



piano  
winter, culture

# Jingle Bells

This song has been around the world traveling wherever Americans have traveled, including outer space! Join in the chorus, dance to the tune or just enjoy the beat.

Key G, first note low D  
a cappella count-in: 1,2,3,4,Dashing...

## Jingle Bells

James Pierpont  
United States  
folksong circa 1860s



Jingle Bells Jingle Bells Jingle all the way. O what fun it is to ride in a 1 horse open sleigh, Hey!



Jingle Bells Jingle Bells Jingle all the way. Oh what fun it is to ride in a 1 horse o-pen sleigh.



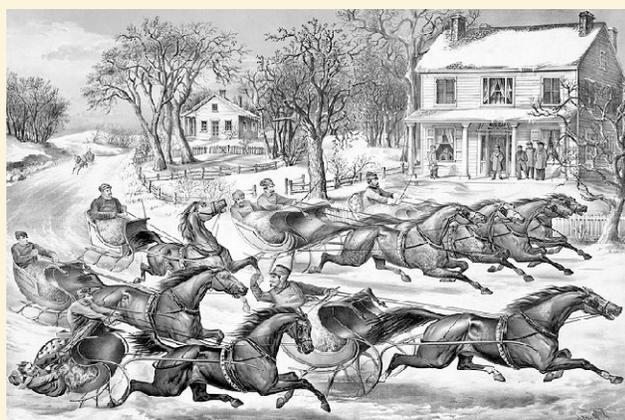
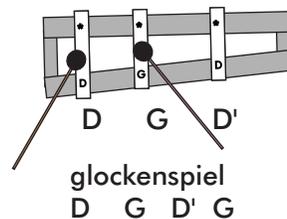
Dash-ing thru the snow in a 1 horse o-pen sleigh O'er the fields we go laughing all the way,



Bells on bob-tail ring, mak-ing spir-its bright what fun it is to laugh & sing a sleigh-ing song to-night OH!

2. A day or two ago,  
I thought I'd take a ride,  
And soon Miss Fanny Bright  
Was seated by my side;  
the horse was lean and lank  
Misfortune seemed his lot  
He got into a drifted bank,  
And we, we got up sot.

3. Now the ground is white  
go to it while you're young  
Take the girls tonight  
and sing this sleighing song  
Just get a bob-tailed bay  
Two-forty as his speed  
Hitch him to an open sleigh  
And crack! you'll take the lead.



In 1898, "Jingle Bells" was recorded on an Edison cylinder --one of the first ways humans had to record sound. In 1943, Bing Crosby and the Andrews Sisters made a recording that reached No. 19 on the charts and sold over a million copies. In 1965, Gemini 6 astronauts, Tom Stafford and Wally Schirra smuggled a tiny harmonica and sleigh bells to help in making "Jingle Bells" the first song ever broadcast live from space. Wouldn't James Pierpont, who wrote the song in the 1860s, be amazed at the journeys it has made!

During one of the years that many Vietnamese "boat people" came to Canada, I was teaching at a Toronto inner city school. Many families in the neighbourhood rented rooms to newcomers. Through November that year our school welcomed bewildered new children. Language, snow and culture change seemed to daunt most of the newcomers until we got to mid-December. We sang "Jingle Bells." The "newest Canadians" smiled openly and sang in English! They had learned it from American soldiers.

## Moving with Music Jingle Bells

**1** Jingle some bells and let your class "guess" what song they will be singing. Chances are they will whiz through the chorus. They may or may not be able to sing the first verse. Begin with the chorus and continue singing through the first verse (even if you do a solo), then repeat the chorus. Key G, first note in the chorus is B, count-in: 1,2,3,4,Jingle ...

**2** Ask: **"What are the people in the song doing?"** Draw a simple sleigh(or show a picture). If you teach in a rural area you may be able to ask questions to draw out the following information.

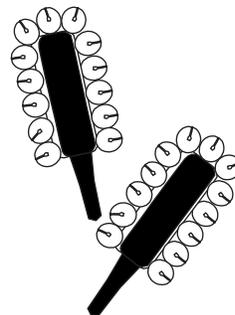
**"Horses pull sleighs. Pieces of leather are wrapped around the horses. The sleigh driver holds the ends of the "reins" the pieces of leather to guide the horses. Sometimes the owners of sleighs (or carriages) would cut the horses' tails so that they wouldn't get tangled in the pieces of leather/reins/harness. A "bob-tailed nag" is a horse who has had its tail trimmed or bobbed."**

**3** Many people think that this is a Christmas song, but it isn't. Oh we sing it at Christmas time but do you see anything in the words about Christmas? Why do you think people have the idea it's a Christmas song?" (Spend a bit of time fielding ideas. There is no "correct" answer so encourage imagination.)

