

# Greetings and Good-byes



**T**he children arrive in Ms. Breaux's classroom at different times in the morning. When Ashley comes in with her mother, Ms. Breaux makes eye contact with her at the door, then kneels down and greets Ashley by singing a verse from a familiar song—"Hello, Ashley, yes, indeed" (CD track 3). Still looking at Ashley, Ms. Breaux adds, "I'm so glad you came to school today, Ashley! We've been waiting for you!" She then proceeds to greet Ashley's mom.

Ms. Breaux plans for greeting children individually each morning because she knows that the first few moments at school set the tone for the rest of the day and are critical to providing continuity in children's lives. Ms. Breaux always uses known songs, chants, or a rhyme that includes every child's name, because she knows from experience that these predictable and familiar rituals make each child feel special and included. All the children hear, "Hello! We know you, and we like you. You are welcome here."

At the other end of a long day, Ashley and Ms. Breaux are both tired. Ms. Breaux is sitting on the floor with Ashley and a few other children. Ms. Breaux sees Ashley's mother coming through the door and starts singing, "Good-bye, Ashley, hey, hey" (CD track 9) as Ashley reunites with her mom at the end of the day. The song signals whose parent is at the door and provides reassurance that Ms. Breaux will be waiting for them at school the next day.

Leo is sitting on the rug with Ms. Breaux and Ashley, but his day is not over yet: he goes to an after-school program at a neighbor's house. Ms. Breaux plans her good-byes to Leo differently. She lets him know about what the classroom curriculum looks like the next day. She often asks him to help set up one of the activities for the next morning, thereby reassuring him that his routine at school is safe and predictable while also giving him something to look forward to. When Leo's father comes through the door, Ms. Breaux sings "Hasta la vista, Leo, hey, hey," using words from the language his family speaks at home (Spanish).



# Good Morning to You

Unknown Source | CD Track 1 | Song Card Page 98

<sup>G</sup> [Good morning, good morning], <sup>C</sup> [good morning] <sup>G</sup> to you,  
<sup>G7</sup> [Good morning] to <sup>D7</sup> [someone] who's <sup>G</sup> [wearing the color blue].  
<sup>G</sup> [Good morning, good morning], <sup>C</sup> [good morning] <sup>G</sup> to you,  
<sup>G7</sup> [Good morning] to <sup>D7</sup> [Ashley], who's <sup>G</sup> wearing the color [yellow].

## Using the Song

Greeting children as they arrive with this song is a great way to set the tone for the rest of the day. Likewise, if you want to use this song at the end of the day, use it to reassure children and their families that their teachers and friends will be happy to see them again soon. These very important times contribute to strengthening relationships with the children and their families.

Use this time to connect with individual children by singing a verse to each child as they put away their belongings. Some children might need more than a verse to feel comfortable and transition into the day while they separate from their caregiver. Sing the song to the caregiver as well, if you feel that some children may benefit from it.

## Variations

- Use the last line of the song to highlight concepts that are meaningful to them (for example, “Good morning to someone whose name begins with A”—in this case, to a child named Ashley).
- Invite children to take turns leading the song.
- This song can be used at gathering times, as you give children time to finish individual projects before they are ready to fully transition into the next activity (for example, cleaning up, gluing the last piece of wood in a collage project, washing hands, etc.).
- During morning gathering, add information to the words that describe specific children and invite them to guess who you are singing about (for example, “Good morning to someone who likes to play with worms”).



# Good Morning, How Are You?

CD Track 2 | Song Card Page 98

(Tune: "If You're Happy and You Know It")

D A7 D  
[Good morning], [Emillie]. How are you? [Good morning], [Emillie]. How are you?

G D Bm G A7 D  
It will be a [special] day, I'm so glad you came to play. [Good morning], [Emillie]. How are you?

D A7 D A7  
[Bonjour], [Simone]. How are you? [Bonjour], [Simone]. How are you?

G D Bm G A7 D  
It will be a [happy] day, I'm so glad you came to play. [Bonjour], [Simone]. How are you?

D A7 D A7  
[Salaam], [Omeed]. How are you? [Salaam], [Omeed]. How are you?

G D Bm G A7 D  
It will be a [rainy] day, I'm so glad you came to play. [Salaam], [Omeed]. How are you?

## Using the Song

When you sing this song, invite the children to help you make every day special. It is particularly valuable to call their attention with welcoming words, such as, "I'm so glad you came to play." At times, you will find that you need to add a short pause after you sing this line to give certain children extra time to let the message settle. Regardless of how challenging the previous day was, this song can help them start a new day, with new goals and fresh emotions. Children who are having a hard time separating and adapting to group care routines may also benefit from this song to emphasize "new beginnings."

Learn how to greet children in their home language, or make up your very own way to greet each child at the beginning of each day (some teachers have nicknames for each child). Make sure you ask their families for the accurate words (for example, "Bom dia" means "good morning" in Portuguese, but four-year-old André greets people at home by saying "Tudo bem?" instead).

## Variations

- In line 3 use different ways of inviting children to make each day special. After a while, pause at that point and let them fill in the blanks and tell you what kind of day it will be ("It will be an exciting day"; "It will be a brand new day").
- Use two names at once, if drop-off times tend to be busy, so you can acknowledge every child individually (for example, "Good morning, Emily and Catara. How are you?").
- Use humor to elicit a response from children ("I'm so glad you came to feed the worms"; "I'm so glad you came to splash in puddles.").
- Use this song at the beginning of large group time and invite children to shake hands, wave hello, and use various forms of greetings to say "hi" to one another.

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# Hello, Everybody, Yes, Indeed

Traditional Folk Song | CD Track 3 | Song Card Page 98

G D7 G  
Oh [hello], [everybody], yes, indeed. Yes, indeed. Yes, indeed.

G C D7 G  
Oh [hello], [everybody], yes, indeed. Yes, indeed, [my darling]!

G D7 G  
Oh [hello], [Hesakai], yes, indeed. Yes, indeed. Yes, indeed.

G C D7 G  
Oh [hello], [Shante], yes, indeed. Yes, indeed, [my darling]!

G D7 G  
[Buenos Dias], [Manuel], yes, indeed. Yes, indeed. Yes, indeed.

G C D7 G  
[Buenos Dias], [Manuel], yes, indeed. Yes, indeed, [my darling]!

## Using the Song

This song's repetitive verses help the children transition into their morning routine. They can quickly predict what subsequent verses will sound like without having to process too much new information as they separate from their caregivers and start a new day. Use a culturally acceptable form of welcoming each child to help him or her feel at ease in your classroom (wave hello, rub backs, give high fives, hug, etc.). Sing to family members, too, as they also need a special greeting in the morning. Ask individual children how they would like to be greeted and incorporate this information into the song.

## Variations

- Use this song for the beginning of a circle time.
- Ask the children to add something (“Who else can we say hello to?”; “How can we say hello to you, Abdul?”; “How do you say ‘hello’ or ‘good morning’ at your house, Yeh-Eun?”).
- Use this song to invite children to join you and their peers as you transition from free play to whole group meetings.
- Ask children for various types of body movements to add to this song (for example, hand clapping, head bobbing, chest slapping). For older children, add on additional movements to the ones they are currently doing. With younger children, do one motion at a time.