

# In the Chook Yard

Margaret McGowan-Jackson © 1998

Cmaj7 F

Have you ev - ver seen the chooks roosters in the  
hens chickens

Bb

chook yard? They peck and scratch all  
They strut a round all  
They sit on their nests all  
They're yellow and fluffy and

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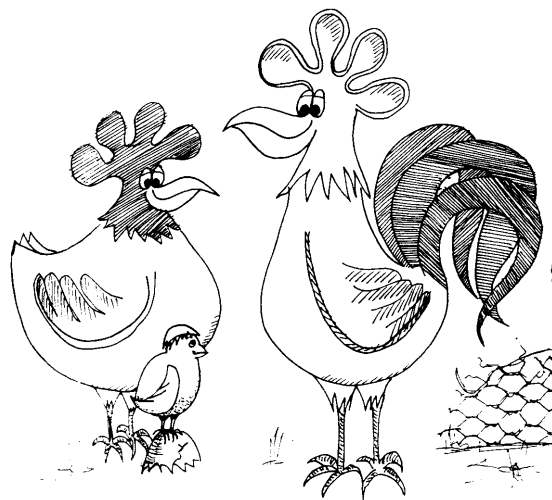
day day day Have you e - ver heard the chooks in the  
day roosters  
small hens chickens

Bb Cmaj7

chook yard? They cluck and ca - ckle all  
They crow at the break of  
They make a lot of noise when they  
They don't make much sound at

F

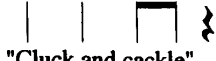
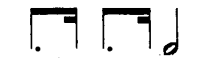


day!  
day!  
lay an egg!  
all!



1. **Introduce the topic.** Using models or pictures, introduce and briefly discuss the birds found in a chook yard.

2. **Listen to or tell the story "Chook Talk".** During the telling of the story the children participate by making the sound effects using body percussion and voice (see story). If you are using the recording, do the body percussion and vocal sounds so that the children will join in.

3. **Create the sounds of the chook yard.** After listening to "Chook Talk", do the actions and sounds of each of the birds mentioned in the story.

ie:	chooks	peck and scratch	"Cluck and cackle"
			
	roosters	strut around	"Cock a doodle doo!"
			
	hens	lay on their nests	"Hey.....I've just laid a lovely egg!"
			
	chickens	yellow & fluffy & small	"Where's my mum?"
			

4. **Create some ostinato patterns.** Have 2, 3 or 4 groups of children chant the birds sounds as repeated phrases (ostinato patterns). (For younger children, just choose two patterns). Try having the groups say their patterns at the same time.

Group 1	The Chooks say	" Cluck and cackle "
Group 2	The Roosters say	" Cock a doodle doo "
Group 3	The Hens say	" Hey! I've just laid a lovely egg!"
Group 4	The Chickens say	" Where's my mum? "

After they have said it using the words, try doing it in "Chook" language! You may also want to try it on instruments. ("Chook" conversations are also a possibility!)

5. **Play a Listening Game based on the ostinato patterns.** The children stay in their groups and listen for their pattern to be played on the tambour. When they hear it, they move around the room (in character) until the pattern changes and a new group starts moving.

6. **Teach the song "In the Chook Yard".** Create simple actions to verse 1 and teach the words of the verse by having the children echo each phrase. At the end of the verse make some chook sounds for the children to imitate. Some children might enjoy making the chook sounds for the rest of the group to echo. When the words are secure, introduce the melody. Again echo some chook sounds at the end of the verse. Sing the song several times.

7. **Listen to the recording of "In the Chook Yard".** There are four more verses in the song. Ask the children to predict what the verses might be about. (They may accurately predict verses about the roosters, the hens and the chickens, but what about verse 5?). Ask the children to listen to find out if they were correct in their predictions, and to find out what happens in verse 5. (It's the same as verse one).

8. Teach the words of the other verses. The children are already familiar with these from the story, so they should learn them quite quickly. At the end of each verse explore making the appropriate "chook" sounds with teacher or child leading and the rest of the group echoing the pattern.

9. Sing along with the recording, echoing the "chook" patterns at the end of verses 1 – 4.

10. Try singing with the instrumental accompaniment track, adding your own special chook sounds between each verse and making up your own coda (ending).

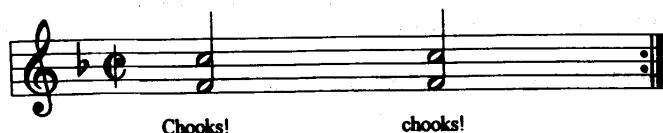
11. Performance of the Song. Divide the class into 4 groups: chooks, roosters, hens and chickens. As their verse is sung they perform their movements plus their special sounds at the end of their verse etc. During the last verse everyone joins in with a cacophony of chook yard sounds!

#### Extension Activities:

- Add an Instrumental Accompaniment.

Set up an alto or bass xylophone with only the large F and small C bars.

One child keeps the beat by playing the F and C bars together. Use the word pattern "Chooks. Chooks" to help them keep the beat. (With very young children, this could be played by the teacher).



Set up one xylophone with only the bars: C D F G C D F G (the E, A and B bars are removed) The children playing these instruments can play freely (improvise) throughout the whole song using any of the bars. It is really important to encourage them to use two beaters. Small rubber headed beaters are good to use as they make a "pecking" sound. Depending on the skill level of the children, untuned instruments such as maracas, guiros and claves (rhythm sticks) could also be added to the accompaniment. Use words to help them keep the rhythm, eg "Cluck and cackle" or "Where's my Mum?" Sing the song several times with the accompaniment.

- Introduce the Cup Chooks made from a polystyrene or paper cup, string and a piece of sponge. Explore making sounds on the Cup Chooks. With a partner, try copying each other's sounds. Try the song with Cup Chook interludes after each verse.

#### Cup Chooks:

**What you need:** polystyrene or paper cup, 60 cms kite string (not the rough hessian type), tooth pick, 2.5 cms x 1.3 cms piece of rectangular kitchen sponge, water.

**How to make it:** Use pencil to make 2 holes (1.5 cms apart) in the bottom of the cup. Push the string through the holes and tie it on the outside (bottom) of the cup leaving one end of the string long. Insert the long end of the string in one of the holes and pull it through so that the string hangs out of the top of the cup. Place a toothpick under the loop of string on the outside of the cup with the ends of the tooth pick extending over the edges of the cup. Tie the long end of the string around the centre of the piece of sponge. (As a craft activity, decorate to look like chooks).

**How to play it:** Dampen the sponge with water. Wrap the damp sponge around the top of the string. Squeeze the sponge against the string as you move the sponge down the string using jerky movements.