



This musical is based on a beloved Eastern European folktale about a very noisy family living in a small village hut. The mama and papa find that the chaos is getting on their nerves. They seek the advice of the wise village Goo Roo (guru).

“How can we have more peace in our house?” they ask. The Goo Roo gives them three pieces of puzzling advice. He tells them to bring various loud barnyard animals into their already cramped and noisy home.

After filling their hut with chickens, goats, and cows, the Goo Roo’s final advice to the even more exasperated mama and papa is to take the animals out of the house and back to the barnyard. Their normal crazy home, in contrast, feels happily peaceful.

Renditions of this story are found in several children’s books:

Too Much Noise by Ann McGovern

It Could Always Be Worse by Margot Zemach

Could Anything Be Worse? by Marilyn Hirsh

It’s Easy, Fun, and Flexible

This musical can be performed with or without speaking parts or solos. The story is told by a narrator, who pauses when songs are indicated. All of the children can sing all of the songs, but confident and inspired children may be persuaded to have a speaking part or solo. Several children may even enjoy being a member of an “orchestra” with simple rhythm instruments.

You can customize this musical to the number of children in your group, easily adding or eliminating roles. If you have a large group of children, you can have a supporting chorus. (They like to wear costumes, too.)

The performed musical takes about 20 minutes and works well for children ages 5–9.

Which groups might enjoy performing this musical?

- classrooms
- Scouts
- camps
- neighborhoods
- community drama groups
- after-school programs
- Sunday schools
- families



Step by Step:

From Start to the Final Bow

Every group will have a different timetable for these steps. Some groups can allow themselves a few weeks; others may require a few months.

1. Read several of the picture-book versions of this folktale:
Too Much Noise by Ann McGovern
It Could Always Be Worse by Margot Zemach
Could Anything Be Worse? by Marilyn Hirsh
2. Ask children: How are these stories the same? How are they different? Discuss their answers.
3. Explain that your group will present a play—a version of this story—and add songs. When songs are added, it becomes a musical. The storyline will be similar to the stories in the books listed above, but also a little different.
4. Read the narration of “Cows in the Kitchen” aloud to the children. Ask them how the storyline in this play is different from those in the books listed above.
5. Present the following terms to the children so that they understand the components of a musical and terminology that will be used while they participate.

Musical – a play that features songs and singing

Cast – the people who act in a musical or play

Roles or Characters – the people who do the action in a musical or play

Props – an object, apart from the furniture, used in a play or musical (like a teapot)

