



Smithsonian Folkways

CLASSIC FOLK SONGS FOR KIDS

from SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS



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Compiled and
annotated by
Jeff Place

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2016 Smithsonian
Folkways Recordings

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1. **Froggie Went a-Courtin'** Elizabeth Mitchell 3:49
arr. Elizabeth Mitchell / Last Affair Music, BMI
2. **Polly Wolly Doodle**
Pete Seeger, Bess Hawes, and Tom Glazer 1:51
3. **Skip to My Lou** Lead Belly 2:15
arr. Huddie Ledbetter / TRO-Folkways Music Publishers, Inc., BMI
4. **I've Been Working on the Railroad** Ella Jenkins 1:27
arr. Ella Jenkins / Ell-Bern Publishing Co., ASCAP
5. **She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain**
Sarah Lee Guthrie and Family 2:44
arr. Sarah Lee Guthrie / BMG Firefly o.b.o. Sweet Milk Creek Music, ASCAP
6. **John Henry** Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry 4:08
arr. Walter McGhee / Figs D. Music o.b.o. Stormking Music, Inc., BMI
7. **Brown Girl in the Ring** Lord Invader 1:49
8. **Old King Cole** Jean Ritchie 1:11
9. **Green Grass Grows All Around** Sam Hinton 2:25
William Jerome—Harry Von Tilzer
10. **La rana (The Frog)** Suni Paz 2:05
11. **I Had a Rooster** Pete Seeger 3:55
12. **Go Tell Aunt Rhody** The Ritchie Family 1:45
Based on music by Jean-Jacques Rousseau



13. **Miss Mary Mack** Ella Jenkins 1:59
Music by Ella Jenkins / Ell-Bern Publishing Co., ASCAP
14. **Yankee Doodle** Pete Seeger 1:41
15. **Rock Island Line** Snooks Eaglin 2:06
Clarence Wilson
16. **Big Rock Candy Mountain** Tom Glazer 3:10
*Marshall P. Locke-Charles Tyner-new lyrics by Tom Glazer /
Larry Spier Music o.b.o. Songs Music, Inc., ASCAP*
17. **On Top of Old Smoky** Pete Seeger 2:19
18. **Crawdad Hole** Cisco Houston 2:17
19. **Oh Susannah** Pete Seeger 1:18
Stephen Collins Foster
20. **Goober Peas** Tom Glazer 2:03
arr. Tom Glazer / Larry Spier Music o.b.o. Songs Music, Inc., ASCAP
21. **Arroz con leche (Rice and Milk)** Young Mexican Girls 0:37
22. **Riding in My Car** Elizabeth Mitchell 2:49
Woody Guthrie / TRO-Folkways Music Publishers, Inc. o.b.o. Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI.
23. **Whoopie Ti-Yi-Yo, Get Along Little Dogies** Cisco Houston 2:05
24. **Home on the Range** Pete Seeger 1:51 *Brewster Higley-Daniel Kelley*
25. **Shenandoah** Alan Mills 2:45



Introduction

Jeff Place





WHAT ARE CLASSIC CHILDREN'S SONGS? Many of the songs had a known beginning, but gradually over time became part of a great shared body of children's songs and games. Many of them are improvisational in nature and can be changed by inserting a teacher's name or a friend's in a game—the children can take old rhymes and give them new shape. Reflecting this historical depth and appropriation by children, the songs included here can be found widely today. Thought of as “old and anonymous,” they have been taught in schools and summer camps. They are songs adults remember from their childhood and can share with their children.

In the 20th century, American folklorists collected these songs, first primarily interested in the lyrics as poetry. Then, with recording devices, they began to follow the melodies. The songs are great examples of the “folk process,” in which a melody may be reinvented over and over with new themes and words to address current situations. An old British ballad becomes “Streets of Laredo” with the cowboys and “St. James Infirmary” with the jazz musicians in New Orleans. Folklorists have found the children's folk song repertoire to be both dynamic and enduring, with many “classics” passed on through, and transformed by, many generations. They would know, since many of them have played a key role in spreading the songs' popularity in the United States through publications and educational institutions. Pioneering folk song collector John Lomax Sr. published an important collection, *Cowboy Songs*, in 1910. Carl Sandburg's 1927 *American Songbag* was another milestone. Robert Winslow Gordon collected songs in the 1920s, leading to the formation of the Library of Congress Archive of Folk Song in 1928.

John and Alan Lomax, Benjamin Botkin, and others provided folk song collections that people young and old could learn the old songs from. From the 1940s onward, children would learn many of these classic folk songs in school from school music books, such as collections by Beatrice Landeck and Elie Seigmeister. Some of the well-known books, such as *Animal Folk Songs for Children*, were edited by composer and folk song documentarian Ruth Crawford Seeger. The songs were above all fun. They were about animals, cowboys, legendary American characters, and seafarers, and tied into the stories of American history taught in school about figures such as Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone. They could be found in summer camp songbooks for all those children who ventured off to their summer adventure. Some folksingers in the 1950s, epitomized by Pete Seeger, often sang at camps, teaching a new generation songs they carried with them into their adulthood and subsequently taught to their own kids.