**4** "Let's try the song again. Hold your hands out front like you have the reins in hand and move them up and down with the beat, just as if you were bouncing along behind a bob-tailed nag. We're going to begin with the chorus ----Jingle Bells. Wait for the count-in." first note B(mi); 1,2,3,4,Jingle ...

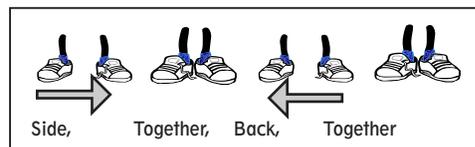
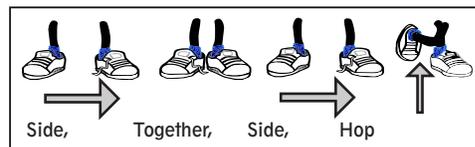
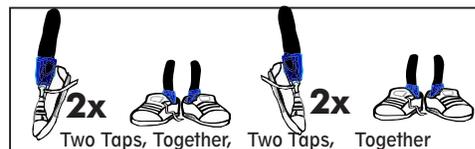
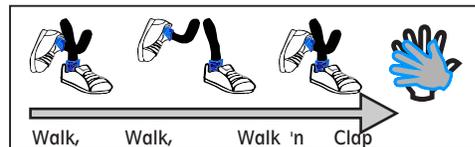
**5** Divide students into groups of 4 or 5. Give time for the groups to choreograph steps for the chorus of Jingle Bells. They can use the steps already taught or make up their own.

Leave time at the end of class today for groups to demonstrate (and maybe teach) their version of the dance to the chorus of Jingle Bells.



play on words  
"Jingle Bells"

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

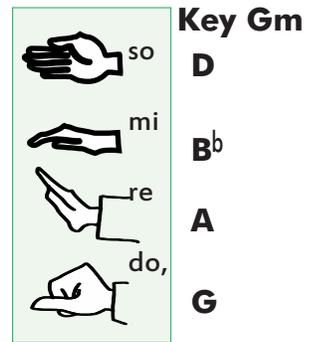




## Practice Song: The Huron Carol

Key Gm, first note D(low so)  
a cappella count-in: 1,2,3, 'Twas...

1. Vocal Warm-Up in the Key of Gm
2. Sing the song once through with the sing-a-long version.
3. Unaccompanied, sing the first verse once.



## Music & Movement/Dance Jingle Bells

CanDo2 invited students to "trot" with the bob-tailed nag in this familiar song. Now it's time for students to invent their own line dance and learn to sing the lesser-known verses 2 and 3 that tell the rest of the story!

Note: Even though it is often associated with December holidays, there is nothing in this song to suggest that it is anything but time to enjoy winter.

### 1 Warm-Up for Moving Stretches

### 2 Moving to 4/4 Music

"Holidays are a good time for dancing. Sometimes its a swirling dance like the waltz in 3/4 time. Sometimes it's something more energetic. Today we're going to make up a dance to music that is in 4/4 time. That means thinking **ONE 2 3 4**; and hearing **ONE 2 3 4** in the music."

"Without saying a word, stand up! I'm going to count **"ONE 2 3 4"** --everytime there is a **ONE**, stamp the foot closest to the (pick a thing in the classroom) clock. When my voice stops, so does the stamping."

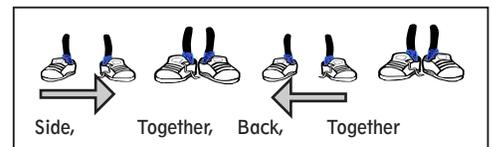
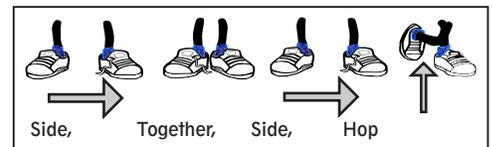
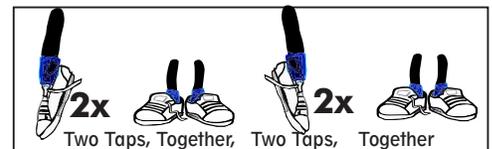
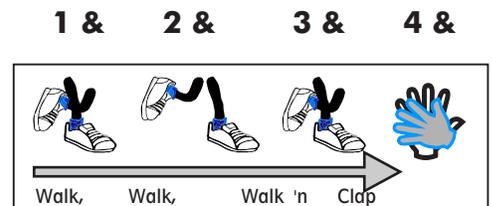
Repeat this several times with different tempos.

### 3 Simple Step Ideas

Use the mirroring technique to teach each of the four basic steps to the class. Saying the "Name Words" identifies the step and gives instructions at the same time.

