

Shake, Rattle, and Listen

Explore rhythm, sound, and movement through joyful songs and actions that support language, coordination, and connection.

Let's Play!

Gather some soft, baby-safe instruments like rattles, bells, or textured shakers. Settle the babies comfortably—lying on their backs, supported in laps, or on a cushioned mat. Gently shake a rattle to one side of their body and watch their eyes follow the sound. You can say, “Ble mae'r sŵn?” (Where's the sound?) or try using “Dyma fo – jingl jingl!” (Here it is – jingl jingl!)

Let the babies hear, see, and feel the sound. Gently tap a small drum and hold their hand or foot on it to feel the vibration. Pause after each sound to give them time to respond with movement, sounds, or gaze.

Encourage them with happy reactions by using phrases such as “Gwych!” (Great!) “Ti'n hoffi'r sŵn bach yna?” (Do you like that little sound?). Watch out for smiles, coos, reaching, or babbles – all signs of engagement and learning. This gentle musical play builds listening, awareness, early language, and sensory joy!

What you'll need:

- Soft baby-safe instruments: Rattles, bells, rainmakers, or egg shakers
- Small percussion items: A hand drum or tambourine for gentle tapping
- Scarves or ribbons: For visual movement and soft touch
- Floor mat or cushions: To keep babies comfortable and supported

This activity provides opportunities for:

Language Development

- Introduces babies to the rhythm and melody of Welsh and English speech through repetitive, playful phrases.
- Helps build early sound recognition by linking sound effects (e.g., jingling, tapping) with simple words like “Sŵn” (sound) or “Ble mae...?” (Where is...?).
- Encourages turn-taking communication as babies start to respond with coos, babbles, or smiles.

Cognitive Engagement

- Develops cause-and-effect understanding as babies begin to realise that shaking makes sound.
- Enhances attention and curiosity by presenting varied sounds and movements that encourage visual and auditory tracking.
- Builds early memory pathways through repetition of songs, phrases, and sounds.

Movement and Sensory Development

- Stimulates tactile and auditory senses through exposure to different textures, vibrations, and sound levels.
- Encourages eye-tracking and gentle head or limb movement as babies follow sound and movement.
- Promotes body awareness through guided tapping, hand-over-hand shaking, or holding instruments.

Inclusive Play for All

This activity is designed to be flexible and sensory-rich, making it accessible for all babies. You can adapt how sounds are introduced depending on a child's needs, using vibration for children with hearing loss, visual cues like ribbons or lights for children with visual impairments, or hand-under-hand support to involve babies with limited mobility. Include instruments, rhythms, or songs from different cultures, and consider learning or using greetings or key words in the family's home language alongside Welsh. This creates a warm, culturally inclusive environment where every child's identity is reflected and valued.

Useful Phrases:

- **Gwrandda!** Listen!
- **Beth wyt ti'n ei glywed?** What can you hear?
- **Ble mae'r sŵn?** Where's the sound?
- **Dyna fo!** There it is!
- **Ti'n hoffi hwnna?** Do you like that?
- **Da iawn ti!** Well done you!
- **Gwych!** Great!

Tap, Clap, Copy

Explore rhythm, sound, and movement through joyful songs and actions that support language, coordination, and connection.

Let's Play:

Gather in a circle or a relaxed group space where children can see and copy you. Start with a simple rhythm using your hands—tap your knees, clap your hands, or stomp your feet. Say the actions as you do them in both Welsh and English:

- “Taro taro!” (Tap tap!)
- “Clap clap – Clapio!”
- “Stampiwch eich traed!” (Stamp your feet!)

Encourage the children to copy your sounds and actions. Start slowly, then build up the rhythm. Keep it fun and achievable. You can introduce animal sounds or themed movements too, like: “Clap like a duck! / Clapiwch fel hwyaden!”. Let children take turns leading a rhythm. Celebrate their efforts with encouraging phrases (Da iawn ti!)

You can make it more playful by adding props like drums, wooden blocks, or scarves to add sound or colour. Repeat familiar patterns to support memory and language—and most of all, keep it joyful and energetic!

What you'll need:

- Space to move – A clear area for stomping, tapping, and clapping in a circle or group.
- Optional musical props
- Scarves or ribbons for colourful movement
- Floor mats or cushions for seated versions
- Visual cue cards – Simple images of actions
- Bilingual prompt cards



Growing movers

This activity provides opportunities for:

Language Development

- Reinforces action words (e.g. tapio, stampio, clapio) and simple commands in Welsh and English.
- Encourages listening, turn-taking, and responding to language cues, supporting both receptive and expressive language.
- Builds confidence through repetition and rhythm, helping children remember and use new words.