This collection draws from the Folkways Records and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings labels. The former was the work of Moses Asch, who spent a good deal of time going to teachers' conventions and trying to get his children's records into schools. When he encountered anthropologists heading off to an exotic locale to record, he encouraged them to bring him back some children's songs. Of the 2,200 titles on his label, his best-selling albums were children's albums—none more than those by a young woman from Chicago, Ella Jenkins, who over time was dubbed “The First Lady of Children’s Music” for her primacy in this field. Asch promoted children's albums by Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Suni Paz, Sam Hinton, Charity Bailey, and others. Founded in 1988 and following the legacy of Asch, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings continues to value children's music. Newer recordings by Elizabeth Mitchell, Sarah Lee Guthrie and Family, and Chip Taylor and his grandchildren, as well as new reissues of older recordings by renowned folksinger Tom Glazer, have expanded the holdings of children's music. These songs are for singing together, maybe in a car, maybe at a party, maybe just at home for fun, and to this end, the lyrics are included here. In the spirit of legendary singer Pete Seeger, who dedicated his life to keeping people interacting together and to bonding together through song, we invite you to do the same. Take out this recording, gather the children, and try singing the songs together. Enjoy.



Songs



I. FROGGIE WENT A-COURTIN'—ELIZABETH MITCHELL

(also known as “King Kong Kitchie Ki-Me-O”; from *Blue Clouds* SFW45065, 2012)

This is an old ballad published as far back as the 1500s (“The frog came to the *myl dur*”) about an unlikely marriage of a frog to a mouse. It is thought to be a commentary on an unpopular English royal courtship of that era.

Froggie went a-courtin' and he did ride / With a sword and pistol by his side.
He rode till he came to Miss Mousie's door, / Where he'd often been before.
Miss Mousie came a-trippin' down, / Green glass slippers and a golden gown.
He took Miss Mouse upon his knee / And he said, “Miss Mouse, will you marry me?”

CHORUS:

Kemo, kimo, kimo, key, / Way down yonder in a hollow tree
An owl and a bat and a bumblebee / King kong kitchie, kitchie ki-me-o.

“Without my Uncle Rat's consent / I would not marry the president!”
Old rat laughed till he shook his sides / To think Miss Mousie would be a bride.
Oh, what will the wedding supper be? / Two butter beans and a black-eyed pea.
What more will the wedding supper be? / Buttercups and dewdrop tea.

Chorus

The first came in was a silver moth, / She spread her wings for a tablecloth.
The next came in was a bumblebee, / Set a little banjo on her knee.
The next came in was the old grey goose, / Picked up his fiddle and he cut loose.
The next came in were two little ants, / They stood up to have a dance.

Chorus

Oh, what a feast, what a wedding day! / Still they left for the honeymoon right away.
Now they live far off in a hollow tree, / But they have good health and children three.

Chorus

Oh, what a feast, what a wedding day! / Still they left for the honeymoon right away.
Now they live far off in a hollow tree, / But they have good health and children three.

Chorus

2. POLLY WOLLY DOODLE—PETE SEEGER, BESS HAWES, AND TOM GLAZER

(from *Lonesome Valley—A Collection of American Folk Music* FW02010, 1951)

This is a 19th-century folk song which has appeared in many songbooks and is a fun sing-along.

Oh, I went down south for to see my Sal,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day
My Sal, she is a pretty gal,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day.



CHORUS:

Fare thee well, fare thee well,
Fare thee well, my fairy fay.
For I'm off to Louisiana, for to see my Susyanna,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day.

Grasshopper sittin' on a railroad track,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day
Picking his teeth with a carpet tack,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day.

Chorus

Behind the barn, down on my knees,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day
I thought I heard a chicken sneeze,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day.

Chorus

He sneezed so hard with the whooping cough,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day
He sneezed his head and tail off right off,
Singing Polly Wolly Doodle all the day.

Chorus

Peanuts sittin' on a railroad track singing for
his supper
Along came the 2:15—toot, toot! Peanut butter!

Chorus

3. SKIP TO MY LOU—LEAD BELLY

(from *Lead Belly Sings for Children* SFW45047, 1999)

“Skip to My Lou” is a popular play party and square dance tune. Young Lead Belly used to play it for many country dances and ring games in his native Louisiana.

Lost my partner, skip to my Lou (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

I’ll get another one prettier than you (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

Can’t get a bluebird, jaybird’ll do (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

Little red wagon painted in blue (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

Fly in the sugar bowl, shoo, fly, shoo (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

My old shoe is torn in two (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

Cows in the cornfield two by two (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

Stole my partner, what’ll I do? (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

I’ll get another one quicker than you (3x)
Skip to my Lou, my darlin’.

4. I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD—ELLA JENKINS

(from *Adventures in Rhythm* SFW45007, 1992)

This is a popular American railroad song, early known as the “Levee Song.” It’s another song included in many children’s songbooks.

I’ve been working on the railroad
All the livelong day
I’ve been working on the railroad
Just to pass the time away

Can’t you hear the whistle blowing
Rise up so early in the morn
Can’t you hear the captain shouting,
Dinah, blow your horn!

Dinah, won’t you blow (2x)
Dinah, won’t you blow your horn

(repeat)

Someone’s in the kitchen with Dinah
Someone’s in the kitchen I know
Someone’s in the kitchen with Dinah
Strumming on the old banjo, and singing

Fee, fi, fiddly i o (3x)
Strumming on the old banjo.

