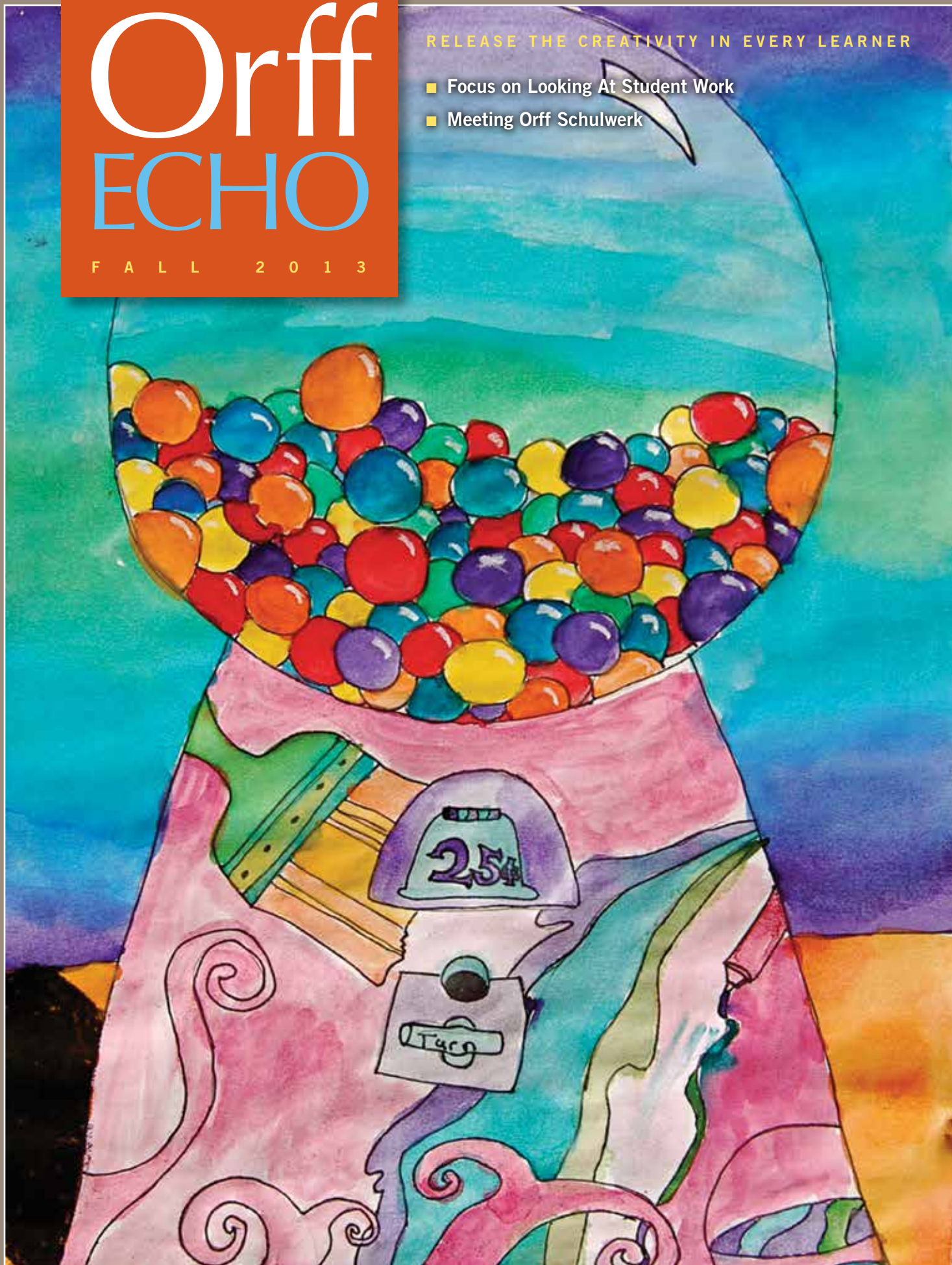


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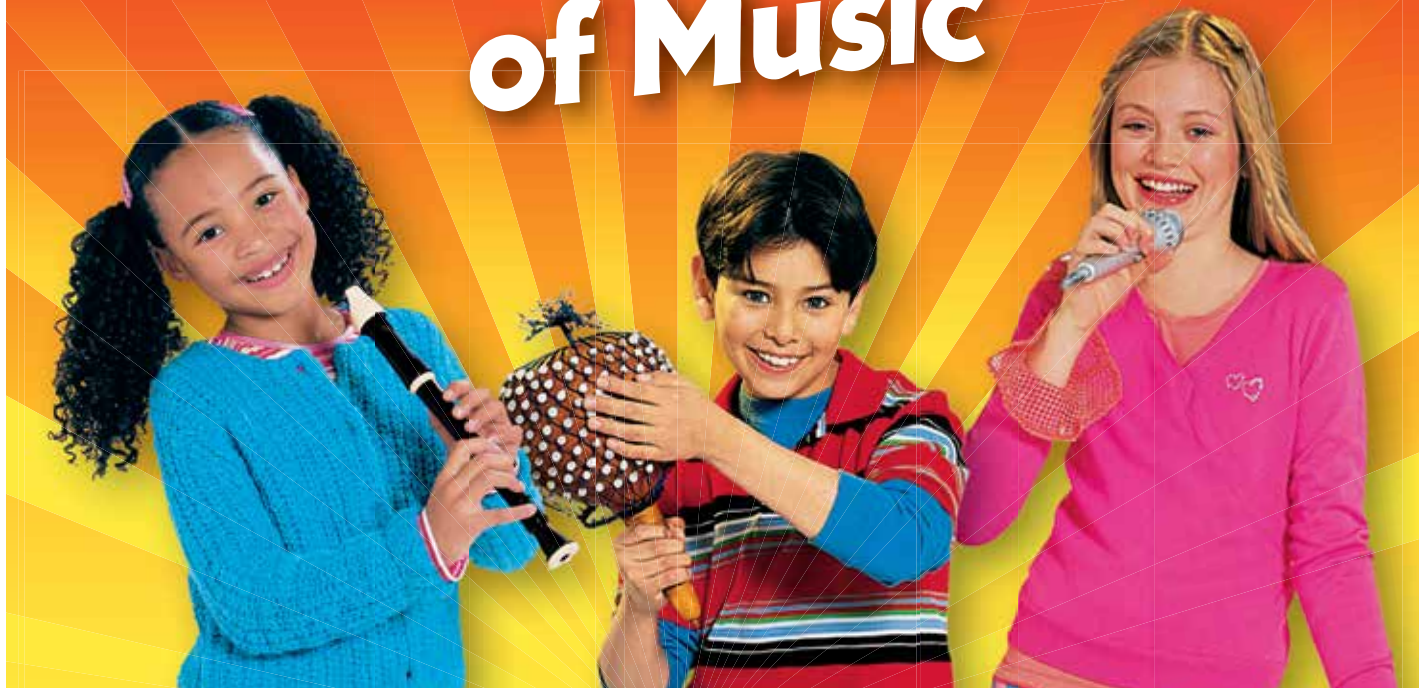
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# Orff ECHO

F A L L 2 0 1 3

VOL. 46, NO. 1

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## on the cover

"Edible Paintballs" by Brooke McAllister,  
a fourth-grade student at Penn Beach  
Elementary School in Pennsville, NJ.  
Art teacher: Justine Adams.

## issue coordinators

Donna Gallo and Chris Tranberg

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American Orff-Schulwerk Association

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### ethics statement

The American Orff-Schulwerk Association strongly encourages members to be positive and discreet when discussing our organization, specific courses and/or teachers, and the Orff movement.

The very nature of the Orff Schulwerk philosophy embodies a broad spectrum of expressions, exploring different paths to arrive at artistic and educational goals. Members are encouraged to recognize and remain open to varied approaches and to celebrate both our differences and our similarities.

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### mission statement

The American Orff-Schulwerk Association is a professional organization of educators dedicated to the creative music and movement approach developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman.

### OUR MISSION:

- Demonstrate the value of Orff Schulwerk and promote its widespread use
- Support the professional development of our members
- Inspire and advocate for the creative potential of all learners



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Chris Judah-Lauder



### Meeting Orff Schulwerk

4

**H**ow does one get involved with Orff Schulwerk? Like many of you, mine is a story of exploration. The only thing I recall about Orff during my early music-teacher training was some flip-chart content from my undergraduate studies: Kodály proudly displayed hand signs, Suzuki presented a beautiful violin, and Orff highlighted various wooden xylophones.

My journey to Orff truly began during my first teaching job at Clay Middle School in South Bend, Indiana, teaching fifth- through ninth-grade general music, choir, dance, and drama. At my initial job interview, the administrator leaned into me with a raised eyebrow, and asked “Are you sure you want to teach this age level?” I nodded with a smile.

He continued, explaining the job would be mine under one condition. My mentor, Helen Hibbs, and I had to make the music department a success in five months, or we would be looking for new jobs. This school had employed six different music teachers over a three-year span. The school’s students had labeled the dysfunctional music program “The Retarded Arts.”

During the interview, the administrator and I toured the music room. It was absolutely wrecked, with holes in the walls (and graffiti on them), broken chairs, and dangling ceiling tiles. Literally, it looked like a war zone. Being the

young and naïve teacher I was, I asked the superintendent if he would be willing to come into one of my classes to observe once I settled in. He smiled and said, “Yes.”

Months later, Helen and I invited him in for a delightful “informance” in our classroom. So Orff-like! It was a great success, demonstrating that students loved the new program and were proud to share their work.

For the next seven years, Helen guided me through my early teaching career at Clay Middle School. We embraced the open classroom concept and the integration of students bussed in from other areas.

After the middle school, I held a K-8 position in Indianapolis, Indiana, where I was honored to meet Ruth Boshkoff. With three other music colleagues, we were commissioned to write a music curriculum for the Catholic Arch Diocese. Before we started this project, we agreed to observe each other to understand our various teaching styles. A colleague named David, observing my teaching, exclaimed, “You are an Orff teacher!” It was as if he had spoken to me in a foreign language. I had no idea what he was talking about, but he insisted that I take a beginning Orff teacher education course. I did, and I was hooked!

I started my formal Orff teacher education at classes at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, learning from Judy Bond, Arveda Steen, Jane Frazee, Nancy Miller, and Mary Goetze, and a master class with Richard Gill. It doesn’t get any better than that! I extend a very special thank-you to each one of these phenomenal instructors who continue to inspire and share their expertise in the Orff Schulwerk.

