

When Grandma and Grandpa Were Kids

Performance Suggestions

Slide Show

During the performance present a slide show with images of the toys and games mentioned in the song and add a few more (Slinky, Mr. Potato Head, board games). This is an opportunity for students to do historical research of the toys and games from the 1950's-1960's and see how some relate to historical events (space toys, for example) as well as compare/contrast that era to the present. Create a short unit with the Social Studies teachers.

If you have the time take photos or short videos of your students playing those games... perhaps even with their grandparents. Remember to get "permission to photo" in writing.

Live Performances

Throughout the song, students play the games on the stage with each activity occurring in a staggered fashion so that by the end of the song the stage is full of activity.

Grandparents Day performance: if possible, have grandparents playing the games with select children *onstage*, choosing and rehearsing the adults and students ahead of time.

Reflection

When I started this composition, it took a different path. There were no Grandmas or Grandpas. Instead, it was supposed to be a song about what kids do in the Spring when it's fun to be outside again. That actually became a whole different piece that might be finished by the time you read this.

As I continued writing, I pictured a bunch of kids sitting around looking at their phones, not even talking to each other. You've seen it; you know what I mean, and we are probably all guilty of doing it at one time or another! I pretended those kids thought games were dumb and phones and video games were better activities.

Enter Grandma/Grandpa. Where I come from we call them Mom Mom and Pop Pop. The names don't matter; my message to you is to appreciate them and please don't choose your devices over talking to them. I never knew my grandparents, but I got to understand a little bit about grands when I watched my own kids interact with theirs throughout the years.

I researched games and toys of the 1950s and 1960s and was surprised at how many we still play today. I played many games of Monopoly, Gin Rummy, rode miles on my bike (mostly without hands...could pogo stick with no hands, too). My friends and I skated and played a lot of baseball games, and we still had time to draw, color, play music and do homework. So, put down the video games sometimes and don't miss out on *active* friendships...and if you have them, spend some quality time with your grandparents!

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