5. SHE'LL BE COMING 'ROUND THE MOUNTAIN

— SARAH LEE GUTHRIE AND FAMILY

(from *Go Waggaloo* SFW45069, 2009)

This song has its roots in the old African American spiritual “When the Chariot Comes,” which got reworked into this children’s song. Later sung by railroad work gangs, it has made its way around America. It’s an old summer camp staple.

She’ll be coming ’round the mountain when she comes, toot, toot! (2x)

She’ll be coming ’round the mountain (3x)

When she comes.

She’ll be driving six white horses when she comes, whoa back! (2x)

She’ll be driving six white horses (3x)

When she comes, whoa back, toot, toot.

Oh, we’ll all go out to meet her when she comes, hi babe! (2x)

Oh, we’ll all go out to meet her (3x)

When she comes, hi babe, whoa back, toot, toot.

And we’ll have chicken and dumplings when she comes, yum, yum (2x)

We’ll have chicken and dumplings (3x)

When she comes, yum, yum, hi babe, whoa back, toot, toot!

She’ll have to sleep with Grandma when she comes, snore, snore (2x)

She’ll have to sleep with Grandma (3x)

When she comes, snore, snore, yum, yum, hi babe, whoa back, toot, toot!

She’ll be wearing red pajamas when she comes, scratch, scratch (2x)

She’ll be wearing red pajamas (3x)

When she comes, scratch, scratch, snore, snore, yum, yum, hi babe,
whoa back, toot, toot!

6. JOHN HENRY—BROWNIE MCGHEE AND SONNY TERRY

(from *Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry Sing* SFW40011, 1990)

John Henry is an American legend, and this song about him is perhaps the most famous of American folk songs. Henry is a worker who was digging the Big Bend railroad tunnel and whose job is threatened by new machinery. He asserts that he can dig faster than the new steam drill and proposes a contest—which he wins, but he dies of exhaustion.

John Henry was a little bitty boy, sittin' on his daddy's knee.
He pointed his finger at piece of steel and said,
"That steel's gonna be the death of me." (4x)

John Henry had a little bitty woman,
Her name was Polly Ann.
John Henry got sick on his dyin' bed.
You know Polly, she drove steel like a man. (4x)

John Henry was hammerin' on top of the mountain.
Captain said, "Johnny, that my tin sinkin' in?"
John said, "Shut up captain, you don't know what you sayin'.
That ain't nothing but my hammer suckin' wind." (4x)

Some say John Henry was born in Texas,
Some people say he was born in Maine.
John Henry was born down in North Carolina,
Leader of a steel drivin' gang. (4x)

Well, the paymaster loved to see John Henry,
Waterboy loved to hear him sing.
Most of all, that the paymaster love,
Love to hear John Henry's hammer ring. (4x)





Well, they kept John Henry on a mountain
Up on a mountain so high.
Last words I hear that poor boy say,
“Gimme a cool drink of water 'fore I die.” (4x)

7. BROWN GIRL IN THE RING—LORD INVADER

(from *Calypso in New York* SFW40454, 2000)

Rupert Grant was a great calypso singer better known as the Lord Invader. He was from Trinidad but lived in New York for many years. The song is a Caribbean ring game for children, possibly from Jamaica.

Brown girl in a ring / Tra la la la (3x)
She looks like a sugar on a plum / Plum plum
(repeat)

Girl, show me your motion / Tra la la la (3x)
You look like a sugar in a plum / Plum plum

Hug and kiss your partner / Tra la la la (3x)
You look like a sugar in a plum / Plum plum

Hug and kiss your mother / Tra la la la (3x)
You look like a sugar in a plum / Plum plum

Hug and kiss your daddy / Tra la la la (3x)
You look like a sugar in a plum / Plum plum

Show me your motion / Tra la la la (3x)
You look like a sugar in a plum / Plum plum

8. OLD KING COLE—JEAN RITCHIE

(from *Children's Songs and Games from the Southern Mountains* FW07054, 1957)

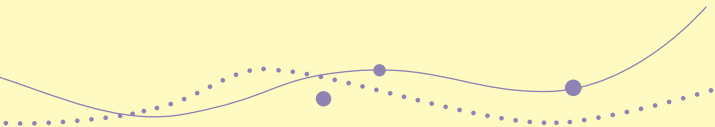
This is a nursery rhyme of British origin first published at the beginning of the 18th century. Whoever King Cole was (no one knows), he has been remembered through this rhyme.

Old King Cole was a jolly old soul
And that you may know by his larning.
He'd eat cornbread until his head turned red and
his old yellow cap needed darning.

My pretty little pink, I once did think that I and you would marry,
But now I lost all hopes of you, and I ain't got long to tarry.

I'll take my musket on my back, my musket on my shoulder
I'll march away through Mexico, enlist and be a soldier
Where the coffee grows on the white oak tree and
the rivers they run brandy
Where the boys are pure as a lump of gold and
the girls are sweet as candy.

You may go on and I'll turn back to the place we first parted.
We'll open up the ring and choose a couple in and hope
they'll come free-hearted.



9. GREEN GRASS GROWS ALL AROUND—SAM HINTON

(from *Whoever Shall Have Some Good Peanuts and Other Folk Songs for Children*
SFW45062, 2006)

This is an old popular music song from 1912. Like “I Had a Rooster,” the lyrics build up from verse to verse. It is usually performed with singers singing it faster and faster until they can’t sing any faster.