After my initial Orff training, I moved to Dallas, Texas, fully intending to take a year off before teaching. Days after I moved in, I found myself screaming frantically in my yard. I had sat in a pile of fire ants. My new next-door neighbor came to my rescue with a remedy.

Once I stopped screaming, our conversation turned to schools. My number-one objective was to find a school for my son. My neighbor highly

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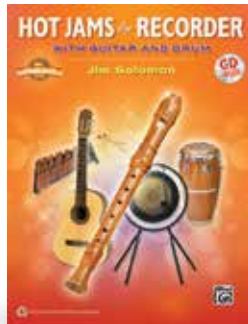
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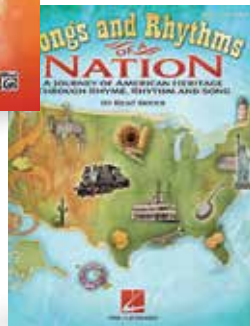
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praised Good Shepherd Episcopal School, so my son and I went for an interview.

I was very impressed with the school's administration, sense of community, and overall curriculum. They tested my son and accepted him as a student on the same day. As I was walking out of the building, the administrator turned to me and, out of the blue, asked, "You don't happen to know a music teacher? Ours resigned this morning." I turned around, had an interview, and the rest is history.

Today, I still teach at Good Shepherd Episcopal School. And I am humbled and excited to represent AOSA as its next president. I look forward to working together with AOSA's devoted members to enlighten and expose many music educators to the Schulwerk, and integrate other philosophies such as Kodály, Dalcroze, Gordon, and Suzuki. After all, we are all reaching out to the same population. It is imperative that we work collaboratively and support each other's philosophies.

As I begin this part of my Orff journey, as AOSA's president, I would like to thank those who have been part of our history: our talented past presidents, dedicated NBT board members, and endearing first Executive Director, Cyndi Wobig. Our future as an organization is bright with our current committed staff, including Carrie Barnette, Executive Director, Anna Pack, Associate Director, and other part-time and contracted staff. I would also be remiss if I didn't mention the thousands of volunteers whose dedication and commitment to the Schulwerk is imperative to this organization's growth and success. As the saying goes, "It takes an army to do the work." Thanks to the hardest-working army in music education!

In any organization, listening to the membership is important. AOSA members' feedback from various surveys tells us we need to provide an updated website to fulfill the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century music educator. We are pleased to rise to this challenge with our new website, which launched

in July. It fulfills many of the needs members have: hands-on lesson ideas, videos, and other resources. A very special thanks to Odatto Marketing Group and Bruce Downing, who have guided us through a strategic plan and played an integral part in successfully launching our new website. Past President Karen Benson, Membership Communications Coordinator Margie Van Gunten, *Orff Echo* Editor Laurie Sain, and Webmaster Steve Hug, along with other contracted staff and volunteers, have worked for months to make this updated, interactive, and effective website transition occur.

At AOSA, it is our intention to be transparent. I believe, as you browse through the new website, all information regarding our organization is available for your perusal. The site is savvy, user friendly, and informative. Its layout is artistic and beautiful.

So, back to the original question, "How does one get involved in Orff?" We, as members of AOSA, must make that involvement happen. We must actively reach out to those who have not had an opportunity to take part in our magic, whether they are teachers or administrators. We must invite them to workshops and conferences. Share with them our experiences with the Orff process, and give them the web address. Let our example motivate their interest in how Orff Schulwerk will change teachers' and students' lives for the better. Because we are AOSA—the heart of Orff Schulwerk in North America. ■

AOSA President **CHRIS JUDAH-LAUDER** teaches fifth- through eighth-grade music as the Fine Arts Director at Good Shepherd Episcopal School in Dallas, TX. She directs a Praise Band and Orff, Recorder, and Drum Ensembles, conducts AOSA teacher-education courses, and is an active clinician nationally. Chris has served as national and local co-chair for AOSA Professional Development Conferences, and was a regional representative on AOSA's National Board of Trustees. She has authored and co-authored numerous articles and books on music education.

# IN THIS ISSUE

By Laurie Sain With Donna Gallo and Chris Tranberg

## Looking At Student Work

**L**earning is a process that flows between teacher and student. The teacher introduces ideas, concepts, and experiences; the student engages and absorbs. But learning progress occurs when both student and teacher evaluate the student's efforts and reflect on them. Appraising those efforts enables learning to continue, as the student incorporates improvement into the experience. Thus learning "spirals" deeper and deeper as the student increases proficiency.

In this issue, our feature considers how we, as teachers, can view student work from a number of angles. We begin with Jeffrey Marlatt's article, "Healthy Assessment Planning: Using Focus, Variety, and Balance." Using assessment as a means of evaluating progress, he presents three key elements that can help teachers plan ways to evaluate student work and use the results to extend the learning process.

As the saying goes, many hands make light work. Four teachers from one school district highlight their experience of working together in "Looking at Student Work: Collaborating as a Team." Keira Brown, Sarah Milligan, Susan Mollica, and Miriam Schreiber explore how their group developed student assessment and evaluation tools. They show how testing an assessment tool's effectiveness helps ensure that the final

tool measures what teachers want to see in a comprehensive and uniform manner. The results help students improve because the feedback they get is specific and relevant.

We can look at student work in ways that help students evaluate themselves, too. David Thaxton shows how he uses technology to involve students in their own performance critiques in his article "Reflective Technology: Using Recording Tools in the Music Classroom." Easily available and relatively simple to use, his computer-based tools provide an objective recording of student sounds and performances.

Sometimes, observing student "work" happens on the playground, as children incorporate music into their everyday activities. In "I'll Meet You In Your Music: Observing Students' Informal Music," author Karen Howard explores how children's music making on the playground provides a framework for balancing both familiar and unfamiliar music in the formal music classroom.

Sometimes, observing student "work" happens on the playground, as children incorporate music into their everyday activities.

Our general articles look at two ends of the spectrum of the Orff Schulwerk experience. Mara Culp writes about using the Schulwerk to teach music and support other disciplines in "Meeting Standards For Speech and Language: Using Orff Schulwerk With Early Elementary Students." She shows how the Orff approach extends beyond music into early language learning. On the other hand, Doug Goodkin looks at the Schulwerk from the teacher's point of view, in "You Just Have To Be There: Oral Transmission in Orff Schulwerk." The challenge of learning the Orff process demands personal experience found only in a good Orff teacher training workshop. It is the "being there" that transmits the understanding of how the Schulwerk develops children's musical and mental minds and bodies.

We close this issue with two reviews of children's books that can be helpful in the classroom. Nicola Mason looks at *All The World* and Katie Traxler describes *The Pout-Pout Fish*, each of which provides good life lessons and opportunities for musical engagement in a story for your children.

By now, you as reader have experienced the new format and design of your journal, *The Orff Echo*. We are curious about your reactions. Both the editor and editorial board are eager to hear your comments. Feel free to email any one of us with your reactions, ideas, and suggestions.

This fall issue begins the 46th year of *The Orff Echo*. As we approach our fifth decade, we hope

you find the content and focus of the journal as fresh as when it was first published. We also welcome your contributions to any issue. We want to make the *Echo* your journal, where you and your peers can express, explore, and get feedback—all the more to learn and expand the Schulwerk for our students and ourselves. ■

**LAURIE SAIN** is the Editor-In-Chief of the *Orff Echo*. Issue coordinators Donna Gallo and Chris Tranberg assisted with this piece. Both are active Orff teachers and enthusiasts, and members of the Echo Editorial Board.

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The new AOSA website has many new teaching resources available, and they are updated often. It's easy to review them regularly. Once you enter the member's section, complete the login process with user name and password. Be sure to check the box that says, "Keep me logged in." You will be able to access the site without logging in again for two weeks.

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# Healthy Assessment Planning: Using Focus, Variety, and Balance

10



**DR. JEFFREY MARLATT**

is Associate Professor of Music and Director of Music Education at the Shenandoah Conservatory of Shenandoah University, Winchester, VA. He joins the conservatory after 18 years teaching in elementary, middle school, high school, and collegiate music programs in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Dr. Marlatt is an active clinician, conductor, and adjudicator. He presents at state, regional, national, and international music education conferences. His research interests include musical identities and music teacher education.

## ABSTRACT

*Planning assessment as a pedagogical practice enables both teacher and student to grow and learn. In this article, the author describes tips for effective assessment. Using the elements of focus, variety, and balance, the article describes a healthy assessment “diet” that helps students learn and educators improve their teaching skills as both experience a lively musical “flow” in the classroom.*

## By Jeffrey Marlatt

In today’s educational culture, many professionals associate the term “assessment” solely with student achievement and teacher evaluation. But effective assessment can also support student learning and improve teaching when implemented with focus, variety, and balance. This article outlines how to use these three elements to create a healthy assessment “diet.”

### Focusing An Assessment Philosophy

Each morning, music classrooms fill with a variety of musical sights and sounds. Music development specialists strive to awake the innate musical behaviors of children. While unifying the elements of speech, music, and movement enable effective music teaching, combining these elements with good assessment practices allows teachers to create a student-centered music learning community.

Thoughtful assessment practices can transform. They inform teaching and guide learning. To assess effectively, one must first focus on a philosophy of assessment (Brophy, 2000).

Even if one has not formalized an assessment philosophy, it exists. Curriculum choices, teaching approaches, and the student work chosen to collect are

all informed by teachers' philosophies. This author's personal philosophy of assessment guides responses to two primary questions: How can I best support student learning, and how can I best improve my teaching?

### ***How can I best support student learning?***

Authentic musical experiences in performing, creating, responding, and connecting shape musical learning while complementing a variety of learning styles and needs (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards [NCCAS], 2013). But how can educators best support their students' specific learning needs? Making a commitment to collect and analyze student work consistently helps students and educators experience the "win" of enhanced learning and student-centered teaching.

Assessment information about student work helps teachers design instruction objectively. By monitoring students' prior knowledge, growth, and acquisition of music knowledge and skills, teachers are better prepared to meet students' individual needs. Students' ongoing, daily work provides an excellent assessment opportunity. The best part is that it can happen naturally as a part of the learning and teaching process (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation [CERI], 2008).

Jay McTighe (2011) describes ongoing, daily student work as cornerstone tasks that are embedded in the learning experience, spiraled experiences that deepen understanding, authentic in terms of the subject matter, and meaningful to the student. For a music teacher, these cornerstone tasks ask students to perform, create, respond, and connect as they engage in the act of making music. Assessing these musical acts provides evidence of teaching and learning.

