



# I'm All Ears!

## A Corn Sound Lesson

K - 2nd Grade

### Activity

#### *Time*

30-45 minutes per activity

#### *Subject Areas*

Science, Art, Music

#### *Essential Questions*

- How can I use corn to investigate sound?
- How can I make a musical instrument with corn?
- How can I make popcorn dance?

#### *Objective*

- Students will investigate sound using corn kernels and popped corn
- Students will make an instrument using corn kernels and recycled materials
- Students will investigate how chemical reactions can cause popcorn to dance

### Materials

- The Popcorn Popper by JoAnne Nelson
- Jar of popcorn kernels
- Recycled containers with lids
- Tape
- Stapler
- Crayons
- 2 paper plates per child
- Clear glass jar/cup
- Popcorn kernels
- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Tray for under the glass jar/cup

### Activity 1

- Ask "What do you know about how corn grows?" Discuss the answers to see if there are misconceptions, or if the students understand that a seed is planted, sprouts, grows, develops ears of corn, then dries out and then the process starts again.

- Watch An Entire Growing Season in One Minute video provided by Laura Thompson-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ex0iCu1Zjw4>
  - Revisit students understanding and add in the new learning from the video. Ask questions like:
    - Do you think that corn makes a sound as it grows? Why or why not?
    - If corn would make a sound as it grows, what do you think it would sound like?
  - Show “Listen and Watch Corn Grow” video provided by UNL CropWatch  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=31&v=76xEkEXI2a4&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=31&v=76xEkEXI2a4&feature=emb_logo)
2. Read The Popcorn Popper by JoAnne Nelson. Highlight the main character, the problem, the solution, and how the song changed that the popcorn popper was singing.
3. Make some music to play while singing your own popcorn songs! Use the jar of popcorn kernels with other materials around the house to make different sounds and music.
- Decorate two paper plates and staple them together with the kernels inside. Shake like a tambourine.
  - Use different kinds of containers with lids to make different sounding shakers: Pringles can, frosting container, plastic water bottle, metal water bottle, oatmeal box, etc. (Tape lids as needed)
  - Pop some of the popcorn and put the popped corn in different container.
    - Does the sound change?
    - Why is the sound different?
4. Use the shakers as you sing some songs together:
- I’m a Little Kernel (to the tune of: I’m a Little Teapot)  
I’m a little kernel in a pot.  
Heat me up and watch me pop.  
When I get all fat and white, I’m done.  
Popping corn is lots of FUN!
  - See the Little Kernel (to the tune of: I’m a Little Teapot)  
See the little kernel in the pot,  
Turn on the heat and watch it hop.  
When it gets all warmed up, it will pop.  
Mmmm, it tastes good when it’s hot!
  - Popcorn Popping  
One little kernel (Hold up one finger)  
Sleeping in the pot. (Curl up and pretend to sleep)  
Turn on the heat  
And watch it pop. (Jump into the air)  
Popping, hopping popcorn (Hop around)  
A munchy, crunchy treat. (Pretend to eat)  
Pour on the butter (Pretend to pour on butter)  
And let me eat! (Pretend to eat)

- Popcorn Song for Kids, Numbers and Counting for Preschool, provided by The Kiboomers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1wP68tP4ss&list=RDrNUbm1JbrlY&index=5>
- Planting Corn, Thanksgiving song for children provided by Mr. Mike TV <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qx40ZbGJ8w>
- Jimmy Crack Corn, Song for Kids by Little Fox <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWGN9bUbYoo>

Optional: Dip LEGO style blocks in brown, orange, red, and yellow paint and press all over a piece of white paper. When the paper is dry, wrap and tape it around your shaker container to look like Indian Corn.

## Activity 2

1. Get out your shakers and sing a song while making the music. Then add, “Well, you know that people love to hear the sound of popcorn popping, and they actually made a dance called the Popcorn Line Dance provided by 4HFairfield <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyaVrKGSHe4&t=126s> . “Let’s learn it together.”
2. Wonder if we can make real corn dance. Let’s gather some materials...popcorn kernels, clear glass, water, vinegar and baking soda.
  - a. Adults Only: Instructions for experiment, not for child to watch. Watch Science Experiment Dancing Popcorn provided by LAB 360. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9iuj6drxfk>
  - b. After watching the video, adult should guide the kids to help predict, do the experiment and explain the science behind it.
3. Closing: Now that we have made sound with popcorn kernels and we have made them dance, which project was your favorite and why? (either making an instrument or the experiment)

## Extension or More Information

- Physical Movement: Act out how a kernel grows into a stalk of corn with your body.
- Popcorn Song by Barenaked Ladies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt6-wqkEcPQ>
- This is a great song to dance to and demonstrate how popcorn pops! It is also a great song to use as a parachute activity. Grab an old bedsheet and throw some soft balls or balloons on it and everybody grab the sides and start shaking the bedsheet to simulate popcorn popping.
- Physical Movement: Play a game of Cornhole outside with your family.