Once here was a tree, it was the prettiest little tree.
Did you ever see a tree? A tree in the ground?
And the green grass growing all around, all around,
And the green grass grew all around.

And on this tree there was a limb, the prettiest littlest limb.
Did you ever see a limb?
The limb on the tree and the tree in the ground
And the green grass growin’ all around, all around,
And the green grass growin’ all around.

Now on this limb there was a branch, the prettiest little branch.
Did you ever see a branch?
And the branch on the limb and the limb on the tree and the tree in the ground
And the green grass grew all around, all around,
And the green grass grew all around.

On this branch there was a bough, the prettiest little bough.
Did you ever see a bough?
The bough on the branch, the branch on the limb, the limb on the tree,
the tree in the ground
And the green grass grew all around, all around,
And the green grass grew all around.

And on this bough there was a twig, the prettiest little twig.

Did you ever see a twig?

The twig on the bough, the bough on the branch, the branch on the limb,
the limb on the tree, the tree in the ground

And the green grass grew all around, all around,

And the green grass grew all around.

And on this twig, there was a leaf, the prettiest little leaf.

Did you ever see a leaf?

Leaf on the twig, twig on the bough, bough on the branch, branch on the limb,
limb on the tree, and the tree in the ground

And the green grass grew all around, all around,

And the green grass grew all around.

On this leaf, there was a nest, the prettiest little nest.

Did you ever see a nest?

The nest on the leaf, the leaf on the twig, the twig on the bough, the bough on the
branch, the branch on the limb, the limb on the tree, and the tree in the ground

And the green grass grew all around, all around,

And the green grass grew all around.

On this nest there was a bird, the prettiest little bird.

Did you ever see a bird?

A bird on the nest, the nest on a leaf, the leaf on the twig, the twig on the bough,
the bough on the branch, the branch on the limb, the limb on the tree,
the tree in the ground

And the green grass grew all around, all around,

And the green grass grew all around.

And on this bird there was a feather, the finest little feather.

Did you ever see a feather?

The feather on the bird, the bird on the nest, the nest on the leaf,
the leaf on the twig, the twig on the bough, the bough on the branch,
branch on the tree, the tree in the ground

And the green grass grew all around, all around,

And the green grass grew all around.

And on this feather there was a flea, the prettiest little flea.

Did you ever see a flea?

Flea on the feather, the feather on the bird, the bird in the nest, the nest on the leaf,
the leaf on the twig, the twig on the bough, the bough on the branch,
the branch on the limb, the limb on the tree, the tree in the ground

And the green grass grew all around, all around,

And the green grass grew all around.

10. LA RANA (THE FROG)—SUNI PAZ

(also known as “Estaba la rana sentada cantando debajo del agua”; from *Alerta Sings and Songs for the Playground / Canciones Para el Recreo* SFW45055, 2000)

Like “I Had a Rooster” and the “Green Grass Grows All Around,” this Latin American children’s song is a cumulative song, one in which the verses build on the previous ones.

Estaba la rana sentada cantando debajo del agua

Cuando la rana salió a cantar

Vino la mosca y la hizo callar

La mosca a la rana que estaba sentada

Cantando debajo del agua

Cuando la mosca salió a cantar

Vino la araña y la hizo callar

La araña a la mosca la mosca a la rana
Que estaba sentada cantando debajo del agua
Cuando la araña salió a cantar
Vino el ratón y la hizo callar

El ratón a la araña etc.....

El hombre al perro el perro al gato el gato al ratón el ratón a la araña la araña a la mosca
la mosca a la rana que estaba sentada cantando debajo del agua
Cuando el hombre salió a cantar
¡Ni el mismo diablo lo hizo callar!

The frog was singing, sitting underneath the water.
When the frog came out to sing,
The fly came out and made her stop.
The fly to the frog sitting, singing underneath the water.
When the fly came out to sing,

The spider came out and made her stop.
The spider to the fly, the fly to the frog
Who was sitting, singing underneath the water,
When the spider came out to sing,
Out came the mouse and made her stop.

The mouse to the spider, etc.....

The man to the dog, the dog to the cat, the cat to the mouse,
the mouse to the spider, the spider to the fly, the fly to the frog
Who was sitting, singing underneath the water,
When the man came out to sing,
Not even the devil could make him stop!

II. I HAD A ROOSTER—PETE SEEGER

(from *Birds, Beasts, Bugs and Fishes (Little and Big)* SFW45039, 1998)

This is a Southern play song. It's a humorous piece in which each verse builds on the previous ones, and the singers can make animal noises.

I had a rooster and the rooster pleased me.

I fed my rooster on a green berry tree.

The little rooster went “cockle doodle doo, dee doodle dee doodle
dee doodle dee do.”

I had a cat and the cat pleased me.

I fed my cat on a green berry tree.

The little cat goes “meow, meow.”

The little rooster goes “cockle doodle doo, dee doodle dee doodle
dee doodle dee do.”

I had a duck and the duck pleased me.

I fed my duck on a green berry tree.

The little duck goes “quack, quack, quack.”

The little cat goes “meow, meow.”