When instructors design assessment strategies to document *performing* tasks of singing and playing, *creating* tasks of improvising, arranging, and composing, *responding* tasks of listening, describing, and evaluating, and *connecting* tasks of relating, they welcome students to a "hands-on" and "minds-on" music learning community (NCCAS, 2013).

### ***How can I best improve my teaching?***

Assessment opportunities provide teachers with invaluable information to improve their own teaching abilities. A teacher's artful reflection on student work provides a lens through which to view the educator's teaching effectiveness. Assessing student work helps identify what was taught most effectively,

and discover those things taught least effectively. Teachers can then implement new ideas to improve their instruction and revise assessment strategies to provide stronger opportunities for improvement in the future (Walters, 2010).

The reflective practitioner views teaching as experience and believes reflection to be a continuous cycle. To best learn from this cycle, teachers might refer to what educational theorists (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983) define as models of experiential learning. Chris Johns (1995) developed a model based on dual roles of self (looking in) and other (looking out). He encourages questions such as "What was I trying to achieve?" or "How did I act in the best interest of others?" With these models, teachers not only think about what or how they taught, but they can critically examine what worked as intended, why it worked, and how things might work differently in the future.

Placing student work within the context of this continuous cycle of reflection allows teachers to examine clearly students' experience of the teaching (and their experience of learning.) Brookfield (1995) suggests four reflective lenses:

- Autobiographies as learners (reflective journals)
- Colleagues' experiences and perceptions (informal discussions)
- Students' eyes (direct feedback)
- Theoretical literature (interpretative frameworks).

These lenses allow self-reflective teachers to construct a more dimensional view of their performance as music development specialists.

### **Creating Assessment Variety**

Just as in a food or nutritional diet, one of the most important techniques of a healthy assessment diet is to vary portion sizes. Embedded assessments allow teachers to collect focused information more frequently. In a way, they are like assessment "snacks." They provide the instructional energy to sustain teaching and learning between larger, summative assessment points.

An embedded assessment uses class-to-class work that students produce as they learn music. Gentemann (2005) describes embedded assessments as having four characteristics. These characteristics:

- occur in a class or group of classes;
- determine if students are learning pre-established learning outcomes;

- take advantage of pre-existing student motivation to perform well; and
- assess what is being taught.

Examples of embedded assessment strategies include performances, graphic organizers, self- or peer-evaluations, learning logs, observations, class discussion, and video or audio recordings. Teachers who vary strategies by using multiple forms of assessment enable students to demonstrate skills and knowledge. From these demonstrations, the teacher can construct a complete, balanced assessment profile for each student (Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1997).

- **Performances** include the creation of a product or performance. The process used and the finished product or performance is typically assessed using criterion-referenced rubrics or checklists.
- **Graphic organizers** are mental maps that allow students to communicate their understanding visually. They are helpful as advanced organizers (or pre-assessments) because students self-assess knowledge while constructing a record of their learning scheme.

- **Self-evaluations** allow teachers to gain information about how students interpret their own performance or progress. Students use a self-reflection process to communicate feelings or attitudes (typically through the use of a Likert-type scale). Peer evaluations offer opportunities to express feelings about the work of others.
- **Learning logs** are student-generated, written records. By examining these logs, teachers can assess how students organize, explain, and evaluate concepts. Even simple logs can be effective. For example, a log might consist of short responses students write on note cards that are required as exit tickets at the end of class.
- **Observation** is an invaluable informal tool used to guide the teaching process. Teachers can easily formalize observations using anecdotal notes. Develop a method of shorthand to quickly document student progress.
- **Class discussions** allow the teacher to ask targeted questions to assess levels of understanding or a student's ability to apply

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concepts. Discussion is also a useful tool for diagnosing “fuzzy” thinking.

- **Video or audio recordings** are useful to chronicle student work over time. Recordings in student portfolios allow both teacher and student to review student progress, especially for spiraled content.

In 1785, poet William Cowper penned the phrase, “variety’s the very spice of life.” Cowper’s words inform this author’s approach to collecting and analyzing student work. By viewing student progress and performance from a variety of assessment perspectives, a teacher is better prepared to capture the essence of a student’s musical identity. Students also engage more fully when they actively participate in assessment processes that foster imagination, creation, and reflection. In this context, variety in learning content and assessment strategies is the very spice of musical development.

### Balancing Assessment Activities

A balanced assessment diet means using assessment to obtain the most appropriate type and amount of

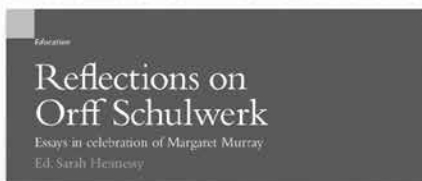
information to support musical growth and development. Balanced assessments meet teacher and student needs in an authentic manner. Ideally, they are learner-centered, provide students with meaningful feedback, and promote excellence in teaching.

Meaningful feedback from a balanced assessment approach fosters active student participation in the learning process. Feedback can provide students with standards of performance, accounts of strengths and weaknesses, information about how to improve, opportunities to correct misinformation, and reinforcement of what was done well (Gore, 2000). Use the following questions to guide the creation of meaningful feedback methods:

- Do I provide ongoing and consistent feedback?
- Do I provide feedback that encourages student action?
- Do students improve as a result of the feedback I give?

Supplement meaningful feedback with learner-centered assessments. These engage students in examining their own learning. Huba and Freed (2000) identified four distinguishing

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edited by Sarah Hennessy

*Reflections on Orff-Schulwerk* is a collection of essays by colleagues and friends who have worked with Margaret Murray over the years. Each essay in this collection offers an insight into a particular aspect of the Orff approach, viewed from the perspective of the life and work of Margaret, whose contribution to the establishment and development of creative music teaching and learning in the English speaking world is immeasurable.

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characteristics of learner-centered assessments. These characteristics include

- flexible time on task to meet student needs;
- student-to-student and student-to-teacher collaboration;
- recognition of diverse talents and learning styles; and
- ongoing practice of learned skills.

Meaningful feedback and learner-centered assessments allow teachers to collect information that can transform teaching practices. The information can guide decisions such as selection of teaching materials, teaching sequence, time allotment, review of content, and content progression (Popham, 2008). Excellence in teaching is an inspiration: It inspires teachers to develop healthy pedagogical patterns, and students to develop healthy learning patterns.

### Conclusion

Every teacher has experienced a teaching day when everything just seemed right. Teacher and students created music purposefully, class time

passed quickly, and moments followed each other naturally and smoothly. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) defines these experiences as “optimal experience” or “flow.” In spite of day-to-day pressures of teaching schedules, administrative tasks, teacher evaluations, and extra-curricular activities, teachers must protect the sanctity of students’ music learning experiences. For both students and teachers to feel good about their musical work, teachers can aim to create patterns of healthy assessment that result in an experience of “assessment flow.”

Armed with a well-informed assessment philosophy, the teacher who focuses assessments with a variety of balanced assessment strategies creates a happy, healthy musical learning community. As you try these approaches to assessment, remember that change happens over time. Begin simply by collecting and analyzing student work to support student learning and improve teaching. Make small changes first. You may be surprised at how quickly an approach to healthy assessment becomes a long-lasting teaching habit. ■

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# Looking At Student Work: Collaborating As A Team

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BROWN



SCHREIBER



MILLIGAN



MOLLICA

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## ABSTRACT

*As music teachers, we use feedback to inspire, motivate, and teach students to be independent musicians. But vague encouragement—perhaps by saying, “Good job!” or “8 out of 10 – pretty good!” or a simple, “You’re getting there!”—does not give students information that helps them develop musically. Do students know specifically why and how they did a good job so they can continue to improve upon that behavior? Do they know and understand specific strategies that will help them achieve at their highest levels? How does the feedback relate to their learning goals? Are students even aware of these goals? In this article, we discuss ways teachers can collaborate with their peers to create effective assessment tools that help teachers provide specific and useful feedback to students as part of the learning process.*

**By Keira Brown, Sarah Milligan, Susan Mollica, and Miriam Schreiber**

**A**ssessment is a broad term. It encompasses large ideas, such as testing, grading, measurement, evaluation, and formative and summative assessment. It includes any strategies used to obtain information about student learning.

However, assessment is not the same thing as evaluation. For example, a teacher might choose to give a test as one strategy during the assessment process. A scored test is just one piece of data used to measure a student’s

**Figure 1:** Initial draft for a rubric to analyze reading rhythm skills.

Draft District-Wide Rhythm Reading Rubric			
	STEADY BEAT	READING ACCURACY	TOTAL (MAX)
	0 = Not present	0-8 (1 point for each beat)	
	1 = Present but hesitations		
	2 = Present and constant		
<b>POTENTIAL SCORE</b>	0 – 3 pts	0 – 8 pts	11 pts
STUDENT NAME	STEADY BEAT	ACCURACY	TOTAL
<i>Example: Student #1</i>	2	6	8

current stage of musical development. Likewise, scores from a rubric, checklist, or rating scale are tools that measure students’ performance progress.

At its essence, collecting and recording assessment evidence helps track student progress. When a teacher uses all of the collected assessment data to assign a report card grade at the end of a term, this is evaluation. Evaluation involves making a value judgment, comparing a student’s achievement with other students’ work or against a set of standards.

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Process-based assessment, called formative assessment, shapes and forms student learning. Formative assessment has many goals (Earl, 2003, p. 2). These may include

- providing feedback to students,
- informing teachers about student learning and prior knowledge,
- identifying diagnostic information to guide planning and instruction,
- summarizing information for record keeping, and
- collecting evidence for reports.

When teachers use summative assessment information to assign grades, it becomes assessment *of* learning. When it is used to provide students with feedback to help increase their understanding, it becomes formative and can be viewed as assessment *for* learning. Teachers may also instruct students to reflect on assessment information as a way to personally understand how they are performing and need to improve. When students use assessment as self-reflection, it becomes assessment *as* learning (Earl, 2003; Scott, 2012, p. 31).

In our school district, elementary general music teachers meet a few times per year in a collaborative team called a Professional Learning Community

(PLC) to develop useful assessment tools. This collaboration is important to the formative assessment process. We discuss student work and how our curricular goals can improve teaching and learning. We also share student assessment evidence to create common assessment measurement tools, such as rating scales, checklists, and rubrics.

### Creating Rubrics Collaboratively

The PLC’s belief in the importance of informative, process-based assessment guides collaborative rubric development. These rubrics have two main purposes. They help teachers (a) identify and understand individual students’ difficulties and strengths relative to a specific task or skill, and (b) provide feedback to students that supports their continuing progress in that task or skill.

