

Earth, Wind & Fire Lesson Plan Outline (Grades K–6)

Unit Overview

- **Featured Artist:** Earth, Wind & Fire
- **Focus Concepts:** Rhythm, form, movement, listening, instrument performance, and SEL connection.
- **Target Grades:** K–6 (adaptable by activity)
- **Resource Guide:** For video demonstrations, audio examples, and complete teaching details, visit the full [Earth, Wind & Fire Music Lesson Plans & Activities](#) guide on Oodles of Music.

1. Quick Facts & Listening Context (All Grades)

- **Historical Highlights:** Founded in Chicago (1969) by Maurice White; over 50 past/present members.
- **Instrumentation & Style:** Funk, R&B, soul, pop, jazz; features prominent brass section, tight vocal harmonies, and multi-percussion (congas, bongos, kalimba).
- **Key Hits:** "September," "Let's Groove," "Shining Star," "Boogie Wonderland."

2. K–2 Movement Activity: "September" Scarf Routine

- **Concepts:** Beat tracking, form, spatial awareness, letter recognition.
- **Progression:**
 - *Lesson 1:* Free-form scarf exploration to the groove.
 - *Lesson 2:* Hand-switching routines (alternating hands) on section or letter shifts.
 - *Lesson 3:* Both-hands simultaneous movement patterns.
 - *Lesson 4:* Student choice (alternating vs. simultaneous) with reflection on decisions.

3. Grades 3–6 Rhythm & Play-Along Activities

- **Option A: "September" Percussion Ensemble**
 - **Instrumentation:** Drum, cowbell, rhythm sticks, Boomwhacker "A".

- **Objective:** Read and play rhythmic patterns matching song form.
- **Option B: "September" Staff & Stick Play-Along**
 - **Instrumentation:** Rhythm sticks (or buckets/floor taps).
 - **Rhythms:** Quarter notes/rests, eighth-note pairs, half notes placed on a 5-line staff.
 - **Scaffolding:**
 - *Lesson 1:* Body percussion on FACE spaces (*F* = stomp, *A* = pat, *C* = clap, *E* = snap).
 - *Lesson 2:* Transfer FACE patterns to rhythm sticks.
 - *Lesson 3:* Divide into 4 groups (one per FACE space note) to play on cue.
- **Option C: "Let's Groove" Body Percussion**
 - **Focus:** Pop music form (intro, verse, pre-chorus, chorus, bridge, outro).
 - **Adaptation:** Upper elementary follows full staff patterns; primary grades follow single color cues (e.g., clap on orange, pat on blue).

4. K–6 SEL & Art Connection: "Shining Star"

- **Focus:** Self-affirmation, individual strengths, classroom community.
- **Activity:**
 - Students decorate personal stars highlighting their unique talents and qualities while listening to "Shining Star."
 - Discussion prompt: *"Which star best describes you, or what unique trait do you bring?"*
 - Final Display: Classroom "Shining Star" bulletin board showcase.

5. Assessment: Interactive EWF Quick Quiz

- Check understanding of band origin (Chicago), signature instrument family (brass), famous release dates ("21st of September"), and active status.