The little rooster goes “cockle doodle doo, dee doodle dee doodle
dee doodle dee do.”

I had a pig and the pig pleased me.

I fed my pig on a green berry tree.

The little pig goes “oink, oink, oink.”

The little duck goes “quack, quack, quack.”

The little cat goes “meow, meow.”

The little rooster goes “cockle doodle doo, dee doodle dee doodle
dee doodle dee do.”

I had a cow and the cow pleased me.
I fed my cow on a green berry tree.
The little cow goes "mooo, mooo!"
The little pig goes "oink, oink, oink."
The little duck goes "quack, quack, quack."
The little cat goes "meow, meow."
The little rooster goes "cockle doodle doo, dee doodle dee doodle
dee doodle dee do."

I had a lion. The lion pleased me.
I fed my lion on a green berry tree.
The little lion went "growl, growl."
The little cow went "mooo, mooo!"
The little pig goes "oink, oink, oink."
The little duck went "quack, quack, quack."
The little cat went "meow, meow."
The little rooster went "cockle doodle doo, dee doodle dee doodle dee
doodle dee do."

I had a baby. The baby pleased me.
I fed my baby on a green berry tree.
The little baby went "waaaah! waaaah!"
The little lion went "growl, growl."
The little cow went "mooo, mooo!"
The little pig went "oink, oink, oink."
The little duck went "quack, quack, quack."
The little cat went "meow, meow."
The little rooster went "cockle doodle doo, dee doodle dee doodle
dee doodle dee do."

12. GO TELL AUNT RHODY—THE RITCHIE FAMILY

(from *The Ritchie Family of Kentucky* FW02316, 1958)

This song, also known as “Go Tell Aunt Nancy,” has a long history. It began as part of an opera in 1756 by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Over time, it travelled on its own and became a popular children’s song, found all over the United States.

Go tell Aunt Rhody (3x) / The old grey goose is dead.
The one that she’s been saving (3x) / To make her featherbed.
She died last Friday (3x) / Behind the old orange shed.
She left nine young goslings (3x) / To scratch for their own bread.

13. MISS MARY MACK—ELLA JENKINS

(from *Songs Children Love to Sing* SFW45042, 1996)

This is one of Ella Jenkins’ most popular children’s songs. It’s a children’s clapping game—two children sit opposite one another and clap hands.

Miss Mary Mack, Mack, Mack
All dressed in black, black, black
With silver buttons, buttons, buttons
All down her back, back, back.

She asked her mother, mother, mother
For 50 cents, cents, cents
To see the elephants, elephants, elephants
Jump over the fence, fence, fence.

They jumped so high, high, high
They reached the sky, sky, sky
And they didn’t come back, back, back
Till the 4th of July, ly, ly!

14. YANKEE DOODLE—PETE SEEGER

(from *American Favorite Ballads, Vol. I* SFW40150, 2002)

In colonial America, the British and the colonists made up songs to insult each other. The British wrote this one to make fun of Americans as country simpletons. The Americans liked it so much they marched against the British singing “Yankee Doodle.” It’s the song most associated with the American Revolutionary War.

Yankee doodle went to town
Riding on a pony
Stuck a feather in his hat and called it macaroni.

CHORUS:

Yankee doodle, keep it up
Yankee doodle dandy
Mind the music and the step
And with the girls be handy.

15. ROCK ISLAND LINE—SNOOKS EAGLIN

(from *New Orleans Street Singer* SFW40165, 2005)

The Rock Island Line was part of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. Folklorist Stephen Wade discovered that Clarence Wilson penned the song as part of a contest to write a jingle for the railway. In a modified form, it became a prison song; John Lomax found inmates singing it and recorded them. Lead Belly recorded the most popular version and introduced it to many. It later was recorded by rock musicians, notably Lonnie Donegan.

Oh that Rock Island Line is a mighty good road,
Oh that Rock Island Line is that road to ride,
Oh that Rock Island Line is a mighty good road.
If you want a woman, get your ticket at the station. You got the Rock Island Line.

A, B, C, double X, Y Z, come on baby, let's ride with me.
(repeat)

A, B, C, double X, Y Z, come on baby, and ride with me.
(repeat)

16. BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN—TOM GLAZER

(from *Tom Glazer Sings Honk-Hiss-Tweet-GGGGGGGGGG and Other Children's Favorites*
SFW45068, 2008)

"Big Rock Candy Mountain" is song about a hobo's imaginary world, where things are much brighter than the life he is living. It comes from various old songs like "Little Stream of Whiskey." It was popularized by Western singer "Haywire Mac," Burl Ives, and others. Tom Glazer wrote different lyrics to this classic.

On a sunny day in the month of May
A bunch of kids came loping / Down a shady lane through the sugar cane.
For years they'd been hope, hope, hoping
As they walked along, they sang a song of a land of cake and candy
Where a kid can play when he wants to play, and everything's just dandy.

CHORUS:

Oh, the buzzin' of the bees in the bubblegum trees near the soda water fountain
At the lemonade springs where the popsicle sings
On that big rock candy mountain.

There's the ice cream hill where you have your fill, and the donuts grow like flowers.
You can play each day / Every day's a holiday / And the days have a hundred hours.
There you go to school in a swimming pool, and your favorite cowboys teach you.
And you ride a horse, it's your own, of course. / You're so tall that
your daddy can't reach you.

