

## Who Has A Penny?

I have been using this little song in workshops and classrooms for over twenty years, and I am still amazed at its magic!  
Although it has only four lines, this song...

- ◆ Gets children singing! Even those reluctant singers will join in! (This is the magic part!)
- ◆ Teaches cooperation and problem-solving, as children negotiate for and trade "treasures"
- ◆ Builds simple math skills as items are counted at the end of the song.
- ◆ Builds listening skills (I help children repeat the entire sentence of the response, not simply respond, "I do!")
- ◆ Provides an opportunity to discuss the difference between a sentence and a question, often a difficult concept for young children!



### WHO HAS A PENNY?

Traditional rhyme and melody



Have enough pennies, buttons, and keys so that each child can have one item. I like to keep them in a pretty little "treasure" bag; it adds to the excitement! Instruct each child to open his or her hand, and place an item in it. Instruct them to keep their treasures hidden until the end of the song

TEACHER sings: "Who has a penny?"

CHILDREN with pennies answer, "I have a penny"

TEACHER sings : "Who has a key?"

CHILDREN with keys answer "I have a key"

TEACHER sings: "Who has a button?"

CHILDREN with buttons echo "I have a button"

TEACHER sings: "Now let us see."

ALL CHILDREN open their hands together.



(Variation for Coin Counting)

## WHO HAS A PENNY?

Using the alternate lyrics below, you can use this as a teaching tool for counting and understanding coins.

TEACHER sings: "Who has a penny?"  
CHILDREN with pennies answer, "I have a penny"

TEACHER sings : "Who has a dime?"  
CHILDREN with keys answer "I have a dime"

TEACHER sings: "Who has a nickel?"  
CHILDREN with buttons echo "I have a nickel"

TEACHER sings: "Show me this time."  
ALL CHILDREN open their hands together.

After the song you can collect, lay out, and count the coins. Discuss how many pennies in a nickel, how many nickels in a dime, etc.

## Additional Ideas



I have a librarian friend who uses this song as a pre-story time activity. As children arrive, each is given a "treasure," and the song is sung. As more children arrive, treasures are added and traded and the song goes on until it's time for the story time to begin.



Have the children trade items, and sing two more times, so that every child gets to have all three items. (Warning- everyone will want a key!) Then collect the treasures. Lay them out on the floor on columns, and count the number of each item. Are there more or less of each, or the same? This is a great, easy math lesson!

