

Welcome to Fracas English Supasongs! We're happy you found us. We're a starter company working from Australia and we specialise in songs and music for English language learning.

### How can I buy Supasongs?

There are two ways. You can buy individual songs from our website. Browse our online songs catalogue at [www.supasongs.com](http://www.supasongs.com) and choose what suits your situation best.

You can also buy bundles of songs. We offer five different bundles at this moment: **SupaDooper** (songs for 4-10 year-olds), **SupaKids** (songs for 8-10 year-olds), **SupaTweens** (songs for 10-12 year-olds), **SupaTeens** (songs for 12-16 year-olds) and **Supadults** (songs for people 16 and over). Naturally, you may find that categories overlap and that some songs can be used for a wide range of ages. The categories are just a way to make it easier for you to choose.



### What are all these songs about?

Supasongs are about a large variety of subjects ranging from familiar topics for young learners such as 'the house', 'food', 'time', etc. to more

intimate topics for older learners ('friendship', 'love', 'growing up', etc). We make sure that the writers writing our songs know what goes on in classrooms, in children's heads and teachers' minds.



### What do I get when I buy Supasongs?

Supasongs are a complete teaching resource for use in the English as a Foreign or Second language classroom. Every song comes with a FREE instrumental **karaoke** version (also the songs for adults!), a FREE **worksheet** for direct use in the classroom and the **lyrics** of the song.

You can print the worksheet and lyrics for classroom use with your students. You are not allowed to copy the songs to students or other teachers.

### How many songs can I choose from?

Our catalogue is constantly growing. *Every week we upload two new songs* with an instrumental version and a

worksheet. Teachers can tell us what topics they would like to hear songs about, and we will try and meet your request.

### Who are involved in Supasongs?

Fracas English is a partnership of Southern Cross Connexions (teachers and language teaching materials developers since 1983), Fracas Music Publishing Studio (with 25 years of experience in educational and general audio production, as well as music writing, production and publishing) and Market Research Asia.

We have combined our strengths as teachers, professional and creative writers, recording artists and publishers to offer you a unique combination of contemporary music suited for learning English.



### What is our teaching philosophy?

Our philosophy is simple. *Learning or teaching English through songs is fun and effective!* Most people love music, and songs allow them to learn spontaneously and without great effort. So much of language learning

music is, let's call a spade a spade, boring. Either the music is dull or the words are, and we think children and teachers in classrooms all over the world deserve better than that. Children and teachers listen to music that is relevant to them all day. However, often the words are not suitable: there may be too much slang, or the lyrics may be too complicated.



At Fracas English we think that both children and teachers like to hear music that appeals to their tastes and that has lyrics that teach them English in a fun and easy way. They like songs that do not dumb down; songs that take them seriously.

We respect that and offer you the great range of FracasEnglish music styles, words and worksheets for enjoyment and learning.

### Are Supasongs about grammar?

As you browse through our catalogue you will find that some songs are indeed about grammar; others are

about vocabulary, and others focus on issues that play a role in learners' lives and reflect stages of personal development they may be at. Whatever Supasongs are about, they are about things that matter. That's why you'll find songs, for any age, that 'teach' the present continuous, but also songs that practice food words, or songs that deal with friendship, loss, love and growing up.

### Do Supasongs have a link with any external standards?

Supasongs have been written with the Common European Framework of Reference in mind. This is a standard for language learning that is now familiar to teachers all over the world. In our catalogue you will find indications of which CEFR level we think each song is suitable for. But even without this indication, the songs are always relevant for English language teaching.

### Are Supasongs in British or American English?

Fracas English recognises that the English language is rapidly developing into an international tool for communication, and that more and more non-native speakers of English talk with each other using

international varieties of English. For a lot of them, at the end of the day, it doesn't really matter whether their accent is British, American or Australian. We use the right singers for the right songs (American, British and Australian). Our writers are all teachers and professional songwriters who know what you can do in an English language classroom.

### Would you like to write worksheets?

If you think you've got what it takes to write worksheets for Supasongs, get in contact with us, tell us who you are, what your experience with songs is and send us a sample of your work. Drop us an email and send it to Hans at : [hans@fracasenglish.com](mailto:hans@fracasenglish.com).

### Article of the month

In our newsletters, we ask teachers and writers to share their thoughts about music, songs and language learning with us. This month it's Sandie Mouraõ, from Portugal, who would like to get everybody to sing, all the time!

*Sandie, a teacher and teacher trainer, is co-author, with Hans Mol (a materials developer) and Phil Pyne (a musician) of the SupaDoooper songs, for 4-10 year-olds.*

## Sing, sing a song!

*Sandie Mouraõ, Portugal.*

How many teachers don't use songs when teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to young children? Not many! It's an acknowledged fact that songs are part of what we do, alongside playing games and being ludic! For teachers they play an important role in our lesson planning, they can be routine openers or closers, especially for very young children, and excellent settlers when children get too excited. They add variety to our lessons, providing a change of pace; they present new contexts for recycling language; and finally allow us to let our hair down a bit. There's nothing better than a good old sing song!