For example, our PLC recently developed a rubric focused on analyzing the skill of reading rhythm in our district’s second graders (see Figure 1). For the rubric, we wrote a set of equally difficult but distinct 8-beat rhythm patterns using rhythmic content familiar to all of our second-grade students. We recorded student performances, and then, as a group, listened to and scored them without discussion. This ensured that each teacher used the rubric with internal consistency.

After scoring, we compared and discussed our results. We found that both our draft rubric and the protocol for administering the assessment required substantial revision. This was necessary because of several factors.

- We did not agree about what constituted a beat error as opposed to a reading error.
- We administered the assessment using a variety of tempi.

- Students experienced varying degrees of pre-test familiarity with the actual patterns used as assessment prompts.
- We had not decided whether to consider accuracy of rhythm syllables.

As a result, the rubric did not truly inform our understanding of the students' skill development. For example, despite intentionally scoring student samples that were clearly diverse in accuracy, we discovered that out of a possible 10 points, most students scored 8 points or more. Therefore, the rubric was not helping teachers adequately differentiate between different types of student performances. It also made it difficult to categorize student errors.

We began solving these problems by clarifying the protocol for using the rubric: We specified tempo and the degree of prior experience students should have with the exact patterns used.

Then we focused on the rubric itself. It was important that steady beat and rhythmic accuracy remain distinct. We believed that students' rushing their performances was generally due to a lack of confidence, which was less problematic than hesitation errors.

Hesitation signified greater difficulty with either the skill of performing with steady beat or, more likely, the combined skill of reading while maintaining a steady beat. With beat errors accounted for, we could focus on the literal decoding of each symbol into the appropriate number and duration of sounds within the student's tempo and beat as performed.

Although students used rhythm syllables, we decided not to assess knowledge of syllables, but

to focus on students' performance of the musical content. Our final adjustment to the rubric was to evaluate whether a student performed the entire excerpt or completely stopped the performance and began again (see Figure 2).

Using the revised rubric to rescore student samples, we reached consensus on an array of student performances. We also used a wider range of points, which helped evaluate assessment results of a group of students, as either a class or a grade level. Most importantly, we were satisfied that the rubric would help us identify our students' needs for improvement. We could then precisely tailor feedback for students and parents by addressing specific skills, whether those were a steady beat, decoding of symbols, or musically fluent performance.

Throughout this collaboration, the group sought to maintain reflective practice and flexibility in order to meet students' needs. In the future, we may revise or even abandon the rubric, if it no longer fulfills its original purpose. Further, should student needs change, the rubric or its use may need to be adjusted.

### Qualities of a Collaborative Team

Suppose that you and your colleagues are tasked with creating district-wide assessments. Where do you begin? In the first place, all teachers in the group must contribute to decisions so that they feel ownership of the work. Before creating any assessments, the group should establish the structure of the meetings and determine the norms that will be

**Figure 2:** Revised draft for a rubric to analyze reading rhythm skills after testing the initial version.

Revised District-Wide Rhythm Reading Rubric				
	6 points STEADY BEAT	8 points READING ACCURACY	1 points PERFORMED WITH FLUENCY	TOTAL (MAX)
	3 = consistently steady 2 = rushing 1 = hesitations 0 = beat not apparent	0-8 (1 point for each beat)	1 = did not re-start 0 = stopped and re-started	
<b>POTENTIAL SCORE</b>	0 - 3 pts (multiplied x2)	0 - 8 pts	0 - 1 pts.	15 pts
STUDENT NAME	STEADY BEAT	READING ACCURACY	PERFORMED WITH FLUENCY	TOTAL
<i>Example: Student #1</i>	2	6	0	10

in place throughout the collaborative process. Some sample norms include:

- Be respectful
- Listen without interrupting
- Keep an open mind
- Actively participate
- Be engaged
- Be prepared
- Be professional
- Have student-centered goals
- Ask clarifying questions
- Distribute responsibility
- Establish realistic timelines for completion.

An agenda for each meeting will help the group stay focused. The agenda for the beginning of each meeting should include a review of decisions that were made at the last meeting and artifacts that are to be shared. Each person must arrive for meetings prepared with ideas, resources, collected student work, and any other agreed-upon materials.

For each meeting, assign someone to facilitate the meeting, and another person to take notes throughout the meeting and distribute them to all members afterwards in a timely fashion. Each group member should take a turn facilitating meetings and taking notes. The notes provide a record of discussion points, decisions, and work to be accomplished by each teacher before the next meeting. All team members need to be involved and take on equal amounts of work. Each person must be accountable to the group.

This collaborative process can be a challenge in many ways. Team members can change from year to year. When this happens, it is imperative that the group review protocols and norms, and allow new group members to suggest changes and/or additions.

For example, four of the five members of our PLC have joined our school system in the past five years. The fifth member has worked in the district for 28 years and knows the valuable history of past practice and decisions. This veteran PLC member has helped the group move forward without repeating work that has already been done. In addition, knowing how and why previous decisions were made allows for greater understanding by members, and leads to consistency within the department.

Through the years of collaborative group work in our district, certain PLCs have struggled with wide differences of opinion, which have created

professional tension. When faced with challenging group dynamics, it is important to remember:

- Be willing to change.
- It's okay for your ideas to be challenged.
- Be willing to try something even if you don't agree.
- No one should feel left out.
- No "hibernators": Everyone needs to participate in each discussion/meeting.
- No "dominators": No one person should take control.

These principles became important last year when we discussed how we were teaching students to read rhythms. We were specifically identifying which syllables to use for each rhythm. Some in the group felt very strongly about using *ti-ti* for eighth notes, whereas others felt that we should use Music Learning Theory *du-de* instead. Conversations got particularly heated when talking about sixteenth notes: *ti-ri-ti-ri* or *ti-ka-ti-ka* or *du-tuh-de-ta*? Rhythms in 6/8 meter had their own unique challenges.

We were encouraged to use the same syllables in all of the district's five elementary schools so that students would have a common language for rhythms when they began music classes at the middle school. We did reach consensus on most rhythms, but it was a challenge since we each were attached to the syllables that we had used for years. In the end, we made decisions that were in the best interest of student learning.

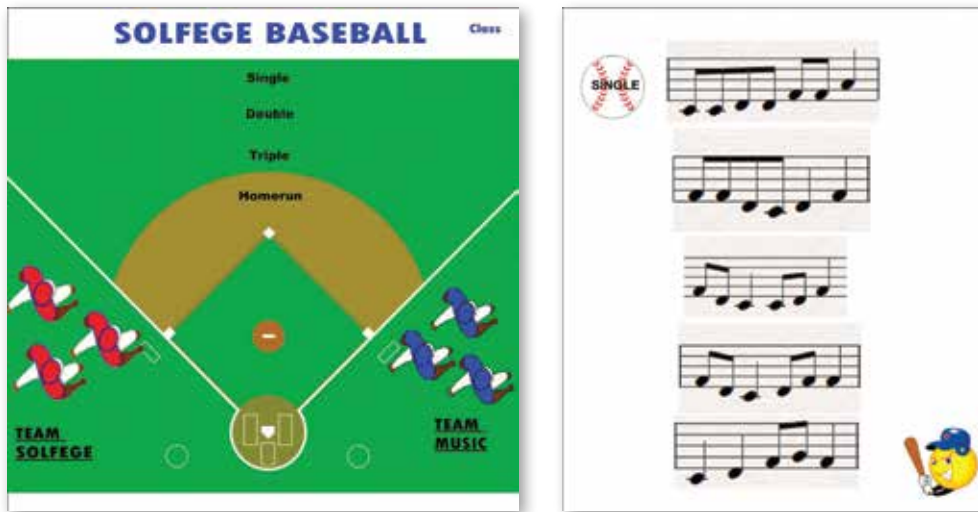
### In the Classroom

Student learning begins with you and your instruction. While you and your colleagues collaborate to create valid measurement tools, you must decide how to best utilize them in your classroom.

Rubrics are tools to help determine accurate information on student performance. They should fit into your teaching processes and not impede excellent instructional practices. Assessment can be inspiring and motivating when students feel comfortable in the environment, and with activities that are appropriate, engaging, and rewarding. Collaboration can help you develop best teaching practices and ways to use rubrics creatively, effectively, and efficiently.

In our district, we are extremely fortunate to have SMART™ Board-equipped elementary general music classrooms. The SMART Board can be an excellent tool for adding interaction to assessment. The SMART Notebook program has

**Figure 3:** Template for solfege baseball game, and an example of patterns at “single” level.



SOURCE: ILLUSTRATIONS PROVIDED BY MIRIAM SCHREIBER.

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helped inspire many new assessments. Because the SMART Boards arrived at different times, we were able to help teach each other ways to turn assessment activities into interactive games.

In one such game, “Solfege Baseball,” students press the “level” (single, double, etc.) at which they feel comfortable reading (see figure 3). Depending on their success, they can advance players around the bases. Rules for this game can be flexible, and made to fit your classroom and students. The game gives students some control over their level of assessment, creating a comfortable environment. This is a clear attempt at differentiating for student learning needs. Additionally, students enjoy going to the board to move players, and are eager to volunteer.

We used many other games to “disguise” reading flashcards or other literacy-related tasks. One game, called “Knee Ball,” only requires a laundry hamper or trashcan in the center of the room and a large ball. Students sit in a circle around the hamper. Then they take turns reading patterns to earn the right to toss the ball (from their knees) into the basket.

When we discussed our singing rubrics, we found that we could easily assess categories by using singing games or call-and-response songs that we already taught. These types of songs can provide comfortable opportunities for students to perform solo. While the class plays “Charlie Over the Ocean” (Feierbend, 2004), assess the caller using a performance rubric. Some play-parties that have a verse/refrain form offer assessment opportunities as well. As students are

performing a grand left-and-right in “Goin’ Down to Cairo” (Locke, 1981), individual students can sing the verses, while the class joins on the refrain.

Our PLC includes teachers with a variety of experience. Three members are in their first teaching positions. We benefit greatly both from veteran team members and those at earlier stages in their careers. For example, asking older students to sing solo can be difficult, but collectively we are able to discuss strategies that have yielded great results. Other shared strategies describe ways to offer choice for students. To assess fifth- or

sixth-grade students singing “Paddy Works on the Railway” (Bacon, et al, 2002), offer students a choice to sing existing verses, or to create new ones using the same structure (see Figure 4). When students can sing verses such as “In 1877, I bought a Slurpee at 7-11....to work upon the railway!” they enjoy sharing them with each other and will risk sharing their work with their peers.

