ELLAJENKINS
123s and ABCs

Smithsonian Folkways
ELLAJENKINS 123s and ABCs

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Tracks 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 16 (arr. Ella Jenkins / Ell-Bern Publishing Co., ASCAP)
Track 7 courtesy of Educational Activities, Inc.

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ELLA JENKINS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC EDUCATION

Ella Jenkins wears the title given her by many of her fans, “The First Lady of Children’s Music,” with tremendous energy. Now in her ninth decade, she continues to provide a rare model of the music that best suits the lives and learning styles of young children. Her irresistible songs—performed at preschools, schools, camps, and community institutions as well as on radio, television, concerts, and at teachers’ conferences—draw on a long history of children’s game songs coupled with her own genius as a composer and music educator.

Ella Jenkins, who was born in St. Louis, spent much of her childhood in Chicago, surrounded by music. She studied sociology, child psychology, and recreation at San Francisco State University, and was drawn to the music of her own and other cultures. While working in youth camps and then as a YWCA program director for teens in the early 1950s, she led singing sessions that featured folk and traditional songs from her neighborhood; songs she was learning from Spanish-speaking friends; songs she happened across in Hebrew, Arabic, and French, and from India and the African continent; and songs she’d written. She has performed her songs all over the world, learns new songs everywhere she goes, and teaches them to children when she gets home. Her accomplishments have been widely recognized by awards from ASCAP (Lifetime Achievement) and Parents’ Choice, and she received a GRAMMY Lifetime Achievement Award—the first ever awarded to a children’s music artist. Her recordings, the most popular releases on the Folkways record label, have inspired generations of teachers, children, and musicians.
Easy as ABC

Ella Jenkins, vocals
From COME DANCE BY THE OCEAN SFW 45014

This little alphabetical exploration is aimed at the younger children, though all ages can get involved—especially in the memory testing.

A is for Apple.
A is for Annie too.
B is for banana.
And B is for the boy in blue.
C is for cherry.
C is for Cathy too.
C is for caring, and I care a lot about you.
Johnny Had One Friend

Ella Jenkins, vocals and ukulele
From COUNTING GAMES AND RHYTHMS FOR THE LITTLE ONES SFW 45029

Johnny had one friend, one friend, one friend
Johnny had one friend
Johnny had two.

Johnny had two friends, two friends, two friends
Johnny had two friends
Johnny had three.

Johnny had three friends, three friends, three friends
Johnny had three friends
Johnny had four....
(You can keep increasing the number for practice.)

This song was taught to me by Larry Gordon, one of my seven-year-old students. The original song was:
Johnny had one hand, one hand, one hand
Johnny had one hand, etc.
One, Two, Three, Four, Five

Ella Jenkins, vocals and ukulele
From COUNTING GAMES AND RHYTHMS FOR THE LITTLE ONES SFW 45029

One, two, three, four, five
I caught a fish alive.

Why did I let him go?
Because he bit my finger so. (Wiggle your little finger.)

One, two, three, four, five
I caught a fish alive.
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten
I let him go again.

Why did I let him go?
Because he bit my finger so.

Which finger did he bite?
The little one on the right. (Wiggle your little finger.)
One, two
Buckle my shoe
Three, four
Knock on the door
Five, six
Pick up sticks
Seven, eight
Lay them straight
Nine, ten
A big fat hen

Eleven, twelve
Dig and delve
Thirteen, fourteen
The maids are courtin’
Fifteen, sixteen
The maids are in the kitchen
Seventeen, eighteen
The maids are waiting
Nineteen, twenty
The platter’s empty.
One potato, two potato, three potato, four
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more.

Here’s a little chant to practice rhythm with. The game is easy to play—simply call it “fist stacking.” It’s fun to play with partners or with several children. Everybody does the chanting. Children enjoy playing it over and over again. Speed up the rhythm to make it more exciting.
Eight Clay Pigeons

Ella Jenkins, vocals
From COUNTING GAMES AND RHYTHMS FOR THE LITTLE ONES SFW 45029

Eight clay pigeons (2x)
Eight clay pigeons a-sitting on a wall
Oh look, one of them has flown away...

Seven clay pigeons (2x)...
Counting from One to Ten in Spanish

_Ella Jenkins, vocals_

*From LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES EA 596*

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Uno
Dos
Tres
Cuatro
Cinco
Seis
Siete
Ocho
Nueve
Diez
Counting in Swahili

_Ella Jenkins, vocals_

*From* _JAMBO AND OTHER CALL AND RESPONSE SONGS AND CHANTS_ SFW 45017

Ella — group
Moja, Moja — one
Mbili, Mbili — two
Tatu, Tatu — three
Ine, Ine — four
Tano, Tano — five
Sita, Sita — six
Saba, Saba — seven
Nane, Nane — eight
Tisa, Tisa — nine
Kumi, Kumi — ten
One, Two, Three, O’Leary

Ella Jenkins, vocals; Rita Ruby, guitar; Angela Palmares, solo (counting Spanish)

From AFRICAN AMERICAN LEGACY SERIES: ELLA JENKINS: A LIFE OF SONG SFW 45067

This was a popular song in my Chicago neighborhood, sung in English from one to ten, and then reversing the order from ten to one. In this rendition, a child sings the numbers in Spanish. The call-and-response form comes shining through, with the group of singing children always at the ready for “O’Leary.”