But, how do they benefit our students? And more importantly, are we using music and song enough?

Music and song are hailed as contributing to a child's development in all areas - socio-emotional, physical, cognitive and linguistic. Let's have a look at how.

### Socio-emotional development.

Singing a song as a whole class is a truly social act, allowing for non-

verbal and verbal participation with everyone involved no matter what their English is like - some children mumble following the actions, some sing one or two words at the end of a refrain, others will sing large chunks, and there will always be those who know all the words and sing loud and strong. Each child participates as well as they can, actively contributing to creating a group identity and reinforcing a positive '*I can*' feeling.

One of my favourite group identity songs is '*If you are happy and you know it!*' It is easily Googled, and available in many recorded formats and versions as it holds no copyright. Its simple, repetitive pattern is perfect for memorizing and children love doing the actions and loudly shouting the final refrain, '*WE ARE!*'

*If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap, clap)*

*If you are happy and you know it clap your hands (clap, clap)*

*If you are happy and you know it and you really want to show it*

*If you are happy and you know it clap your hands (clap, clap)*

I continue with three more verses substituting clap your hands with:

1. ...stomp your feet (stomp stomp)
2. ...say we are (WE ARE!)
3. ...do all three (clap, clap, stomp, stomp, WE ARE!)

In its simplest form this can be used with children of all ages, but as children get older encourage them to create their own versions. They can change the actions eg. '*... say hello / wink your eye / turn around.*' Or they can change the adjective '*If you are sad / scared / angry ...*'. They can then teach each other their verses, another appropriate social activity.

Many songs involve turn taking, another important social skill. Repetition is naturally provided as they swap roles, repeating the song over and over. A good example of this is a routine 'Hello song', at the beginning of lessons:

(Sung to tune of Frère Jaques)

Teacher	Children
<i>Hello children!</i>	<i>Hello teacher!</i>
<i>How are you?</i>	<i>We're fine, thank you!</i>
<i>How are you?</i>	<i>We're fine, thank you! How about you?</i>
<i>I'm fine too!</i>	

As classes progress, the children can individually take on one of the roles, e.g. Children: *Hello Ana!* Ana: *Hello friends!*

This idea also applies with larger groups of children (a row / table cluster) singing different parts of a song (e.g. one line / group) - a song will get sung as many times as there are groups, as each group sings each part. Everyone will be enjoying himself or herself, and the song will soon be memorized!

The example above also illustrates how useful well-known tunes are. Frère Jaques, in particular, is a great tune to put new words to. The children know the tune already and are relaxed about the new song they are listening to and concentrate on the words themselves.

### Physical development

All children love moving around, and songs provide a wonderful opportunity to do this. Very young children need to focus on accompanying the music with appropriate paralinguistic gestures and reproducing rhythmic accompaniments. Not only do they physically need to add movement to song, but in doing so, memory is stimulated and enhanced, so they find

it easier to pick up chunks of language as they sing.

There are many songs used with English as mother tongue learners, which are suitable for the EFL classroom. Once again you can google them, and find sites which provide the lyrics and the music. One of my favourites is *'One finger, one thumb'*, which gets children really focused on which part of their body to move and helps them develop sequencing and coordination skills.

### One Finger, One Thumb Keep Moving

Move each part of the body as it mentioned in the song and count 1 - 5 on your fingers.

*One finger, one thumb keep moving (x 3). 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*

*One finger, one thumb, one arm, keep moving (x 3). 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*

*One finger, one thumb, one arm, one foot, keep moving (x 3). 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*

*One finger, one thumb, one arm, one foot, one leg, keep moving (x 3). 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*

*One finger, one thumb, one arm, one foot, one leg, one nod of the head, keep moving (x 3). 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*

You can make it more challenging by repeating the last verse and speeding it up! Children love that!

For smaller children songs which come from nursery rhymes provide great finger play activities. *'Incy Wincy Spider'* is a good example and is excellent for children's manual dexterity.

### *Incy Wincy Spider*

*The Incy Wincy spider climbed up the water spout,*

Fingers imitate a moving spider

*Down came the rain and washed the spider out.*

Fingers imitate falling rain

*Out came the sun and dried up all the rain.*

Arms make a large circle over your head

*And the Incy Wincy spider went up the spout again.*

Fingers imitate a moving spider.

To imitate a moving spider: touch left hand thumb with right hand little finger and then bring over left hand little finger with right hand thumb. Repeat the action. It's very difficult

for small children, but they get so much pleasure from being able to do it eventually!