Costumes – outfits that characters wear in a musical or play

Scenery – backdrops, hangings, or furnishings used to show the play’s setting

Rehearsals – practices for a musical or play

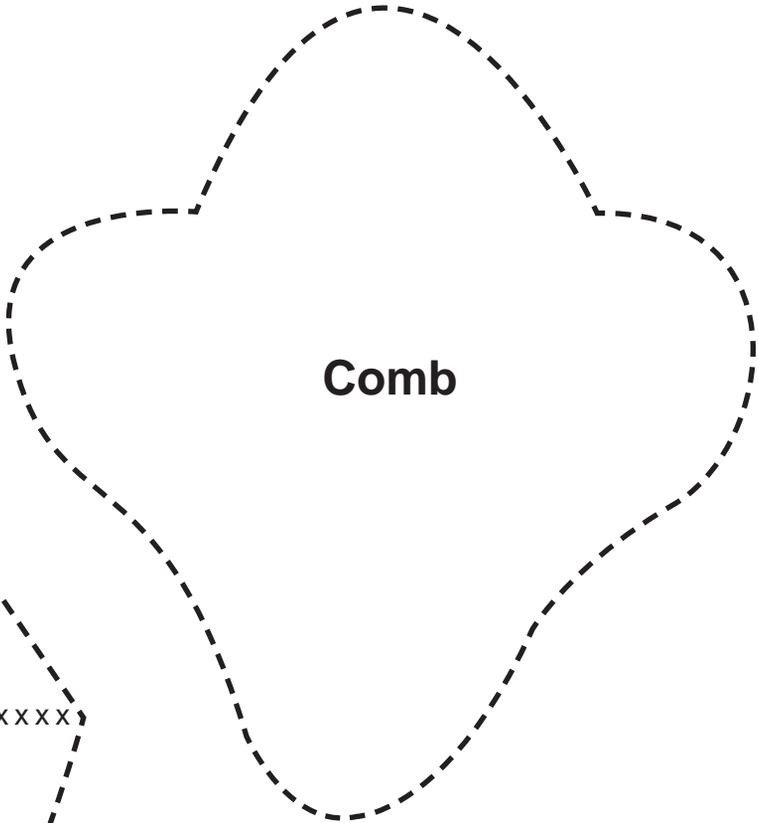
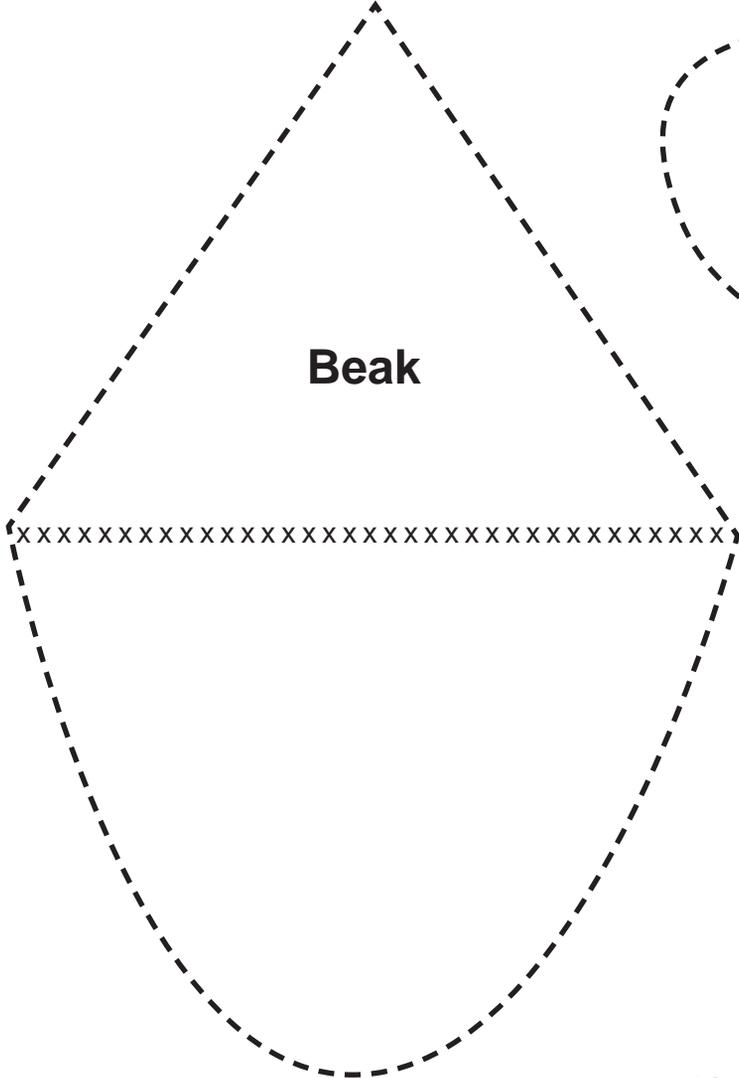
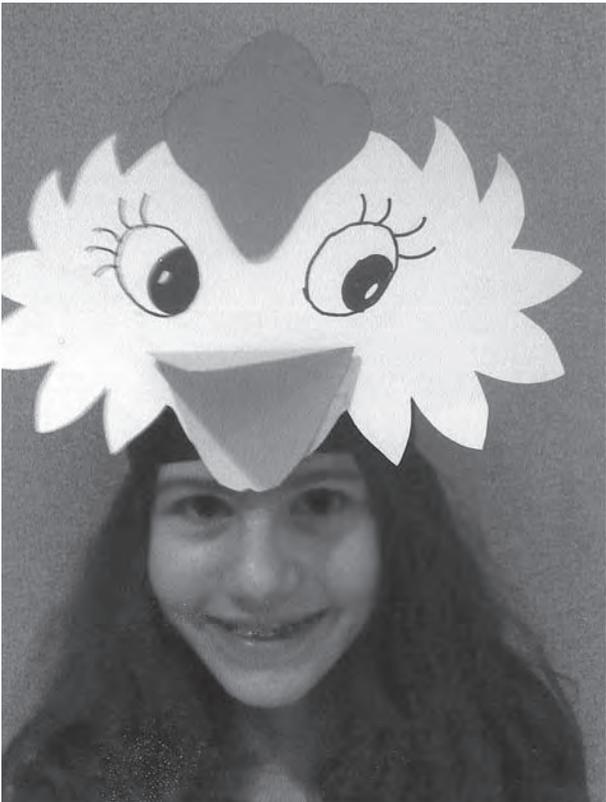
Performance – a presentation of the musical or play

Audience – the people who come to see the performance

6. Play the CD with the songs frequently—whenever and wherever you can. The children will learn the songs more quickly than you think.

