

# MUSICAL HOT POTATO

## Description

Musical Hot Potato is a lively, interactive game that engages seniors in developing their cognitive skills through music. In this game, participants pass a soft object (like a ball or stuffed toy) around while music plays. When the music stops, the person holding the "musical potato" must answer a musical prompt, such as naming a song, identifying an instrument, or recalling a musical fact. This activity promotes quick thinking, memory recall, auditory processing, and cognitive flexibility, making it a fun way for seniors to exercise their brains while enjoying music and socializing.



## Time Needed

20-30 minutes

## Learning Setting

Group activity

## Materials Required

- A soft ball, stuffed toy, or any small object to pass around
- A device to play music (smartphone, speaker, or CD player).

## Learning Objectives



- Strengthen both short-term and long-term memory by recalling song titles, artists, instruments, and musical facts.
- Sharpen the brain's ability to recognize, distinguish, and respond to different musical elements (such as instruments, genres, or melodies).
- Promote the ability to switch between different types of information quickly, such as moving from identifying songs to recalling musical knowledge or facts.

## Practical Tips

- Set up the music player and ensure the room is arranged so that participants can pass the potato easily.
- Include songs that are familiar to the participants.
- Vary the prompts between memory recall, music identification, and knowledge-based questions (e.g., "What year was this song released?" or "What genre is this?").



## Step By Step Guidance

1. Prepare a playlist with a range of music, including various genres, tempos, and familiarity to suit the cognitive levels of the group.
2. Explain the rules, that you pass the musical potato around while the music plays. When the music stops, the person holding the potato will have to answer a musical question.
3. Provide examples of potential questions: "Name a famous composer," "Identify the instrument you hear," or "What genre is this song?"
4. Start the music and have the group pass the musical potato around.
5. Randomly stop the music and call on the person holding the potato. They must quickly answer a question related to the music (e.g., identifying an artist, recalling a musical term, or identifying an instrument).
6. Vary the types of questions to encourage cognitive flexibility, making it both fun and mentally stimulating.
7. Optionally, give a small recognition to participants who provided the most thoughtful answers.

## Expected Results

- The activity will improve memory, as participants recall details about songs, artists, instruments, and genres under a time constraint.
- Sharing musical knowledge and memories fosters social interaction and emotional connection, reinforcing cognitive skills while deepening appreciation and enjoyment of music.

## Source

SIF