One, two, three, O’Leary
Four, five, six, O’Leary
Seven, eight, nine, O’Leary
Ten, O’Leary postmaster.

Ten, nine, eight, O’Leary
Seven, six, five, O’Leary
Four, three, two, O’Leary
One, O’Leary postmaster.

Uno, dos, tres, O’Leary
Cuatro, cinco, seis, O’Leary
Siete, ocho, nueve, O’Leary
Diez, O’Leary postmaster.
One two three, one two three,
Were the very first numbers that were taught to me.

ABC, ABC,
Were the very first letters that were taught to me.

XYZ, XYZ,
Were the very last letters that were taught to me.

The younger children and I worked on these rhymes at their school. I was quite pleased that they did so well in the studio, since we had not rehearsed for some time. Younger children seem to enjoy counting games and reciting alphabets.
ABCs

Ella Jenkins, vocals; John Carbo, banjo; Guy Guilbert, guitar

From EARLY EARLY CHILDHOOD SONGS SFW 45015

A, B, C, D, E, F, G,
H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P,
Q, R, S,
T, U, V,
W, X, Y, and Z

Now I know my ABCs
Next time won’t you sing with me?
And One and Two...

_Ella Jenkins, ukulele, vocals_

*From AND ONE AND TWO AND OTHER SONGS FOR PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY CHILDREN*

SFW 45016

And one
And two
And three
And four
And five
And six
And seven
And eight

Clap your hands
Shake your hand
Beat your chest
Slap your thighs
Stamp your feet
Tap your knees
Slide your feet
Dangle your legs.
Ten Green Bottles

Ella Jenkins, vocals
From GROWING UP WITH ELLA JENKINS SFW 45032

Michael Jolley is from England, but I met him in New Orleans, Louisiana. He taught me this song from his childhood.

Ten green bottles hanging on a wall (2x)
If one green bottle should accidentally fall,
There’d be nine green bottles hanging on a wall.

Nine green bottles hanging on a wall (2x)
If two green bottles should accidentally fall,
There’d be seven green bottles hanging on a wall.

Seven green bottles hanging on a wall (2x)
If three green bottles should accidentally fall,
There’d be four green bottles hanging on a wall.
Four green bottles hanging on a wall (2x)
If three green bottles should accidentally fall,
There’d be one green bottle hanging on a wall.

One green bottle hanging on a wall (2x)
If that green bottle should accidentally fall,
There’d be no green bottles hanging on a wall.
Farmer Brown had ten green apples hanging on a tree (2x)
Then he picked one apple, and he ate it greedily
Leaving nine green apples a-hanging on a tree.

(Count down with the children taking turns singing each new verse.)
Alef, Bet, Gimel

A, B, C, D, E, F, G,
H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P,
Q, R, S,
T, U, V,
W, X, Y, and Z

Now I know my ABCs
Next time won’t you sing with me?

In the old days, the rabbi taught the young children their alphabet in Yiddish while a fire burned in the stove in the kitchen. This helped to keep the young ones warm while they were nestled together learning their ABCs.
This Old Man

Ella Jenkins, vocals; John Carbo, banjo; Guy Guilbert, guitar

From *EARLY EARLY CHILDHOOD SONGS* SFW 45015

This old man, he played one
He played knick knack on my thumb

Chorus:
With a knick knack paddy whack give a dog a bone
This old man came rolling home.

This old man, he played two
He played knick knack on my shoe

Chorus

This old man, he played three
He played knick knack on my knee

Chorus

This old man, he played four
He played knick knack on my door

Chorus

This old man, he played five
He played knick knack on my side

Chorus
CREDITS

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ABOUT SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian Institution, the national museum of the United States. Our mission is the legacy of Moses Asch, who founded Folkways Records in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. The Smithsonian acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987, and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings has continued the Folkways tradition by supporting the work of traditional artists and expressing a commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding among peoples through the documentation, preservation, and dissemination of sound.
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Please send comments, questions, and catalogue requests to: smithsonianfolkways@si.edu.
Ella Jenkins: 1, 2, 3s and A, B, Cs distills the genius of America’s “First Lady of Children’s Music” into 16 tracks teaching counting and the alphabet in multiple languages. Ella’s joyful engagement, delight in music and game-playing, and deep respect for children of all backgrounds, all make this a classic recording for and with young children.

31 minutes, 28-page booklet