Connecting Literature With Music
This is a selected list of books that can be used to teach music concepts and music history in the K-5 classroom. All are available in the Curriculum Materials Center.

**Picture Books:**

Photographs capture children singing, dancing and playing instruments throughout the world. Includes world map, instructions to make instruments and a glossary.
**Call Number:** j781.1 Ajm

Simple explanations of musical terms, history, and ways that music is part of our lives.
**Call Number:** j780 Ali

This little girl’s family all love and play different types of music.
**Call Number:** P J Cox

Ruby gets the blues because she is so loud no one wants to play with her. She is a welcome presence once she learns how to control her voice.
**Call Number:** P J Dal

Violet is born wanting to play music all day long. She longs to find others who want to do the same.
**Call Number:** P J Joh

As each grass blade grows it identifies its uniqueness.
**Call Number:** P J Kel
Moses and his classmates, all deaf, go to a concert and meet a deaf percussionist. Includes American Sign Language diagrams.
**Call Number: P J Mil**

Colorful illustrations and lively poems give the history of jazz in America. Includes a glossary of jazz terms and a timeline.
**Call Number: P J Mye**

Listen closely and you can hear the music in the world after a snow storm.
**Call Number: P J Per**

When Lee, a jazz pianist, goes deaf he goes to learn sign language and meets other deaf musicians who form their own band.
**Call Number: P J See**

Bilingual story of a little girl who accidentally breaks her grandfather’s vihuela, then learns about her grandfather’s musical accomplishments.
**Call Number: P J Tor**

A rhythmic celebration of the musical family that surrounds baby.
**Call Number: P J Whe**

**Picture Books Based on Songs:**

Scenes of a family’s summer days are depicted as background to this American classic. Includes music score.
**Call Number: j782.421 Ger**
One of Woody Guthrie’s most famous songs, with a tribute from Pete Seeger, a musical score and information about Woody Guthrie’s life.
**Call Number: P J Gut**

Illustrated text of the U.S. national anthem with musical score and historical notes.
**Call Number: j784.7 Key**

Bilingual version of popular Christmas song with the traditional gifts replaced by Latin-flavored ones. Includes a pronunciation guide, glossary and music score.
**Call Number: j782.42 Mor**

Quackenbush uses the melody of two popular folk songs to tell the story of New York City during the American Revolution. Includes music scores and a list of historic places.
**Call Number: j784.4 Qua**

Set to the melody of “The Twelve Days of Christmas” this song celebrates our planet. It also gives background about the celebration of Earth Day.
**Call Number: P J Sch**

A little boy and his magician father are chased out of town as a nuisance, but welcomed back when they make the giant disappear.
**Call Number: P J See**

Soft illustrations accompany this song composed by Pete Seeger while putting his daughter to bed.
**Call Number: P J See**

An old English ballad about a fox in search of food for his family.

**Call Number:** P J Fox


**Call Number:** j782.42 Tab (also available as a Big Book)

**Picture Book Biographies:**


Troy Andrews tells his story of learning to play trombone as a child in his hometown of New Orleans.

**Call Number:** j788.9 And


Bilingual story of the percussionist and band leader from Spanish Harlem, told with colorful and energetic illustrations. Include brief biographical notes.

**Call Number:** jB Puente


The amazing story of a guitar genius who didn’t let his badly burned hands stop him from playing the guitar.

**Call Number:** jB Reinhardt


This story was inspired by the life of Millo Castro Zaldarriaga, a Cuban woman who proved that a woman can play drums.

**Call Number:** P J Eng (DVD also available.)


Miriam Makeba, a South African singer, who sang protest songs against Apartheid. Includes a glossary, author’s notes, time line and other resource material.

**Call Number:** j782.42 Ers
Tells the story of a young Jamaican immigrant and the beginning of the hip hop music.
**Call Number: j782.4 Hil**

Based on the life of Mary Lou Williams, who began playing the piano at age four and who later composed for Duke Ellington and other jazz greats.
**Call Number: P JIng**

The talented and almost blind pianist tells his own story of growing up in Toledo. Biographical notes included.
**Call Number: jB Tatum**

“Scat Cat Monroe” narrates this story of Ella Fitzgerald whose unique style of singing changed jazz music.
**Call Number: jB Fitzgerald**

Melba Doretta Liston not only played the trombone, but she also composed many jazz classics.
**Call Number: j788.9 Rus**

Growing up in Hoboken Frank Sinatra loved to sing. His voice enabled him to make a career of singing. Additional biographical notes are included.
**Call Number: jB Sinatra**

The remarkable story of Elizabeth Cotten, a singer-songwriter who taught herself how to play the guitar upside-down because she was left-handed.
**Call Number: j782.421 Vei**
Fictionalized biography about Louis Armstrong teaching scat singing to a young girl.
**Call Number: P J Wei**

Dizzy’s great talent got him working with the Cab Calloway Band, but he soon left and continued to experiment with a new form of music called “bebop.”
**Call Number: jB Gillespie**

**Poetry Collections:**

Poems about insects meant to be read by two people.
**Call Number: j811.54 Fle**

A collection of over forty poems, accompanied by a CD, with recording of the poems being read, many performed by the original poet.
**Call Number: j811 Hip**

Marsalis highlights the lives and accomplishments of twenty-six jazz greats through twenty-six different styles of poems.
**Call Number: j811.6 Mar**

Told in verse this is a celebration of the members of the integrated sixteen piece all-women big band who performed during World War II.
**Call Number: j781.65 Nel**

**Songbooks**

One of many collections of spirituals selected and illustrated by Ashley Bryan. Includes music score for three popular songs.
**Call Number: j782.25 Let**
The scores of thirteen songs, accompanied by colorful full page illustrations, with English translations of lyrics.
**Call Number: j781.64 Car**

Eighteen gross and silly songs that use the melody of traditional songs such as “Home on the Range.”
**Call Number: j782.42 DiP**

This songbook matches sixty-one children’s folk songs with artwork from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
**Call Number: j784.4 Go**

Fifty fingerplays with musical score, piano arrangements, guitar chords and instructions for finger movements.
**Call Number: j784.6 Gla**

Five folk tales from the Caribbean, each accompanied by a song and dance steps.
**Call Number: j398.209 Hal**

Twenty-seven songs with musical score, background notes, English and Spanish translations, piano accompaniment and guitar chords.
**Call Number: j784.6 Dec**

“A collection of 51 songs from Raffi’s first three records for young children.” Includes music scores with piano accompaniment and guitar chords.
**Call Number: j784.6 Raf**

Classic collection of over 90 favorite folk songs for children, organized by broad topic. Includes music scores and indices by subject, rhythm, titles and first lines.

**Call Number:** j784.4 See

**Other Music Related Titles:**


“The world sends us garbage. We send back music.” The story of Favio Chavez who converts garbage into musical instruments for children in the slums of Asuncion.

**Call Number:** j784.206 Hoo (also available in Spanish)


Chronicles the history of African American music through the eyes of an artist.

**Call Number:** j780.89 Igu


Alphabet book that identifies musical terms, such as B is for Beatles, bongo, band, Beethoven, etc. Musical notes provide more information about the terms.

**Call Number:** j780.3 Kru


Illustrated retelling of Verdi’s tragic opera of an Ethiopian princess and Egyptian general.

**Call Number:** j782.1 Pri


Using examples of songs Seskin has composed he help students understand his songwriting process. Includes music vocabulary and CD with songs and music tracks.

**Call Number:** j782.42 Ses


Turner describes the orchestra instruments and provides commentary about the different parts of this composition. Includes a CD of the entire score (23 minutes).

**Call Number:** j784.2 Tur