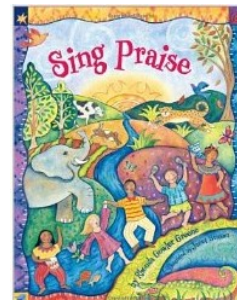
You Will Need

- A copy of the book *Sing Praise* by Rhonda Gowler Greene

Sing Praise

Read the book, *Sing Praise* to the group, pausing at each page to allow the group to take in the many colors and images illustrated so beautifully by Janet Broxon.

After reading the book, ask the group what impressed them the most. Talk together about the myriad of things portrayed in the book - nature, animals, people of all colors, seasons, etc.



Talk with the group about how illustrator Janet Broxon included people from around the world in her artwork. Ask the group to identify the countries represented in the clothing, instruments, and skin color. How does this inclusion of different nations and cultures expand our view of God's creation?

You Will Need

- Bible

Psalm 148 - an Active Reading

Open your Bible and read Psalm 148 to the group pausing after each verse or phrase to allow the group to stand up, twirl around, and say "Praise the Lord!"

When Rhonda Greene wrote this book, she used Psalm 148 and Psalm 150 as her inspiration. Ask the group to compare the images in the book with the two psalms they have heard read. What images from the psalms do they see in the book? What images would they add?



We REPOND creatively

Creative Movement

Look together at the vivid colors, and lyrical drawings. How do they inspire us to offer praise using our whole bodies?

Invite the group to join with the animals and people in the book by giving praise to God using their bodies in creative dance and movement.

Play several different types of music (from slow "ballet" to fast "jitterbug") allowing for a time of dance and movement. Encourage each individual to create his/her own dance of praise to God making sure to affirm everyone's attempt at dancing.

Note: There may be individuals in your group that do not feel comfortable dancing and creating their own movements to music. Affirm their decision to watch those who do feel like dancing and perhaps offer them the chance to "choose the next song" or "push the button" to start the music.

Allow as much time as the group would like for the dancing and merriment!



Consider adding color and more movement to your dancing time by giving each student a 36" length of ribbon or a streamer to hold and move. Thin scarves also work well. Even the most "movement challenged" person can wave a streamer/ribbon/scarf to the music!

You Will Need

- Audio recordings of a variety of music
- Streamers in various colors and/or lengths of ribbon at least 36" long
- Thin scarves

You Will Need

- Instructions and supplies for making instruments

Make an Instrument (optional)

Try an internet search to find simple instructions for making rhythm instruments. There are many versions using recycled materials that are fun and easy to find and use!

Gather supplies and help the group create their own musical instruments to use in praise!

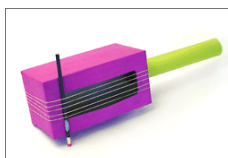
Coffee can drum



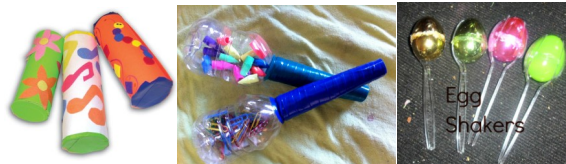
Plate tambourine



Tissue box guitar



Shakers (filled with non-food items)



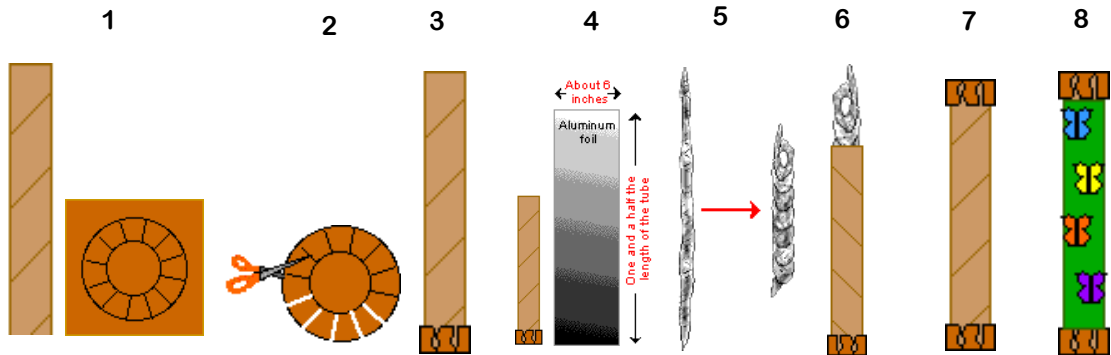
Egg Shakers

Make an Rain Stick (from <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/music/rainstick>) - optional

You Will Need

- A paper towel tube or other long cardboard tube
- Aluminum foil
- Small rocks or aquarium gravel
- Brown paper (from a grocery bag) or construction paper
- Glue/tape
- Pencil
- Scissors

1. Create a cap for the each end of your tube by tracing one end of the tube on a piece of brown paper, draw a larger circle around the traced circle and cut out.
2. Cut out "spokes" by cutting slits from the larger circle to the inner circle.
3. Glue or tape cap to one end of the tube. Make a second cap and set aside.
4. Cut a piece of aluminum foil 6 inches wide by 1 1/2 times the length of your tube.
5. Twist into a snake like shape.
6. Make two and insert into your tube. Pour small rocks into tube and fill about 1/10 of tube.
7. Add a second cap to the bottom of your tube and secure.
8. Cover tube with decorative paper and tape in place



We DEPART to serve

Closing Breath Prayer

Move your group into a comfortable position sitting in a circle on the floor and begin with some slow intentional breathing. Ask everyone to close their eyes so that they are less likely to be distracted. Take some time in centering and deep breathing.

When everyone has settled into the breathing pattern, instruct your group to think (not speak) the following words in rhythm to their breathing: "With every breath" (as you breathe in), "I'll praise the Lord" (as you breathe out). Encourage everyone to continue the pattern of breathing in and out allowing the words to fill their mind, heart and soul.

Allow several minutes for this spiritual practice of a Breath Prayer.

Encourage everyone to use the spiritual practice of a Breath Prayer each day this week as they admire God's creation and respond in gratitude and praise.

Dancing Benediction

Turn on a recording of your favorite upbeat "dancing music" and invite the group to dance as they leave to go out into the world as God's creatures filled with praise!

You Will Need

- Audio recording of upbeat music

Expanding the Lesson

Looking for ways to turn this one-hour session into a mini retreat or expanded session?

Here are some enrichment activities for you to consider as you plan for your unique time frame and group dynamics.

Gather

- Invite musicians to join your group for a time of demonstration and instruction on a variety of instruments.
- Ask your church organist to give your group a tour and demonstration of the instruments used in your church for worship and other occasions.
- Show a video clip of an orchestra playing different types of music - from somber to lively. How does music affect our mood and mindset?

Hear

The Story of Creation - Genesis 1-2

Divide your group into six small groups and assign one day of creation to each group.

Ask the groups to read the scripture related to their day and then create an art poster showing all the things created on that day. Encourage groups to use words and pictures on their poster.

Allow each group to display their poster as you retell the story of creation.

Respond

- Set up instrument making stations so that participants have a choice of instruments to make.
- Have a sing-a-long. Use praise songs from children's CDs, past VBS music, and other favorites from your personal collection.