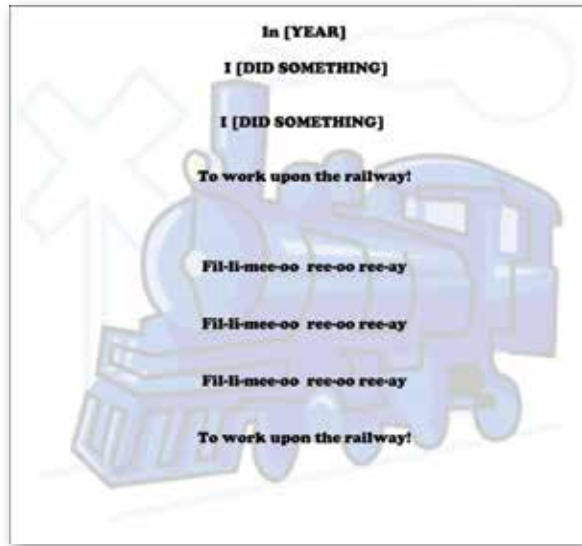
In sharing our activities, we noticed a trend. Almost every activity that begins with a whole-class experience works well for assessment. Students gain self-efficacy (whether performing, creating, reading, or decoding) when the process enables students to experience the activity as a whole class, then in smaller groups, and finally as individuals. After several lessons with group practice or experimentation, students become confident in their abilities to perform tasks at a high level, and the teacher can informally assess and monitor for understanding along the way, making necessary adjustments. By the time students are asked to perform alone, they feel prepared.

### Conclusion

Working with a team will directly impact your capacity to create valid and reliable district-wide assessments. As you talk about assessment criteria with your peers, keep all communication open and honest. Accept that professional tension is a characteristic of high-quality collaboration.

Developing assessments and measurement tools can be a learning process for all of us as educators. We

**Figure 4:** Template for “Paddy Works on the Railway.”



SOURCE: ILLUSTRATIONS PROVIDED BY MIRIAM SCHREIBER.

compare it to methods of guiding students through a process where they struggle with their own learning and eventually master a skill or concept.

Working with a team can be as beneficial as individual members of the team allow. The best team members bring ideas to meetings as well as creative and engaging tasks and assessments that they have successfully implemented. Quality tasks can pinpoint the skills necessary to utilize your measurement tool effectively.

Though initial assessments may seem well designed, be diligent about testing their reliability and validity. Use multiple trials and compare performance results with colleagues. Use data to inform adjustments, and remember that all curricular materials are “living” documents that can always be altered if they are not measuring the desired knowledge and skills.

Most importantly, remember that we measure students’ progress to inform our own instruction and provide students with feedback that will help them grow and develop as musicians for life. ■

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# Reflective Technology: Using Recording Tools in the Music Classroom

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## ABSTRACT

*Formative assessment is a critical part of instruction. When it comes to music, a student must be able to hear what others hear in order to improve. Today's digital technologies enable teachers to easily record performances for students to hear and critique, then improve their own skills, whether with musical instruments or the voice. This article describes equipment, software, and methods that use technology as a formative assessment tool to help students achieve musical and other goals.*

## By David Thaxton

“**T**he microphone doesn't lie,” I tell my students. Musicians record themselves for several purposes. The first is universal, if somewhat optimistic: to sell albums and become rich and famous. The second is to listen to their work objectively and evaluate their performance so they can improve. While the first is not typically achieved in an elementary school setting, the second illustrates one way that technology can serve the purpose of formative assessment, which is a vital component of instruction.

No microphone is perfect. Depending on its mechanical and electronic design, it may pick up disproportionate levels of the audio spectrum. Its placement in the physical space of a room determines if it gathers a correctly balanced mix of multiple musicians in an ensemble. Playing a recording may not adequately emulate the resonance or acoustic profile of the performance space.

Conversely, and often horrifyingly, a microphone gives a more accurate rendering of the sound of our own voices than we are accustomed to hearing. When we vocalize, sound waves travel through the air to our ear drums,

but are also conducted through bone, tissues, and spaces of the body and connect directly to the bones of the middle ear and cochlea.

When we speak or sing, what we hear is a mix of these elements. On the other hand, microphones, like other listeners, only pick up the sound travelling through the air. Many children's first encounter with recordings of their voices usually manifests itself in laughter. With adults, the sounds often elicit surprise and disbelief. Once either initial shock fades, the performance can be objectively analyzed, as musicians are liberated from being performer-listeners to purely listeners.

As musicians perform, a virtual storm of activity fills their minds. During a performance, pitch, rhythm, articulation, phrasing, dynamic contour, and countless other elements are anticipated, performed, analyzed, and evaluated in perpetual cycles by the brain. It's a wonder that performers can do all of these things and still retain the ability to stand upright, let alone remember all the chords, fingerings, forms, and lyrics of songs.

When we listen to our recorded performances, we focus entirely on listening. While errors and imperfections may be gratefully apparent to the performer, a good recording can give vital and accurate feedback, encourage growth, and even foster creativity.

### Tools of the Trade

Recording technology's development from wax cylinders, through vinyl discs and magnetic tape to digital media has come a long way. For classroom purposes, this author uses a free recording and editing software called Audacity®. Combined with external microphones, the software on a classroom desktop computer enables larger scale and multi-tracked recordings. By connecting the microphones to a mixer board before inputting sounds into the computer, the user can achieve a better ensemble balance. Audacity's controls and filters enable teachers to adjust volume, treble, and bass levels and add effects such as chorus, echo, and reverb. The sound files can then be combined or mixed down and exported to an .mp3 or .wav format. This can be stored and replayed using iTunes®, RealPlayer® or Windows Media Player®.

While these digital tools save time with large projects, the involved nature of the setup and performance make it more appropriate as a culminating project or an alternative to a live performance.

### Integrating Technology For Feedback

My third graders sit in a circle on the floor. In the center sits an iPad with the Voice Recorder HD app running. This class is learning Japanese folksongs for an upcoming performance. I ask them to record themselves as they wish to sound for the concert.

I give them a starting pitch and count-off. They sing unaccompanied and without input from me. When they finish, I remind them, "The microphone doesn't lie. It will play back exactly what it heard, and I want you to listen to it for two things: What sounded good, and what could be improved upon."

After listening to the recording, students remark how they all sang together and matched rhythmically. When I ask about areas for improvement, they become their own sharpest critics. "Some kids are sitting too close to the iPad and we can't hear everyone." "Some people are not using a singing voice." "We forgot the words halfway through." "The words are not clear."

For each of these criticisms, we discuss corrective strategies. "Let's even out the circle, find our head voices before we sing, watch someone's lips who knows the song better than you, and focus on the consonants of the words." We record it again, and listen to see how well we improved. The results are striking.

As the class transitions to the next activity, I upload the files to DropBox with a few finger taps on the iPad. I now have an authentic artifact on file, as well as class-generated critiques (which can also be recorded) that I can use formatively to plan the focus of upcoming lessons.

In this case, we spend a little extra time on the words, adding some motions to help them make more sense. We also echo the text with exaggerated articulation. After a few weeks, we repeat the process. We listen particularly for improvement in the areas the students suggested. The students have not only improved, but they can take full credit and ownership of the improvement. I may have used the recordings as a tool for my lesson planning, but they have taken responsibility for the musical quality of the performance.

For spontaneous, portable, small-scale projects and assessments, nothing beats the power and simplicity of simple voice recording apps on tablet computers and phones. The sound app Voice Recorder HD® by eFusion Co, Ltd. works wonderfully on both iPhone® and iPad®. Even using the internal microphones on these small devices, the sound quality is quite good and the interface is simple. However, for room-filling sound, it helps to plug a set of computer speakers into the headphone jack so that every student can clearly hear the performance. This author uses a Logitech® Z-2300 2.1 speaker system (400W) for

this purpose. The files can also be easily uploaded to iTunes through email, iCloud® or Dropbox®, where they can be dated and organized for use as assessment data or portfolio artifacts.

### Using Recordings for Formative- and Self-Assessment

Trained musicians are accustomed to evaluating and adjusting their performances continuously. They recognize that small changes in technique and execution can affect the final output tremendously.

For children, the idea of recording, listening, evaluating, and adjusting is often a very new concept. Many who are unaware of the process display behaviors such as intentionally blurring out, yelling, or making other extraneous noises during recording sessions.

As annoying as these actions are, they are a developmental step towards self-awareness. As students become accustomed to recording and evaluating themselves, these behaviors diminish. The students begin to focus on improving and fine-tuning their performances.

Just as musicians single out difficult passages for practice, critical listening skills must be taught and honed. By isolating the skill of critical listening, recording activities sharpen students' abilities to be sensitive, responsive performers in both live and recorded settings.

### Recording Technology as Adaptive Device

*Time* magazine once listed Auto-Tune® as one of the “50 Worst Inventions,” right between DDT and Red Dye No. 2 (Fletcher, 2010). Performers such as Cher and T-Pain have used this audio manipulation tool to create artistic, if sometimes jarring, vocal effects, while others have used it to subtly “fix” their inabilities to match pitch while performing. While others may describe it as an overused gimmick, condemn it for the homogenization of pop music with “perfect” pitch, or perceive it as a tool that degrades artistic craftsmanship, this seemingly insidious piece of technology has helpfully made its way into my own classroom use.

For a few years, I had the privilege of working with a self-contained class of six to eight students with special needs. The children were diagnosed with moderate to severe autism spectrum disorders. Most had severely limited verbal skills, and extensive IEP goals concerning appropriate vocalization and speech.

As their music teacher, I felt I had a unique opportunity to work specifically towards these students' goals. I relied heavily on a ritual of song and movement activities. After several weeks, most of the students were progressing towards appropriate group participation, vocalization, and speech. While all the students in the class faced similar challenges, a couple struggled more than the others.

For example, one student, Liam<sup>1</sup>, would vocalize in a barely audible whisper unless he was agitated, in which case he would wail loudly. He loved music time, and would sit with the group, whispering or silent most of the time. His engagement was limited to watching the group and occasionally playing small, non-pitched percussion instruments.

What would help break down some of these students' vocalization barriers?

Around Halloween, I introduced the song, “Listen, I Can Hear Something Funny Outside.” (Barlow & Shima, 2003) I would pause throughout the song, allowing students to make creepy sounds in turn. Some hissed, growled, or moaned. Others, like Liam, sat silently.