Chorus

You'll have lots of fun / When you hit home runs / Every time you come to bat.
When the doctor is ill, / You will feed him pills. / What do you think of that?
And you'll take a trip in a rocket ship / A hundred miles a minute.
Every day you'll go to the rodeo / And you'll be the hero in it.

Chorus

You'll be stronger than the strongest man, and your bath you'll take
in the Pepsi Cola lake
And it never rains on the peppermint planes, and you'll always win
every game you're in...
On that big rock candy mountain.

17. ON TOP OF OLD SMOKY—PETE SEEGER

(from American Favorite Ballads, Vol. I SFW40150, 2002)

Pete Seeger learned this courting song in Appalachia, where the Great Smoky Mountains are. Many of the residents there descend from immigrants who came over from the British Isles with their ballads of love and courtship.

On top of Old Smoky, / All covered with snow,
I lost my true lover, / For courting so slow.

For courting's a pleasure, / But parting is grief,
And a false-hearted lover / Is worse than a thief.

A thief will just rob you, / And take what you have,
But a false-hearted lover / Will lead you to the grave.

A grave will decay you, / And turn you to dust,
Not one boy in a hundred / A poor girl can trust.

They'll hug you and kiss you, / And tell you more lies
Than crossties on a railroad / Or stars in the sky.

So come all you young maidens, / And listen to me,
Never place your affection / On a green willow tree.

For the leaves they will wither, / The roots they will die,
You'll all be forsaken, / And never know why.

(repeat first verse)

18. CRAWDAD HOLE—CISCO HOUSTON

(from Songs to Grow On, Vol. 2: School Days FW07020, 1951)

This is a fun play party song from the South where children could dance and sing about the scrumptious crawdads that could be caught down by the riverbank.

You get a line and I'll get a pole, honey,
You get a line and I'll get a pole, babe.
You get a line and I'll get a pole,
We'll go down to the crawdad hole, honey, baby mine.

Get up now, you slept too late, honey,
Get up now, you slept too late, babe,
Get up now, you slept too late,
The crawdad man done passed your gate honey, baby mine.

What are you gonna do when the lake goes dry, honey?
Tell me, what are you gonna do when the lake goes dry, babe?
What are you gonna do when the lake goes dry?
Sit on the bank, watch the crawdads die, honey, baby mine.

I heard a duck say to the drake, honey,
I heard a duck say to the drake, babe,
I heard a duck say to the drake,
There ain't no crawdads in this lake, honey, baby mine.



Yonder comes a man with a sack on his back, honey,
Yonder comes a man with a sack on his back, babe,
Yonder comes a man with a sack on his back,
Got all the crawdads he can pack, honey, baby mine.

Well, the man fell down and he broke that sack, honey,
The man fell down and he broke that sack, babe,
The man fell down and he broke that sack,
See them crawdads back and back, honey, baby mine.

Well, I sell crawdads three for a dime, honey,
I sell crawdads three for a dime, babe,
I sell crawdads three for a dime,
And your crawdads ain't as good as mine, honey, baby mine.

(repeat first verse)

19. OH SUSANNAH—PETE SEEGER

(from American Favorite Ballads, Vol. I SFW40150, 2002)

This minstrel-era song comes from the pen of the great 19th-century songwriter Stephen Collins Foster. First published in 1848, it was one of the most popular songs of the time and was adopted by the 49ers traveling west by wagon, looking for gold.

I come from Alabama with my banjo on my knee
I'm going to Louisiana, my true love for to see.
It rained all night the day I left, the weather it was dry
The sun so hot, I froze to death, Susannah, don't you cry.

CHORUS:

Oh, Susannah, oh don't you cry for me
For I come from Alabama with a banjo on my knee.

I had a dream the other night when everything was still
I dreamed I saw Susannah a-coming down the hill.
The red, red rose was in her cheek, and a tear was in her eye
I said to her, "Susannah gal, Susannah, don't you cry."

Chorus

20. GOOBER PEAS—TOM GLAZER

(from *A Treasury of Civil War Songs Sung by Tom Glazer* SFW40187, 2011)

This song dates to the American Civil War. "Goober peas" are peanuts.

Sitting by the roadside on a summer's day
Chatting with my mess-mates, passing time away
Lying in the shadows, underneath the trees
Goodness, how delicious, eating goober peas.

CHORUS:

Peas, peas, peas, peas / Eating goober peas
Goodness, how delicious, / Eating goober peas.

When a horse-man passes, the soldiers have a rule
To cry out at their loudest, "Hey Mister, where's your mule!"
But another pleasure, enchanting-er than these
Is wearing out your grinders, gobbling goober peas.

Chorus

Just before the battle, the General hears a row
He says, "The Yanks are coming, I can hear their rifles now."
He turns around in wonder, and what d' ya think he sees?
The Georgia Militia, eating goober peas.

Chorus

I think my song has lasted almost long enough.
The words are interesting, but the rhymes are mighty rough.
I wish this war was over, when free from rags and fleas
We'd kiss our wives and sweethearts, stop gobbling goober peas.