Chicken Headdress

Make a 2 ½"-wide headband out of construction paper. Then construct a chicken's head using the templates on these two pages. Tape the chicken's head to the front of the headband. Now...cluck!



Keys:

-----	cut along line
xxxxxx	fold along line
	attach shape



(information, questions, research, and to-dos for the children)

This musical play offers ample opportunity to extend the children's learning. The following are simple ideas and suggestions for educational activities and discussions inspired by "Cows in the Kitchen." Try them out with your children! They can be used as is, or customized to fit your classroom or group setting.

What is a Folktale?

1. Since "Cows in the Kitchen" is based on a folktale, the children can learn that a folktale is a story from a certain region in the world. Children usually HEAR folktales from their parents or grandparents. They are passed down through the generations. Usually, a folktale is about real people and has a lesson to teach. There is no particular author. People sometimes change the story a little, but the lesson stays the same.
2. "Cows in the Kitchen" is a folktale from Eastern Europe. What is the lesson that it tries to teach?
3. Sometimes these folktales become books. Several books have folktale stories that are similar to "Cows in the Kitchen." (The titles are mentioned in the Step by Step section.)
4. Folktales in the library are shelved in section 398.2.

Where in the World?

1. Look at a world map, atlas, or a globe. Find the United States. What states are in the eastern part of the United States?
2. Point out that the United States is a country in the continent of North America. Europe is another continent which includes many countries.
3. Locate Europe. What countries are in Eastern Europe? This folktale probably was told in the Eastern European countries of Russia, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Lithuania, or Latvia.
4. Do you know where your ancestors came from? Do you know any family stories or folktales from that area?

Papa's Song - Mama's Song

3
1-3

F B \flat

Papa: My head is buzz - ing with
Mama: My head is buzz - ing with

7 F Gm C7

trou - ble. _____
trou - ble. _____ It Cha - os and mess ev - 'ry -
rum - bles and shim - mies and

11 F B \flat F

where. _____ Noise, com - mo - tion and hub - bub. _____
shakes. _____ Noise, com - mo - tion and hub - bub. _____

16 Gm C7 F

I'm los - ing to my the mind and my hair. _____
(spoken "Ahhh") A trip to the Goo Roo we'll make. _____

Do What the Goo Roo Says

2 Am

1-2

Do what the Goo Roo says,

4 G C Am

do what the Goo Roo says, do what the Goo Roo says,

6 E Am G C

what he says to do. Hop, we hop! Stop, we stop!

9 E

1. Am 2. Am E7 Am

We will do what he says to do. says. That's true!



About the CD

Tracks 1–15 are a performance of the songs in the musical. They will acquaint you with each of the songs and help you teach them to your class.

Tracks 16–32 of the CD are accompaniment only. You can use these in your performance if you do not have a pianist or guitarist available.

Performance Tracks

1. Noisy Chant #1
2. Noisy Chant #2
3. Papa's Song
4. Mama's Song
5. Do What the Goo Roo Says
6. Yoo-Hoo Song
7. Goo Roo Advice (chant)
8. Surprise Song
9. Chicken Rock
10. Maa Maa March
11. Moovin' In
12. Cow Exit
13. Goat Exit
14. Chicken Exit (chant)
15. Finale

Accompaniment Tracks

(NOTE: Since the chants do not involve music, they are not on the accompaniment tracks. Songs listed more than once are performed multiple times, and sequentially, as indicated in the narration.)

16. Papa's Song
17. Mama's Song
18. Do What the Goo Roo Says
19. Yoo-Hoo Song
20. Surprise Song
21. Chicken Rock
22. Do What the Goo Roo Says
23. Yoo-Hoo Song
24. Surprise Song
25. Maa Maa March
26. Do What the Goo Roo Says
27. Yoo-Hoo Song
28. Surprise Song
29. Moovin' In
30. Cow Exit
31. Goat Exit
32. Finale