Finally, another fun movement focused song is 'Peter Hammers', where children are reinforcing numbers but also sequencing their body movements... and it's not easy!

### Peter Hammers

Peter hammers with one hammer, one hammer one hammer,

*(pound one fist on floor or leg)*

Peter hammers with one hammer all day long.

*(Increase the number of hammers to five ...)*

Two hammers. *(pound two fists)*

Three hammers. *(pound two fists, one foot)*

Four hammers. *(pound two fists, two feet)*

Five hammers. *(pound two fists, two feet, nod head up and down)*

Peter's very tired now... *(rub eyes, then lay head on hands)*

If you have access to some musical instruments, xylophones, triangles,

wooden blocks etc try tapping a beat to the rhythm of the song.

### Cognitive development

For the last decade researchers have been heralding the use of song as positively developing spatial intelligence. Spatial intelligence is described as the part of our intelligence that allows us to understand the three-dimensional world in which we live, from kicking a ball to driving a car and it's also useful in advanced maths problems! It's got something to do with the way we visualize the musical components in our heads.

Repeatedly singing the same song over and over is also very good for children - repetition is a very effective learning tool, especially when the child is self-motivated and enjoys repeating the learning experience. How many times have you played a song and the children have called out, 'Again? Have you played it again? Next time remember, that each time the notes of a song are heard, children are refining basic music skills such as pitch, rhythm, and dynamics. Repeatedly interacting with songs is as important to children as repeatedly practicing a concerto is to a professional musician.

The skill acquired from repeatedly participating in something is automaticity that is, both knowing what to say and producing language rapidly without pausing. Using songs certainly supports automatized language use, especially if they are repetitive and simple enough. There are lots of good examples, and an alphabet song will serve as one here. There are many to choose from, and most use simple melodies and rhyming words to help children memorize of the letter order - a great example is the one you can find on the British Council LearnEnglishkids site: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-songs-alphabet.htm>

*ABCDE I'm in the jungle in a coconut tree*

*FGHIJ Do you want to come and play?*

*KLMNOPQ I will bring a friend or two*

*RSTUV A zebra and a chimpanzee*

*WXYZ We'll play until it's time for bed*

All you have to do is sing 'A, B C' and the children will continue singing the letters that follow ... and the rest! This song shouts out for physical actions to accompany it, as well as dividing the children into groups, each singing a line. Within a couple

of weeks they'll have the alphabet perfect!

### Linguistic development

Though important for us as EFL teachers, I am considering this last. In early learning education, songs are considered critical in developing phonemic awareness, and play a significant role in early literacy preparation programmes. The more we include music and song in our EFL classes, the easier it will be for younger children to pick up individual sounds to later support reading in English.

For all ages, songs reinforce the stress and intonation we put on words, as well as the rhythm. They also provide excellent pronunciation practice, whether you focus on the sounds or not. Again, repetition of songs plays an important role in this.

The rhythm in songs is also responsible for helping memorization, enabling children to quickly pick up whole chunks of language successfully. Songs also provide opportunities for skill practice: listening and speaking obviously, and depending on what activities are used to introduce or follow up a song, reading and writing too.

In my example above using 'If you are happy...' children wrote new verses. How about writing out their new song and illustrating it? Each new verse could be a page in a songbook, which can go on display. The completed new song could be sung in a school concert. From singing a simple, repetitive song, focusing on social development, you have helped children practice their linguistic skills (rewriting the song, thinking about different action / emotion words) and involved them physically and emotionally in preparing something for others to see.

That brings me nicely onto another wonderful reason to use songs: they provide an opportunity for children to take English out of the classroom! Formally as part of a performance or wall display or informally as a hum! Both renditions provide parents and carers with evidence of what their children can do in English, which is motivating for both parties. Many a time I have met parents who earnestly tell me that their children teach them the songs they learn in English. What a wonderful opportunity to share something together, an English song, brought home from school, and sung by all the family!

Joe Raposo, well known for writing the lyrics for many Sesame Street songs, wrote a hit for the Carpenters in 1972 - it goes like this:

*"Sing, Sing a song, Sing out loud, Sing out strong, Sing of good things, not bad, Sing of happy, not sad, Sing, Sing a song, Make it simple, To last your whole life long, Don't worry that it's not good enough, For anyone else to hear, Sing, Sing a song."*

He couldn't have put it better!

We live in a world surrounded by music, it's part of every child's life. Make sure it's also part of their English life - include songs in your lessons as regularly as possible - there are so many good reasons for doing so!

## Sing, sing a song!

Supasongs is a large and growing collections of modern, stimulating and motivating songs that you can use to learn or teach English with. All songs come with resources and ideas for use in the classroom.