

Therapeutic Music Experience  
I Am...  
Mary Jane Landaker, MME, MT-BC

**Purpose:** To promote use of first and second person tenses when identifying people; divided attention (words and melody differences); impulse control (waiting for turn to echo); social interaction; sense of self identity

**Source:** Original song. © 1/5/2011 by Mary Jane Landaker, MME, MT-BC

**Materials:** None required; OPTIONAL – guitar and/or melodic instruments to provide melodic format

**Environment:** Group members within hearing range of therapist. No other environmental requirements

**Song/Chant/Words:** [I Am.pdf](#)

I am Mary Jane. *She is Mary Jane.*

Mary Jane's my name. *Mary Jane's her name.*

I am Mary Jane. *She is Mary Jane.*

Mary Jane's my name. *Mary Jane's her name.*

My name is Mary Jane.

**Procedure:** **R = Reinforcement opportunities; C = Redirection/Cue opportunities; A = Assessment**

1. C=start singing song, pointing to self, replacing the name in the song with the therapist's name
2. A=assess group members' command of first/second person use by observing whether members require additional prompts to change the words
3. A=assess group members' ability to echo by observing response times, duration of latency, and eye contact towards leader
4. C=redirect group members who do not use appropriate first person tense during echo portions of song by saying something similar to "What is your name? Is your name Mary Jane?"
5. R=reinforce group members who do use appropriate first person tense during echo portions of song through verbal, nonverbal, or gestural means
6. Continue to sing until group members demonstrate awareness of first and second person tense through singing words without prompting
7. C=change leader, encouraging the leader to use first person tense when naming self during the lyrics
8. Repeat steps 1-7 until all group members have had an opportunity to be the leader, the group members start to show signs/symptoms of boredom, or time runs out

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**Therapeutic Function of Music:** The music acts as structure throughout the experience, offering mechanisms for coordinating oral motor function, timing for verbal responses, and opportunities for social interaction. The melody, harmony, and rhythm format may be simplified or made more complex as indicated by the group members' functioning level. The listed extensions increase the creative aspect of the song by encouraging improvisation in both the vocal melody and the use of instruments as accompaniment.

Melody	Pitch	Rhythm	Dynamics	Harmony
Repetitive	Variable – able to be changed based on client preferences for pitch	Repetitive and based on the lyrics	Variable to engage client interest and attention	None unless accompanying instrument is used

Form	Tempo	Timbre	Style	Lyrics
Call and response	Variable	Vocal	ABABC	Repetitive

Chart adapted from Hanson-Abromeit, D. (2010). *A Closer Look at the Therapeutic Function of Music*. Presentation at 2010 American Music Therapy Association National Conference: Cleveland, OH.

### **Adaptations:**

- Decrease the number of notes during each echo pattern
- Simplify the melody to accommodate client communication skills. Remain scalar rather than incorporating skips in the melodic pattern
- Increase the number of times each pattern is repeated to increase group members' understanding of concept of first/second person use
- Practice use of first/second person use through pointing to indicated group members

### **Extensions:**

- Incorporate Orff instruments with ostinato accompaniment developed by leader
- Encourage leaders to improvise melodic patterns to accommodate the rhythmic pattern of their names