

# Going to the Zoo

Words and Music by Tom Paxton

## VERSE



1. Dad - dy's tak - ing us to the zoo to - mor - row,



zoo to - mor - row, zoo to - mor - row,



Dad-dy's tak - ing us to the zoo to - mor - row; we can stay all day.

## REFRAIN



We're go - in' to the zoo, zoo, zoo, How a - bout you, you, you?



You can come too, too, too; We're go - in' to the zoo, zoo, zoo.

2. See all the monkeys scritch, scritch, scratchin',  
Jumpin' all around and scritch, scritch, scratchin',  
Hangin' by their tails scritch, scritch, scratchin';  
We can stay all day. *Refrain*
3. See the elephant with the long trunk swingin'  
Great big ears and long trunk swingin',  
Snuffin' up peanuts with the long trunk swingin';  
We can stay all day. *Refrain*
4. Well, the seals in the pool all honk, honk, honkin',  
Catchin' fish and honk, honk, honkin',  
Little seals honk, honk, honkin'; (*high pitched voice*)  
We can stay all day. *Refrain*
5. See the brown bear, he's a-huff, huff, a-puffin',  
Coat's too heavy, he's a-huff, huff, a-puffin',  
Don't get too near the huff, huff, a-puffin',  
Or you won't stay all day. *Refrain*

(*Slower tempo*)

6. We stayed all day and I'm gettin' sleepy,  
Sittin' in the car and gettin' sleep, sleep, sleepy,  
Home already and I'm sleep, sleep, sleepy,  
We have stayed all day.

*Refrain—last time (still slower)*

We've been to the zoo, zoo, zoo,  
How about you, you, you?  
You came too, too, too;  
We've been to the zoo, zoo, zoo.

(*a tempo*)

7. Mama's taking us to the zoo tomorrow,  
Zoo tomorrow, zoo tomorrow,  
Mama's taking us to the zoo tomorrow,  
We can stay all day.

## SINGING

This is a fun song about zoo animals that is adaptable to any grade level. Start by learning the refrain which is short and repetitious. Next, learn the first verse which secures the melody line for all the verses to come. Once the melody is learned the lyrics to the five verses will come easily. Younger children (yes, and some older ones too) enjoy pantomiming the animal actions as they sing along with the song. Let them go where the music takes them both fast and slow.

## PLAYING

When using percussion instruments in the musical classroom we generally instruct the children to play "on the beat" and in a way "appropriate" for the instrument. Sometimes, however, it's acceptable to let the children experiment with alternate instrumental sounds. Using slow and non rhythmic grinds, muffles, and ratchets have the children discover animal sounds in drum heads, tone blocks, or rhythm sticks. Have the children match their creations to the animals in the song. Play along while they sing. Remind the students to be respectful of the musical instruments.

## CREATING

Lead the children in identifying other animals that could be included in this song. Use any of the verses as an example of repetition, rhyme, and beat/line length, then set the children to the task (individually or in small groups) of creating new verses to the song. As a class "publish" a "Zoo Song Book" with illustrations and new verses in their best hand writing. Now sing, sing, sing!

## LISTENING

Whether singing or playing instruments we use our ears to "tune up" and "stay together". Everyone in an ensemble must listen to everyone else in the group to match pitch and play consistently on the beat. In a song like "Going to the Zoo" students can learn to differentiate between musical and non musical sounds created by the voice. Have them listen carefully to match pitch while singing the verses, but allow freedom to improvise vocally when creating the animal sounds. Moving on and off their specific pitch or beat requires extra careful listening and develops increased sensitivity and musicality.

## INTEGRATION (Science)

In the creation of new verses some students might be tempted to use rare or exotic animals to add a special touch to their writing. An enjoyable science project, whether as a class on a field trip or on special assignment to interested individuals, is to visit the zoo or aviary for unique verse subjects. Take along a pencil and notebook. Observe the physical characteristics and behavior of the animals or gather information from posted signs. Take notes of what makes each animal unique. Now when the students begin the verse writing process they will be prepared to use their "field research" to generate fantastic examples from the animal kingdom.

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