To extend this song activity in the next lesson, I brought in the iPad with an Auto-Tune program called “I am T-Pain.”<sup>2</sup> The program filters singing and changes pitches to the nearest scale degree in a specified key. The file can be saved, played, or shared through email or social media sites. Interestingly, while a singing voice will be “auto-tuned” with the desired effect, a speaking voice will not, and sounds only minimally changed. A whisper simply registers as static, if anything.

In class, students took turns recording their vocalizations, and playing the results with excited surprise and glee. At his turn, Liam gripped the iPad and whispered into the microphone port. The result was a disappointing hiss, but Liam reached for the iPad again, and I gave him another turn. This time, after a couple whispers, he produced a short singing vocalization on a word that sounded like “dear.” His aides nearly collapsed from disbelief. As Liam listened to the result, he clapped with joy. I sent the sound file to Liam's teacher, occupational therapist, and mother. All were ecstatic not only to hear Liam finding his

1 “Liam” is a pseudonym.

2 As of this writing, I am T-Pain 2.0 uses the T-Pain Effect pitch correction by Izotope, not Antares Auto-Tune. Apple no longer supports iPod 2s with iOS 4.

voice, but to learn that they had a tool to help unlock the door to speech.

### Recordings for Spontaneous Creation

As technology evolves, it typically becomes faster, smaller, more powerful, and easier to use. Smart phones, laptops, and tablet computers enable spontaneous recordings without much preparation. Given the playful nature of the Orff Schulwerk approach, this ability to record and work with electronic files in a spur-of-the-moment setting offers marvelous potential.

For instance, my sixth-grade choir had just finished rehearsing a piece that called for a percussion accompaniment. As the students were putting away their instruments, Anthony continued to play his part on the tubano, as many children (and adults) are prone to do. Sitting nearby, Demarea began singing a short ostinato over the drumbeat, and bobbing his head back and forth. “Hey, whoa-whuh, hey, whoa-whuh” he sang as his friend Kaiden chimed in during the rests,

“yeh, yeh yeh.” Instead of asking them to stop, I gestured with a rolling finger to keep them going while I grabbed the iPad and began to record.

When the students reached what they felt was a satisfying conclusion, I played the file for the class. Smiles ensued. Soon a trio of girls—Faith, Crystal and Katie—began singing harmony a fourth above Demarea’s voice on the recording. Other students rushed to grab more drums.

A second recording followed, with much less success as ten drums quickly drowned out any trace of the vocals. The group decided to reduce the drums to three and try again. After another recording, they still noticed how overpowering the drums remained. We discussed using proximity to affect balance. After deciding that Anthony would lead the drum ensemble from afar while the vocalists sang, the students decided on a form. Singers would layer their parts in and out while arranged around the iPad: Soloists sat closest, harmony singers were a little farther away, and drummers the farthest from the microphone.



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The group performed the piece again, relying on gestures to direct the form as they layered their parts. The result was instant approval from the choir, and playground bragging rights for the performers. Using this technology, within fifteen minutes this group stepped into the roles of composers, performers, critics, sound technicians, and directors to create something that truly belonged to them. (Listen to the results! At [www.aosa.org](http://www.aosa.org), go to the *Echo* page and look for “Echo Extensions.”)

### Conclusion

Technology and assessment can easily become invasive weeds in an active music classroom. However, when they are used with integrity, they can transform a teaching space, remove barriers, and give young musicians a powerful set of tools to release their inner creativity.

This author has often heard Orff practitioner and instructor Roger Sams say during his workshops, “I don’t just want to teach my students to perform music. I want to teach them how to think like musicians.” Recording activities enable students to practice reflective thinking, whether it is in the form of guided self-assessment or spontaneous creation. When students hear their own growth from performance to performance, they naturally want to improve and innovate. The motivation, however, is not limited to one student or one class.

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A well-crafted performance can be captured and shared with other students as an exemplary model.

As Orff Schulwerk teachers, we try to foster creative thinking. When spontaneous creation happens, having a quick, easy, and powerful means of capturing it creates a tremendous opportunity to share a moment that would otherwise be lost. Students who may be fearful of taking creative risks can be empowered by these models. The reflective nature of recording technology can be a tool for students to both find their voices and craft a performance into a thing of beauty. ■



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# I'll Meet You In Your Music: Observing Students' Informal Music

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**KAREN HOWARD** (BME and MME, The Hartt School, University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT) has taught music and dance for 20 years. Karen has extensive training in multi-cultural music and dance, and has studied in Cuba, Tahiti, Ghana, Turkey, Macedonia, Thailand, Morocco, and India. She has presented national and international workshops helping teachers make connections with music and dance of other cultures. Karen conducted at the Connecticut Children's Chorus, and was recognized as Connecticut Music Educator's Association Elementary Music Educator of the Year in 2003. She resides in Seattle, WA, and is a doctoral student at the University of Washington in music education.

## ABSTRACT

*Children of many ages naturally incorporate music into their daily activities, separate from any formal training in the classroom. This article looks at how American kindergarteners and fifth graders use and reinvent classroom musical experiences on the playground, and build on what they have learned to create a rich, musical life experience. It also explains how the author links children's natural musical interests to formal lessons in music class.*

## By Karen Howard

**W**ander in an elementary school and you will hear the sounds of children in their element—whispering, shouting, chanting, singing, screeching, whistling, counting, spelling, reading aloud, singing, humming, and laughing. Whether intentionally or not, children musically interact with each other, their teachers, and even inanimate objects (Lum & Campbell, 2007). Music plays a role in children's daily activities from the most formal ensemble rehearsals to informal musical utterances.

Over the last 20 years, scholars have studied the culture of children seriously (Campbell, 2010; Emberly, 2013; Harwood, 2008; Marsh, 2008; Sutton-Smith, 1997). Children's culture has its own integrity, making it necessary to view the material collected within the subculture in terms of the attributes that are important to the children, rather than what adults see as "useful" (Marsh, 2008).

## A Peek Into My Students' Musical Culture

In a six-week project intended to help better understand children's informal relationships with music, I observed children in kindergarten and grade five in

**Figure 1:** Substituting new words for the familiar melody, “If your’re happy and you know it.”



SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR.

different settings. This was a perfect opportunity for me to observe and interact with my music students other than during class. I was curious to find out what I might be missing and what I could learn from their musicking that wasn't directed by me.

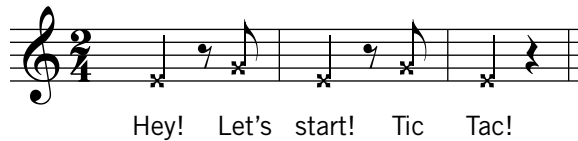
The term "musicking" was coined by Christopher Small (1998) and refers to a student taking part in musical performance in any capacity, whether performing, listening, dancing, or being an audience member. Throughout my observations, I interviewed students in "friendship groupings" (Marsh, 2008) to make them feel more comfortable. As their vocal music teacher, I was well aware of what happened in their formal music instruction. My aim was to see the inside world of what they would choose to do with music when the decisions were theirs to make.

### Music in the Kindergarten Classroom

Since children regularly bring music they learned in school out to the playground and home with friends, I spent some time in a kindergarten classroom to hear what was happening. I observed a particular classroom teacher that I knew incorporated music throughout the day along with her students. In class, the teacher is regularly the one initiating the musical activity. An example is her daily use of the well-known melody for "If you're happy and you know it" with substituted words (see Figure 1). The song serves the dual purpose of maintaining children's engagement mentally while physically guiding them through the desired transition (Campbell & Lum, 2007).

On another visit, I observed the daily ritual of "morning meeting," where particular routines were led by a "student of the day." The teacher used the melody for "Clementine" to practice the days of the week (see Figure 2).

In other situations, the children independently chanted or uttered short, melodic ideas. During a math lesson, I moved from table to table watching how the children chose to work on the activity that the teacher was directing, which entailed placing plastic chips on a chart. Before he began the exercise, one boy chanted:

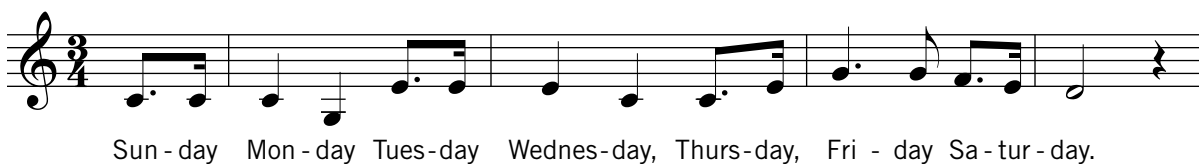


### Out On the Playground (and Not On Duty)

I spent several days watching kindergarten children outside for recess. I realized that, despite many years of teaching, I had never been outside with children at recess when I was not in a supervisory capacity. The freedom to truly watch the children was a refreshing experience.

As I first walked outside to kindergarten recess, I was greeted by a group of five girls jumping rope with one child on each end twirling the rope. The girls were chanting a version of "Teddy Bear" in a soft speaking voice. The girls chanted with inflection, particularly the jumper in the middle

**Figure 2:** Using the melody from "Clementine" to practice the days of the week.



SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR.

Figure 3: Playground version of “Teddy Bear” used by kindergarteners for skipping rope.

Ted - dy bear Ted - dy bear turn a - round.

5 Ted - dy bear Ted - dy bear touch the ground.

9 Ted - dy bear Ted - dy bear shine your shoe.

13 Ted - dy bear Ted - dy bear that will do.

SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR.

whose voice was filled with anticipation and excitement as she approached the “free jump” counting at the end of the rhyme (see Figure 3).

Hearing this version was an eye- and ear-opening experience for me since I was new to the school. I had been attempting to teach a singing version of “Teddy Bear” to my firstgrade children. The variant that I was using was in duple meter and used the pitches sol, la, and mi. I had tried teaching it in the key of D major (see Figure 4 on page 31).

From the first moment I had asked the children to sing for me, it became clear that there was a competing version already in their aural musical repertoire. As music educators know, it is extremely difficult to replace a known variant of a song or chant. I tried to learn the children’s version and use that instead, but discovered more than one version had been learned—one in pre-school, one on the playground, and a third from a previous music teacher.

Observing the children’s use of the chant on the playground made it immediately clear that this was a well-used jump rope chant in this particular school. It seemed logical to use their version in my future lessons with the same melody.

In another corner of the playground, a young boy ran by me singing as he went:

Can - dy Can - dy Can - dy Can - dy

This interval of a third was a common melodic utterance, minor or major, descending or ascending as in the example below. A young girl was singing the following while waiting to re-enter her school building at the end of recess:

Good - bye, Good - bye, Good - bye, Good - bye,

*continued on page 32*

**Figure 4:** In-class version of “Teddy Bear” being taught to first graders.

Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, turn a - round. Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, touch the ground.

