



Hello! My name is Janet Winston and I am so happy to be working with your children in music class. They are a delightful group and we have already set a course for a successful year of musical basics, creative movement, and fun with friends!

I wanted to take a moment to explain the basics of our curriculum, and why music is so important as part of a rich educational experience. Over the course of the year, we will gain a solid grasp of basic musical concepts- such as tempo, dynamics, rhythm, and even basic note reading. For those students who participated in the class last year as part of the nursery program, it is wonderful to see their understanding of these concepts deepen. We reinforce all of these concepts (and more!) not just through singing, but also through creative movement exercises, related books and stories, and playing and listening to various instruments.

As we participate in all of these activities, we are not just learning about music, we are also touching upon many other important aspects of education such as:

-Math (Notes are fractions! Rhythms are patterns!)

-Science (How do different instruments- including our voices and our bodies- make different sounds?)

-Physical Development (We use both small motor and large motor skills for movement and instrument games)

-Social Development (we place a large emphasis on teamwork and turn taking- giving each child a chance to participate in a way that makes them feel comfortable)

-and of course, Art (how do we take these basic notes, words, and rhythms and turn them into something that is greater than the sum of its parts?).

We also use our music class as an opportunity for **cultural enrichment**. We listen to and sing music from many different countries and cultures and try to give our children a taste of the wide world all around them. As part of this cultural exposure, we do occasionally discuss holidays that are celebrated in different countries, or by different groups of people, such as Dia de los Muertos (Mexico), Lunar New Year (China), St. Patrick's Day (Ireland), and more. We also explore holidays or events that are unique to America, such as Thanksgiving or even Groundhog Day. I want to clarify that we are not celebrating the holidays as a class, we are acknowledging the fact that they are happening around us, and learning about what they might mean to our diverse group of family, friends, and neighbors here in New York City. In fact, if you and your family have any songs or music that relate to a special holiday or tradition from your culture, we would love to have you share it with our class. Or if there is a culture or tradition that you would like us to learn more about, please feel free to bring it to my attention- I always love to research topics that will add depth to our students' education.

Thank you so much for sharing your children with me. I look forward to a wonderful year together!

Sincerely,

Janet Winston

Sept. 2018