

Transition Songs to Help Your Early Childhood Students Change Activities

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Transitions happen in preschool programs when children move from place to place or change from one activity to another. Sing transition songs to help your early childhood students change activities. Read on for simple songs sung to traditional tunes.

- **What are Transitions?**

Transitions are those times in the classroom schedule when teachers and children pass from one place or one activity to another. Transitions do occur many times during the day helping children learn schedules and what to expect next. Choose a typical day in your program and create a detailed list of activities. Think about how many times a day that you move your children from one activity to the next.

To make transitions meaningful and fun, think of transition songs for early childhood to sing where they can be entertaining as well as productive. Many teachers find it helpful to be prepared with a list of appropriate songs and chants for each movement in the classroom. You may want to give a five-minute warning which may help the children finish activities by alerting them to the reason for change. Then it's time to start singing.

Most transition songs are sung to traditional and familiar tunes: just change the words to relay the message and instructions. Here are a few to try, and don't be afraid to be creative as these usually make the best songs!

- **Music for Switching It Up**

Welcoming Song (Tune: "If You're Happy and You Know It")

*I'm so happy to see you today,
I'm so happy to see you today.
(Child's name) won't you stand,
And shake your neighbor's hand.
Now everybody clap and say hooray!*

Circle Time (Tune: "Oh, My Darling Clementine")

*Time for circle, time for circle,
Time for circle time today.
Let's sit down, let's be quiet,
Wonder what we will do today?*

Wiggles Out for Quiet Time (Tune: "Jingle Bells")

*Clap your hands, stomp your feet,
Wiggle all around.
Reach your hands high in the air
And now let's touch the ground.
Hold your hips, hold your head
Give yourself a hug.
Sit right down, eyes to look,
It's time to read a book.*

Clean Up Time (Tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star")

*We've had lots of fun today,
It's time to put our things away.
We need all the girls and boys,
To stop now and pick up toys.
We've had lots of fun today,
It's time to put our things away.*

Good-bye Song (Tune: "Are You Sleeping")

*School is over, school is over,
Time to go home, time to go home,
I'll see you tomorrow, I'll see you tomorrow,
Bye, bye, bye; bye, bye, bye!*

- **Using Holiday Tunes**

Time for Art (Tune: "Are You Sleeping/ Frere Jacques")

*Time for art, time for art,
Let's go paint, Let's go paint.
Time to make a picture,
For Halloween,
Fun, fun, fun; fun, fun, fun!*

Make this song open-ended by changing the type of art (paint, draw, color, paste, etc.) and also change the holiday.

Calendar Song (Tune: "We Wish You a Merry Christmas")

*We wish you a happy Tuesday,
We wish you a happy Tuesday,
We wish you a happy Tuesday,*

- **Sources**

- "Calendar Song" by Gail P. Jones accessed 5/6/10 from *First Teacher Magazine*, March/April 1992
- "Circle Time" author unknown, accessed 5/6/10 from <http://www.perpetualpreschool.com/transitionideas.html>
- "Time for Art" by Tania Cowling
- Transition Songs, authors unknown, accessed 5/6/10 from *Piggyback Songs* by Jean Warren; Totline Press; 1989