### 4 Step Game

After all 4 steps have been learned, turn them into a game. Call out a name, give a count-in: **ONE 2** ready dance. Use a drum to keep the beat as students try to do the step. When the drum stops, students stop and a new step is called out, etc.



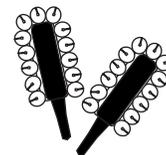
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## 5 Feeling the Beat in Chosen Dance Music

(Jingle some bells.) Any guesses as to what music we're going to dance with? Of course! "Listen for the ONE 2 3 4 in Jingle Bells and stamp on the ONEs."



**Play Music** Jingle Bells 1 verse and chorus



## 6 Choreographing the Dance

"Excellent work. Gather students together, sitting on the mat. Post the written words for Jingle Bells.

Who is singing this story?  
Is this a new song or an old song?  
How can you tell?  
Who is Fanny Bright?

"Form in music is when musicians look for parts that repeat. Choreographers (people who make up dances) do the same thing. If part of the music repeats, then the choreographers sometimes ask the dancers to repeat the same steps for that part of the music. Look at the music. What is the form of this song?"

With the students, go through the chorus line by line deciding what steps or movements to use. Encourage students to add their own "extras" to the basic steps. Try the chorus steps with students singing. (easier than doing the steps up to the speed of the recorded music). Ask for revisions. Practice the steps again.

## 7 Dance and Sing



**Play Music** Jingle Bells

Chorus: dance steps  
Verse: sing words

open sleigh  
1 horse open sleigh  
o'er the fields  
bob-tail  
bells on bob-tail  
bob-tail nag  
lean and lank  
misfortune  
drifted bank  
up sot  
hitch him

A chorus  
B verse  
A chorus  
B verse  
A chorus  
B verse  
A chorus

The form is called chorus-verse. The words and music repeat in the chorus. The words change in the verses, but the music remains the same.

## Optional

### Just a little time left?

Take suggestions while students are sitting on the mat for a verse.. Put the names of the steps beside each line. Try out the steps singing the verses.

### More time left to use?

Divide students into 4 groups. Give time for the groups to work out dance steps for a verse. Let the groups demonstrate their steps while the rest of the class singing the verse. Now put the song together. Each group does their steps during one of the verses. Everyone sings the words and dances in the chorus.



**Play Music** Jingle Bells

**OR** Finish music time enjoying some of the seasonal videosongs from CanDo 1 and CanDo 2.  
e.g. O Christmas Tree

**OR** Teach one of the songs not used from last week ... African Noel or Japancese Carol

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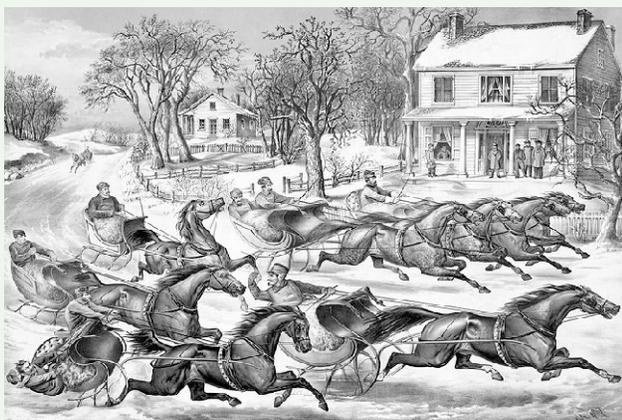
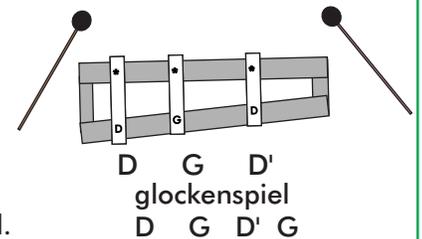
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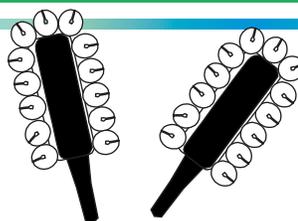
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**Dashing** through the snow

In a **one horse** open sleigh

O'r the fields we go

**laughing** all the way

**Bells** on bobtail ring

making spirits **bright**

What fun it is to **laugh**



and

**sing**

*a sleighing song*

**tonight.**

A **day** or two ago,

I thought I'd take a **ride**

And soon **Miss Fanny Bright**

Was **seated** by my side;

the **horse** was **lean** and **lank**

**Misfortune** seemed his lot

**He** got into a **drifted bank,**

And **we, we** got up sot.

**Now** the **GROUND** is **WHITE**

go to it while you're young

Take the girls tonight

and **sing** this sleighing song



**Just** get a **bob-tailed bay**

**Two-forty** as his **speed**

**Hitch him** to an **open sleigh**

And **CRACK!** you'll take the lead.