5 Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, shine your shoe. Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, that will do.

9 Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, go up the stairs. Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, say your prayers.

13 Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, turn out the light. Ted-dy bear, Ted-dy bear, say good night!

SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR.

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I could hear another boy singing something softly. As I quietly approached, he looked up at me, said, “What the...?!” and scooted away.

I saw two girls jumping rope together on the far side of the playground. As I came near, I could hear one girl chanting softly. When she was finished, I asked her to teach me the words (see Figure 5).

While older children tend to separate themselves into friendship groups that are usually gendered, younger boys and girls often play together comfortably (Opie & Opie, 1985; Sutton-Smith, 1997). I witnessed this on the kindergarten playground. Boys and girls were jumping rope together, playing a variant of hopscotch, organizing a game based on a shape painted on the black-top, playing kick-ball in mixed teams, chasing each other on the playscape, and partaking in role-playing games. Older students tended to spend their time playing sports, walking alone, joking and chatting, playing on the equipment, performing for each other, or engaging in contests (Sutton-Smith, 1997).

### Time for Lunch

Observations in the cafeteria were divided between kindergarten and fifth-grade students. The younger children were full of sound: They made sound effects

with their food, chanted while using lunchbox utensils for percussion instruments, or happily hummed along to a tune in their heads while eating. One kindergarten boy regularly sang to himself or friends in the hallways, in his classroom, or at lunch. He vocalized a very musical stream of consciousness. He sang a rainbow song he learned from his classroom teacher, “A Sailor Went to Sea” which he learned in music class, and the theme song for the cartoon *Thomas and Friends*, including the instrumental parts that he hummed in between the words of the song.

This boy’s performance prompted his neighbors at the table to share the songs that popped into their heads. One boy repeatedly sang the chorus to “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang” while he tried to remember the last phrase. Another boy started to use his sandwich for the motions in “A Sailor Went to Sea.” He then proceeded to jump up and conduct the singing of his classmates. The first boy also sang melodies from the movie *The Cat In the Hat*.

These children’s collection of tunes from movies and television was not unique to this school. Children’s singing games often incorporate musical and textual stimuli found in contemporary mediated experiences such as commercials, movies, and popular music (Campbell, 2010; Marsh, 2008; Roberts, 2013).

**Figure 5:** A jump-rope song learned from a child on the playground.

Cin - der - el - la dressed in yel - la

5  
Went up - stairs and kissed her fel - la

9  
Made a mis - take and kissed a snake.

13  
How ma - ny doc - tors did it take?

SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR.

I shifted my focus to the musicking of fifth-grade students at lunch. I started by simply asking if I could join them for lunch on several occasions. The students were curious about my wanderings in the cafeteria. When I explained what I was researching, they started to offer comments about their favorite music. Children are interested in music trends, popular hits, and the latest dance moves. They read stories about their favorite musicians or bands and share what they learn with each other. Furthermore, they sing, dance and imitate their favorite musicians, and enjoy talking together about musical events, such as organizing a band or learning how to dance (Kertz-Welzel, 2013).

I interviewed a group of girls to find out what kind of music they liked to sing outside of school. Handheld digital music players such as the iPod® were a common reference as a medium for listening (Bickford, 2010).

- Maddie, a talented singer who had sung solo during the last school concert, said she listens to music on her iPod two to three times a week. Her favorite song of the moment was a pop hit titled “Moves like Jagger.” The girls sitting with her confirmed that she had been singing and dancing to the tune constantly over the previous few weeks. Maddie also loved the British singer Adele. I asked her if she sang like Adele, who is known for her unique vocal styling, or if she used her voice as it would normally sound. Maddie thought about it and said, “Both. Sometimes I try to do what she does. Sometimes I just sing like myself.”
- Mary also listened on her iPod and to the radio. Although she didn’t sing as much as Maddie, she especially loved dancing to music and was involved in a local musical troupe.
- Katy rehearsed four hours a week in a well-respected girls choir. Her time with the choir included theory class and ear training. Yet when I asked what music she preferred to sing, she mentioned current pop hits that she knew from the radio.
- Several other girls mentioned favorite music that was introduced by their parents. Sara loved folk singer Dar Williams. She explained that her mother had played two CDs in the car—Handel’s Water Music and Dar Williams—since Sara was a baby. The music became woven into the soundtrack of her life.

When I moved over to the table with the grade 5 boys, I sat next to Luke who was very quiet and reserved in music class. The following dialogue ensued:

*KH: Do you have songs that you love to listen to or sing along with?*

*L: Juke Box Hero.*

*KH: (paused to stare in confusion for a moment) You mean by Foreigner?*

*L: (face lighting up) You know that song?*

*KH: Yes! I know that song! (starts to sing, at which point Luke joins in singing) How do you know that song?*

*L: My dad plays the record all the time. It’s my favorite. (At this point other boys are coming over, interested in our conversation.)*

*KH: (I start to sing the chorus and play air guitar—Luke and I both play the guitar solo and hit the big ending note together—then stare at each other as if we’d never met).*

This exchange developed into a recounting of every song on the album. The fact that I had been in grade 5 when the songs were first released was interesting to the boys at the table. Luke and I now have a social connection that was established through the music we shared. When I saw him a few days after our conversation, I told him I had downloaded the album from iTunes®. Again, his whole demeanor changed and brightened. He was delighted to talk about the songs he enjoyed so much.

Another group of students decided to sing a song about narwhals (a type of whale) for me. Two girls and one boy gathered together at the table and started to sing the song with funny motions that they created in the moment. They broke into laughter at one point and couldn’t continue. They begged me to look at the video on the YouTube™ video community. I didn’t make time to see it until several students had asked me, “Did you see *Narwhals* yet?” I felt that something was curious about the way they were asking, so I went home and watched the video, which had gone “viral.” The lyrics were certainly silly and crude. When the children sang it for me at lunch, they stopped at precisely the moment that the language turned inappropriate for school, or to sing to a teacher. Opie and Opie (1985) discussed how this type of buffoonery with its prankish gestures and fantastic words can bring a child to a “state of self-intoxication, providing a much-needed release

from the real world” (pg 391). It serves a wide range of purposes allowing children to “challenge, undermine, and disarm adult power, to explore taboo topics as various as sex and toilets” (Rosen, 2011).

### Connections to Practice

This project influenced the way I develop music lessons. The children’s strong musical responses and interests became impossible to ignore when choosing music and the pedagogical approach of teaching it. My students are now aware that I am very interested in their musical engagements. There has been a great increase in the number of requests to incorporate specific songs into music class and other events (e.g., James Taylor because he is a favorite of a student’s mother, Macklemore since he is a local resident, a viral YouTube clip, including “Home” by Philip Phillips in the fifth-grade graduation concert, or sharing variants the students created for games we have been playing).

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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When this happens, I ask the children for time to review the particular request.

In most circumstances, I incorporate the music into a lesson by finding a way to connect it to one of our current objectives. This allows me to honor the request and give it equal footing in the classroom musical canon by treating it as something worthy of analysis and performance.

The children in this project opened a doorway for me into their personal relationships with music. It is up to me to walk through and meet them in their music. ■

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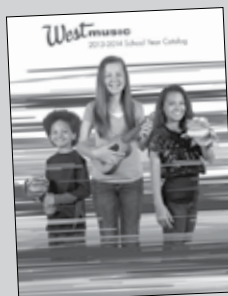
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# Meeting Standards for Speech and Language: Using Orff Schulwerk with Early Elementary Students

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## ABSTRACT

*Expectations for students' skill development and conceptual understanding of language arts is currently receiving national attention because of the widespread adoption of Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy. These standards provide a framework which can enable music educators to meaningfully connect speech-language development and music skills that have populated music curricula for many years. This article presents specific music class exercises that address important Standards and meet Orff musical goals in the elementary classroom.*

## By Mara E. Culp

**M**any music educators work to connect speech-language and musical development in their instructional practices. These efforts are supported by researchers advocating specific musical practices that improve students' speech-language skills (McCarthy, 1985; Mizener, 2008; Wolverson, 1991). Strategies include movement, rhyme, reading text, singing, game/action songs, chanting, body percussion, name songs, locating similar sounds, interacting with peers, visual aids, listening, discussing, and predicting (McCarthy, 1985; Mizener, 2008).

These strategies, especially those in an Orff Schulwerk environment, support the goals of Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy ("The Standards"). This article explores specifically how Orff musical activities support specific Standards for early elementary students in the music classroom.

### Linking the Standards' Goals to Specific Activities

The Standards are an extension of the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards for speaking, language, reading, listening, and writing. The CCR standards define goals students should meet by the end of each school year within specific grade levels. Music educators can note that the CCR standards describe outcomes and leave teachers “free to provide whatever tools and knowledge their professional judgment and experience identify as most helpful” to achieve each goal (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010, p. 4). In this way, the CCR standards recognize the multiple modalities in which students learn and educators instruct. Music educators should investigate how they can help students achieve music goals and high-priority CCR standards without sacrificing the integrity and musical focus of their current programs.

Each area of the Common Core Standards is organized around CCR anchor standards. These are the high-leverage and essential areas for skill-development focus. The CCR Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening contain two standards that can be thoughtfully addressed and delivered by Orff Schulwerk practitioners in the music classroom: Comprehension and Collaboration, and Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas. Both standards are defined by key outcomes, each of which describes grade-level specific activities to reach the standards. (See Table 1.)

Educators using the Orff approach are well positioned to support and improve speech-language skills as a natural part of their classes. The Schulwerk media of singing, dancing, and playing advocates using language to teach musical concepts (Carder, 1990) while providing important musical experiences. Orff educators incorporate language throughout activities with poems, rhymes, games,

**Table 1:** The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening, including key outcomes and some developmentally appropriate activities for early elementary students in grades K-2.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening	
Key Outcomes	Examples of Appropriate Activities for Grades K-2
<b>Comprehension and Collaboration (CC)</b>	
1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conducting collaborative conversations</li> <li>■ Asking and answering questions about a speaker's comments or a text read aloud</li> </ul>
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.	
3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.	
<b>Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas (PKI)</b>	
4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Expressing thoughts, feelings, and ideas</li> <li>■ Describing things</li> <li>■ Producing complete sentences</li> </ul>
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.	
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	

SOURCE: COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS INITIATIVE, ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS, COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS FOR SPEAKING AND LISTENING, P. 22-23.

songs, and dances based on students’ interests and creative choices. The Orff Schulwerk child-centered approach also supports children’s speech-language development by providing opportunities for students to sing, move, dance, play instruments, and speak in natural, non-competitive environments. It also fosters musicianship in every student.

