

Reading stories about music invites interest in every aspect of it: instruments, composers, the performers whose tunes rock your radio, and more. Even if your child has no interest in actually playing an instrument, the rhythm and musicality of these books promotes a multi-sensory reading experience.

“A Fox Found a Box” by Ged Adamson (2019)

Fox unearths a mysterious box that makes delightful sounds, but when it falls quiet Fox and friends appreciate the musical sounds of their forest once again.

“Ada’s Violin: The Story of the Recycled Symphony of Paraguay” by Susan Hood and Sally Wern Comport (2016)

The inspiring and hopeful true story of a resourceful community effort to build instruments assembling an orchestra from recycled landfill items. This book is also available in Spanish as *El Violín de ADA*.

“Manos que bailan: Cómo Teresa Cariño tocó el piano para el presidente Lincoln” (Available in English as “Dancing Hands: How Teresa Cariño Played the Piano for President Lincoln”), by Margarita Engle and Rafael López (2019)

Forced to flee her home in Venezuela, young Teresa arrived in the United States in the midst of the Civil War and found joy in playing piano and sharing her talents to bring comfort to others.

“Double Bass Blues” by Andrea J Loney and Rudy Guitierrez (2019)

Nic carts his double bass between orchestra rehearsal and a joyous jazz performance at his grandfather’s, crossing town with determination.

“Music: A Fold-Out Graphic History” by Nicholas O’Neill and Susan Hayes (2020)

This generously-sized accordion-style infographic picture book traces ancient music to a modern orchestra with a recommended playlist, glossary, and index for lovers of odd facts—and funk.

“Music Is ...” by Stephen T. Johnson (2020)

This brilliantly designed accordion-style picture book unfolds to reveal rhymes and illustrations celebrating 10 categories of music through onomatopoeic verse, with a detailed glossary and song recommendations.

“Oboe Goes Boom Boom Boom” by Colleen AF Venable and Lian Cho (2020)

This is a raucous introduction to several band instruments through enthusiastic young musicians is based on stellar real-life performers.

“R-E-S-P-E-C-T: Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul” by Carole Boston Weatherford and Frank Morrison (2020)

A biography with spectacular portraiture exploring the many talents and accomplishments of Aretha Franklin, on stage and beyond.

“When the Beat Was Born: DJ Kool Herc and the Creation of Hip Hop” by Laban Carrick Hill and Theodore Taylor (2013)

His sister’s house party launched the career of a musical legend that invented a new style of music intended to give dancers longer breaks for dancing—breakdancing, to be exact.

Extend your reading performance with one of these music-inspired activities:

- Fill several glasses with water to various heights and try to make music by tapping them gently or running your finger around the rims. Alternatively, fill bottles with water and blow over the open tops. See the different notes you can hit.
- Assemble a homemade band out of household objects. Try toilet tube shakers, popsicle stick harmonicas, or empty oatmeal container drums.
- Stage a musical tasting and sample a handful of musical styles that aren’t in regular rotation in your household.