Cognitive Engagement

- Develops pattern recognition and sequencing skills by copying and anticipating rhythmic patterns.
- Promotes focus, memory, and auditory discrimination, as children listen closely to mimic sounds and actions.
- Encourages problem-solving and decision-making when children create their own rhythms.

Movement and Sensory Development

- Supports gross motor skills through clapping, stomping, and tapping actions.
- Engages proprioception (body awareness) and rhythmic timing, essential for coordination.
- Provides rich sensory input through sound, movement, and touch—especially when instruments or textured props are used.

Inclusive Play for All

Tap, Clap, Copy! is a naturally adaptable activity that can be made inclusive for all children. For children with limited mobility, focus on upper-body actions (like hand tapping or clapping), or provide hand-under-hand support so they can feel the rhythm with an adult's help. Use visual cues or rhythmic vibrations for children with hearing impairments, and emphasise facial expressions and gestures for clear communication. Incorporate rhythms, songs, or movements from their home cultures to reflect their identity and build confidence. You could also learn and use simple words in their home language alongside Welsh and English, creating a welcoming, multilingual space.

Useful Phrases:

- **Barod?** Ready?
- **Dilyn fi!** Follow me!
- **Beth nesaf?** What's next?
- **Da iawn ti!** Well done you!
- **Clapiwch fel cath!** Clap like a cat!
- **Stampiwch fel eliffant!** Stomp like an elephant!

Rhythm Journey

Explore rhythm, sound, and movement through joyful songs and actions that support language, coordination, and connection.

Let's Play:

Invite the children on a make-believe musical adventure! Start by sitting or standing in a circle with your rhythm props ready (drums, shakers, sticks, or even just your hands). Tell them "We're going on a journey!" / "Rydyn ni'n mynd ar daith!". Use simple rhythms to match different scenes or places you "travel" to.

Encourage children to copy the rhythms and move in ways that match the setting: creeping, marching, jumping, or swaying. Prompt them with bilingual cues and let them help create new rhythm scenes!

Let them lead parts of the journey:

"Ble nesaf?" / "Where next?"

"Beth fydd y rhythm?" / "What will the rhythm be?"

Finish with a gentle "home" rhythm and a calm moment to reflect, stretch, or sing a goodbye song. Keep it playful, imaginative, and full of rich language and sound.

What you'll need:

- Basic rhythm instruments (enough to share or take turns) – Hand drums, shakers, rhythm sticks, tambourines, or wooden spoons and pans
- A large clear space – Indoors or outdoors where children can safely move and explore
- Imaginative props: – Scarves, animal toys, steering wheel cut-outs, etc.



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Confident movers

This activity provides opportunities for:

Language Development

- Introduces and reinforces action words and descriptive vocabulary in Welsh and English (e.g. tapio, stampio, ysgubo, sŵn mawr).
- Builds listening and responding skills, as children follow rhythmic instructions and join in with sound-based play.
- Encourages expressive language as children contribute their own rhythm ideas and describe the places they “visit”.

Cognitive Engagement

- Stimulates imagination and creative thinking as children help shape the journey and invent soundscapes.
- Enhances memory and sequencing through repeated rhythmic patterns and familiar story structures.
- Encourages problem-solving and turn-taking when children choose what comes next or copy a rhythm.

Movement and Sensory Development

- Promotes gross motor skills through marching, stomping, tiptoeing, and swaying movements.
- Develops fine motor control and coordination when using instruments or clapping/tapping hands.
- Provides rich sensory input through sound, touch, and movement—especially beneficial for children with sensory needs.
- Supports body awareness and rhythm regulation, which are key foundations for self-regulation.

Inclusive Play for All

Rhythm Journey is easily adapted for all children. Those with limited mobility can join in using hand-over-hand support, lap instruments, or alternative movements. Children with sensory needs may prefer quieter instruments or time to observe first. Use visual cues and clear gestures for children with hearing or visual impairments. To reflect global majority backgrounds, include cultural rhythms and simple words from home languages alongside Welsh and English. The aim is for every child to feel included, engaged, and valued.

Useful Phrases:

- **Dewch gyda fi!** Come with me!
- **Ble rydyn ni’n mynd?** Where are we going?
- **Rydyn ni yn y goedwig!** We’re in the forest!
- **Sŵn mawr!** Big sound!
- **Sŵn tawel.** Quiet sound.
- **Beth yw’r rhythm?** What’s the rhythm?
- **Da iawn!** Well done!
- **Amser i ymlacio.** Time to relax.