Chorus

21. ARROZ CON LECHE (RICE AND MILK)—YOUNG MEXICAN GIRLS

(from *Latin American Children Game Songs* FW07851, 1968)

The anthropologist Henrietta Yurchenco recorded this group of young Mexican girls in the state of Michoacán in 1966. The title of this ring game translates to “Rice with milk” (the dessert rice pudding, in English). The song is found all over Latin America.

Arroz de leche, se quiere casar
Con una viudita de la capital
Que sepa coser, que sepa bordar
Que ponga la aguja en el campanal.
Contigo, sí, contigo, no
Con contigo mi vida yo me he de casar.
Me subo a la mesa, apago la vela
Agarro un garrote, le pego a mi abuela
Mi padre lo supo, de palos me dio
Malhaya sea el hombre que me enamoró.
Me gusta la leche, me gusta el café
Pero más me gustan los ojos de usted.

Rice pudding, he wants to get married
To a widow from the capital
Who knows how to sew, who knows
how to embroider
Who puts the needle in the tassel of a gown.
With you, yes, with you, no,
With you, my dear, I am to be married.
I get up on the table, I put out the candle,
I grab a stick, I hit my grandmother.
My father found out, he gave me a beating,
Cursed be the man who made me fall in love
with him.
I like milk, I like coffee,
But even more, I like your eyes.

22. RIDING IN MY CAR—ELIZABETH MITCHELL

(from *Little Seed: Songs for Children* by Woody Guthrie SFW45072, 2012)

Woody Guthrie was one of the most prolific “ballad makers” in American history, writing thousands of songs. In the 1940s, he began to compose songs for his own kids. One they used to sing was “Riding in My Car,” a fun sing-along song which has entertained countless travelling families ever since.

Take me riding in the car, car (2x)
Take you riding in the car, car
I'll take you riding in my car.

Click clack, open up the door, girls,
Click clack, open up the door, boys,
Front door, back door, clickety clack,
Take you riding in the car.

Climb, climb, around on the front seat,
Spree I spraddle on the back seat,
Turn my key, step on the gas,
Take you riding in my car.

Engine it goes vroom, vroom (2x)
Front seat, back seat, boys and girls,
Take you riding in my car.

Trees and the houses walk along
Great big buildings walk along
Truck and a car and a garbage can,
Take you riding in my car.

Ships and the little boats chug along (3x)
Take you riding in my car.

I'm gonna zoom you home again (2x)
Zoom, zoom, roll you home again,
Take you riding in my car.

I'm gonna let you blow the horn (3x)
I'll take you riding in my car.

Frog in the car and we can't get him out (3x)
We'll take him ridin' in the car.
(repeat first verse 2x)

23. WHOOPIE TI-YI-YO, GET ALONG LITTLE DOGIES—CISCO HOUSTON

(from *Cisco Houston Sings Songs of the Open Road* FW02480, 1960)

As Americans migrated westward, some of them became cowboys, ranching and driving the cattle from place to place. Like the seamen on the ships before them who also travelled, they had their own songs. Some told tales of the exploits of other cowboys, some of their work. This is one of the songs that made it into many songbooks. A dogie is a motherless calf.

As I was walkin' one morning for pleasure,
I spied a cow-puncher all riding along.
His hat was shoved back and his spurs was a-jingling,
And as he was ridin' he was a-singin' this song,

CHORUS:

Whoopie ti-yi-yo, git along little dogies,
It's your misfortune, ain't none of my own.
Whoopie ti-yi-yo, git along little dogies,
You know that Wyoming's gonna be your new home.

It's early in the springtime we round up those dogies,
We cut 'em and brand 'em and bob off their tails,
Round up our horses, load up the chuck-wagon,
Then throw the dogies out on the north trail.

Chorus

Well, your mother was raised way down in Texas
Where the jimson weed and those chollas grow.
We'll fill you up on those prickly pear briars
Until you are ready for I-di-ho.

Chorus (repeat)





24. HOME ON THE RANGE—PETE SEEGER

(from *American Favorite Ballads, Vol. I* SFW40150, 2002)

The great cowboy song “Home on the Range” is well travelled. Dr. Brewster Higley of Kansas wrote a poem called “My Western Home” that was published in a local newspaper in 1873. Daniel Kelley put it to music, and it became the best loved cowboy song of the West.

Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam,
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

CHORUS:

Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

How often at night when the heavens are bright
With the light of the glittering stars
I stood there amazed and I asked as I gazed
Does their glory exceed that of ours.

Chorus

25. SHENANDOAH—ALAN MILLS

(from *Songs of the Sea: Sung by Alan Mills* FW02312, 1957)

This is an old American folk song dating back to the French fur traders travelling up and down the Missouri River. It speaks of the Indian chief, Shenandoah. The song was learned and was sung on the Atlantic sailing ships as a sea chanty.

Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
O away you rolling river,
Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
Away, I'm bound to go across the wide Missouri.

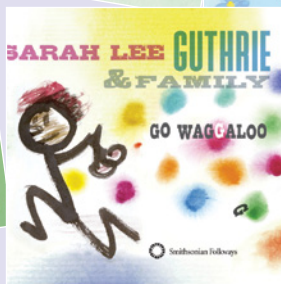
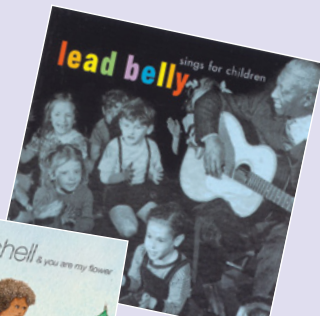
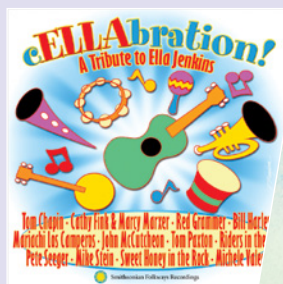
Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter,
O away, oh rolling river,
Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter,
Away, I'm bound to go across the wide Missouri.

Oh Shenandoah, I took a notion,
O away, oh rolling river,
To sail across the stormy ocean,
Away, I'm bound to go across the wide Missouri.

'Tis seven long years since last I see thee,
O away, oh rolling river,
'Tis seven long years since last I see thee,
Away, I'm bound to go across the wide Missouri.
(repeat first verse)



Children's Recordings on Smithsonian Folkways



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Chip Taylor and the Grandkids, *Golden Kids Rules* SFW45071
Elizabeth Mitchell, *Blue Clouds* SFW45065
Elizabeth Mitchell, *Little Seed* (Songs for Children by Woody Guthrie) SFW45072
Elizabeth Mitchell, *Sunny Day* SFW45064
Elizabeth Mitchell, *You Are My Little Bird* SFW45063
Ella Jenkins, *A Life of Song* SFW54067
Ella Jenkins, *More Multicultural Children's Songs* SFW45078
Ella Jenkins, *Multicultural Children's Songs* SFW45045
Ella Jenkins, *Songs Children Love to Sing* SFW45042
Ella Jenkins, *This A-Way, That A-Way* SFW45002
Ella Jenkins, *You'll Sing a Song and I'll Sing a Song* SFW45010
Lead Belly, *Sings for Children* SFW45047
Pete Seeger, *American, Folk, Game and Activity Songs* SFW45056
Pete Seeger, *Birds, Beasts, Bugs and Fishes* (Little and Big) SFW45039
Pete Seeger, *Folk Songs for Young People* SFW45024
Pete Seeger, *Song and Play Time* SFW45023
Sarah Lee Guthrie and Family, *Go Waggaloo* SFW45069
Smithsonian Folkways Children's Collection SFW45043
Songs to Grow On, Vol. 2, School Days FW07027
Suni Paz, *Alerta and Songs for the Playground / Canciones para el recreo* SFW45055
Tom Glazer, *Tom Glazer Sings Honk-Hiss-Tweet-GGGGGGGGGG* and
Other Children's Favorites SF 45068
Woody Guthrie, *Nursery Days* SFW45036
Woody Guthrie, *Songs to Grow On for Mother and Child* SFW45035

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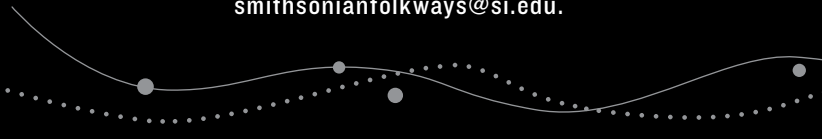
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CLASSIC FOLK SONGS FOR KIDS

In *Classic Folk Songs for Kids*, curator Jeff Place culls a cross-section of 26 classics from the Smithsonian Folkways vaults to tell an intriguing story of American signature sing-alongs. The songs' origins are as fascinating as the songs are fun: centuries-old European ballads, an American Revolutionary tune, 19th-century American folksongs, African-derived game songs, a sea chantey, a railroad jingle, camp songs, and even an opera song! And the singers themselves are a who's who of American folk music artistry—Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Lead Belly, Cisco Houston, Suni Paz, Tom Glazer, Lord Invader, and many more. *56 minutes, 40-page booklet with lyrics.*

1. Froggie Went a-Courtin' Elizabeth Mitchell 3:49
2. Polly Wolly Doodle Pete Seeger, Bess Hawes, and Tom Glazer 1:51
3. Skip to My Lou Lead Belly 2:15
4. I've Been Working on the Railroad Ella Jenkins 2:27
5. She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain Sarah Lee Guthrie and Family 2:44
6. John Henry Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry 4:08
7. Brown Girl in the Ring Lord Invader 1:49
8. Old King Cole Jean Ritchie 1:11
9. Green Grass Grows All Around Sam Hinton 2:25
10. La rana (The Frog) Suni Paz 2:05
11. I Had a Rooster Pete Seeger 3:55
12. Go Tell Aunt Rhody The Ritchie Family 1:45
13. Miss Mary Mack Ella Jenkins 1:59
14. Yankee Doodle Pete Seeger 1:41
15. Rock Island Line Snooks Eaglin 2:06
16. Big Rock Candy Mountain Tom Glazer 3:10
17. On Top of Old Smoky Pete Seeger 2:19
18. Crawdad Hole Cisco Houston 2:17
19. Oh Susannah Pete Seeger 1:18
20. Goober Peas Tom Glazer 2:03
21. Arroz con leche (Rice and Milk) Young Mexican Girls :37
22. Riding in My Car Elizabeth Mitchell 2:49
23. Whoopie Ti-Yi-Yo, Get Along Little Dogies Cisco Houston 2:05
24. Home on the Range Pete Seeger 1:51
25. Shenandoah Alan Mills 2:45