**Musical Activities to Improve Speech-Language Skills**

To create a musical classroom environment conducive to improving speech-language skills, the author recommends a naturalistic approach to speech-language acquisition. This promotes an environment where “techniques [are] devised for use in the typical routines and activities” (Lowenthal, 1995, p. 114). This type of environment aligns well with the child-centered nature of Schulwerk.

The classroom musical activities described in this article synthesize the work of Charlotte Mizener (2008) and speech-language pathology research for young children. Activity themes are based on student interest. The activities incorporate natural opportunities for teachers to respond to each child’s attempts to communicate (Lowenthal, 1995).

**Call-and-Response Singing with “Cuckoo”**

The brief melody “Cuckoo” is particularly suited to develop musical and verbal skills. Its flexible nature and simple melody are based on the natural so-mi minor third interval. This is a basic musical “building block” for young children (see Figure 1).

The teacher may lead the class in a variety of ways, such as fast/slow, high/low, short/long, and/or loud/soft. Students imitate the teacher’s excellent vocal model and experience contrasting tempos, dynamics, durations, and registers. All of these are important to students’ musical development.

Changing the animal named in the song provides diverse music-making opportunities and helps develop speech-language skills because it exposes students to many phonemes, which are the smallest units of language. It also aids language cognition as students fit the new animals’ names and sounds into rhythms they create in real time.

Variations expand the use of this short exercise. The teacher may ask a student to choose a new animal. The student tells the class, or teacher, what animal he or she has chosen and what sound the animal makes. This can be further explored by having students state the reasons they chose a particular animal (see Table 1: PKI, 6, on page 37). Allowing individuals to lead the class in this way draws from their interests and provides excellent opportunities for students to develop self-confidence singing solos. It also builds a sense of community. The teacher may also take this opportunity to informally evaluate individual singing voices.

**Call-and-Response Greeting Song**

Songs that use student names are highly engaging (Carder, 1990). A variation on a greeting song suggested by Mizener (2008) is a child-centered call-and-response built on the natural so-mi minor third interval that incorporates body percussion.

**Figure 1:** The song, process, and variations for using “Cuckoo.”

SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT BY THE AUTHOR.

<b>Exercise Script</b>	
<i>Teacher/Leader</i>	<i>Class</i>
Cuckoo	Cuckoo
Who are you?	I'm a bird
Do you sing?	Yes I do
Sing then	Cuckoo

- Variations:**
- Lead the class using “cuckoo” as the bird. Use variations in singing voice: high/low, short/long, etc.
  - Choose a new animal and repeat.
  - Ask a student to choose an animal.
  - Lead the class in the song using that animal.
  - Ask a student to choose an animal and lead the class in the song.

**Figure 2:** The song and process for using “What’s Your Name?”

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Name, name what's your name? My name is: \_\_\_\_\_

SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT BY THE AUTHOR.

**Exercise Script**

<i>Class</i>	<i>Student</i>
Name, name, what's your name?	My name is ____.

**Process:**

- Class sings while patting and clapping the beat.
- Teacher tosses a beanbag to a child who sings the last line.
- The child sings and tosses the beanbag to the next person to continue the game.

Orff teachers understand the importance of purposeful movement. Regularly incorporating movement activities engages students. Body percussion requires no instrumentation and can utilize various kinesthetic movements that help students feel and internalize the pulse by experiencing the music more thoroughly.

There are many ways Orff educators can help improve fluency, or flow, among students, both musically and in language. Fluent speakers of any language flow naturally from one idea to another avoiding unnecessary pauses or stops. When music teachers encourage students to continue a musical line in a song, particularly one that calls for a response, they build knowledge of musical flow and pacing as well as speech-language fluency.

Orff teachers can use “What’s Your Name?” (see Figure 2) to achieve these goals by continuing the musical conversation between students without pausing. Engaging students in a question-and-answer format helps students meet Common Core Standards, particularly if this activity is at the beginning of the

year when students are still learning the names of their classmates (See Table 1: CC, 3, on page 37).

**Teaching Through Recordings**

Many musical lessons can be taught using quality recordings of children’s music. “Scraping Up Sand in the Bottom of the Sea” (Seeger & Seeger, 1977) is one song that contains interesting and fun musical timbres in a major tonality and a duple meter. This upbeat folk song is played on authentic folk instruments that students enjoy. This song teaches students to move their bodies to musical and textual elements, and helps them experience the rhythm, form, flow, texture, and message of the music.

Before playing the music, lead the class in a discussion that allows students to predict or anticipate musical and/or textural ideas (see Table 2). This assists speech-language development (Mizener, 2008) and strongly connects to Common Core Standards (See Table 1: CC, 1, on page 37). When engaging children in conversations, structure the

**Table 2:** Suggested ideas for discussions before playing “Scraping Up Sand in the Bottom of the Sea.”

“Scraping Up Sand in the Bottom of the Sea” Discussion Examples
<b>Ask the class some questions to promote discussion</b>
1. Would you want to dive to the bottom of the sea and scrape up sand?
2. What would you see at the bottom of the sea?
<b>Discuss how their ideas could be represented musically</b>
1. What kinds of instruments make scraping sounds?
2. What kinds of instruments remind you of the water?

environment to promote communication. Since children are more communicative when interacting with one another on the floor, ask students to engage in the discussion accordingly (Lowenthal, 1995).

After the discussion, play the song so children can experience the music. Then discuss again, referring to ideas posed during the first discussion. What ideas discussed initially occurred in the song? What ideas did not occur? Ask students grade-level appropriate questions about details from the song. You may include questions about the meter, tonality, form, or subject matter. Allowing students to answer for the class also connects to the Common Core Standards (See Table 1: CC, 2, on page 37).

Because “a good Orff teacher provides a framework for ... movement and locomotion experiences” (Carder, 1990, p. 148), you might ask students to demonstrate the following words from the song with their bodies: “Shiloh,” “Good-bye Liza Jane,” and “Oh, how I love her.” After allowing the class to experiment, decide as a group on three universal movements to model for everyone. Universal movements are important because students learn a great deal, musically and linguistically, from imitation in large groups (Frazee and Kreuter, 1987).

As students experience the music further, they will use these movements whenever the three ideas occur. When only instruments play, ask students to improvise movements to allow a free expression of ideas. This improves their musical creativity.

Much of the musical material in any class should be based on students’ ideas and interests. Ask students to name people, friends, or family that are not in the class, write those textual responses on the board, and then pat out each name’s rhythm as way to reinforce their ideas. The teacher can also ask the student to draw a small sketch of the person, or something that represents the person, whose name the student suggested above the written text.

Depending on the age of students, notating the rhythms underneath the name suggestions is a possible music literacy extension. (See Figure 3.) It is also a way to add more visual expressions of students’ ideas (See Table 1: PKI, 5, page 37). Encouraging student involvement in the notation process also promotes a naturalistic environment of language development for terminology as students engage in discussions about appropriate rhythms for the text. Ask the class to practice the rhythms.

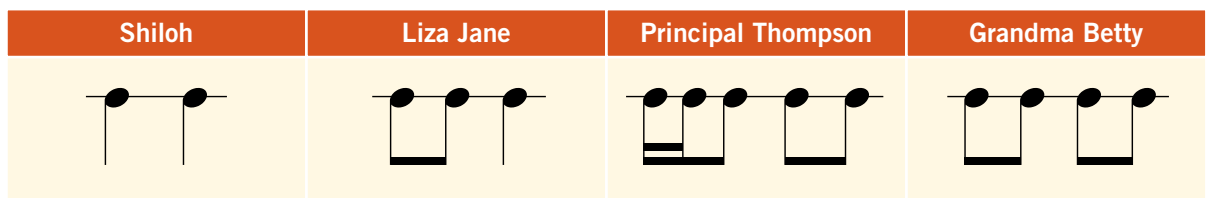
To develop musically, students must experience a wide variety of timbres. Quality Orff instruments are specially designed to expose students to rich, pleasant timbres. Playing instruments also allows students to experience familiar music in new and exciting ways.

To expand their musical horizons, ask students to select un-pitched percussion instruments from the Orff instrumentarium. Practice each rhythm as a class and ask individuals to demonstrate. Creatively arranging these rhythmic ideas is important for students’ musical development (Frazee & Kreuter, 1987), so ask students to juxtapose any two rhythms to create four-beat patterns. Students can alternate performing to create AB patterns. Adding a third rhythm pattern (C) to the activity will create rondo forms and improve students’ conceptualization of musical form by allowing them to become arrangers.

### ***Chants and Games: Using “Cookie Jar”***

Teaching students to communicate through music is an important goal of many music educators. Chants help students communicate expressively through vocal inflection and some acting while also internalizing steady beats. Games are a great way to engage students and excite them about learning. “Cookie Jar” is a chant and game that actively engages students in the process of making music while fostering a sense of community. This is important for both music and language arts learning.

**Figure 3:** Suggestions for notating the rhythms of various names.



SOURCE: FIGURE DEVELOPED BY THE AUTHOR.

**Figure 4:** Tune and process for the chant/game to “Cookie Jar.”

Swung

1. Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Who took the coo - kie from the coo - kie jar? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Accuser: \_\_\_\_\_

John - ny took the coo - kie from the coo - kie jar? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Accused: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Class: \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Accused: \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Who me? Yes you. Coul-dn't be me. Then who?

7. Accused: \_\_\_\_\_

Sa - ra stole the coo - kie from the coo - kie jar? \_\_\_\_\_

SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT BY THE AUTHOR.

**Exercise Script**

*Class*

1. Who took the cookie from the cookie jar?
4. Yes you.
6. Then who?

*Accuser (Teacher/Student)*

2. Johnny took the cookie from the cookie jar.

*Accused*

3. Who me?
5. Couldn't be me.
7. Sara stole the cookie from the cookie jar.

**Process:**

- Speak the rhyme, tap fists to the beat
- Patsch on all words containing the “ee” sound
- Patsch all rhymed words

Chants employed by the Orff educator can play a significant role in speech-language development. Schulwerk methodology specifically indicates that “texts should be recited clearly and distinctly with sensitivity to expression and dynamics.” (Choksy, et al, 2001, p. 187) Additionally, the uninterrupted flow of text can help improve speech-language fluency (Mizener, 2008). The “Cookie Jar” chant/game (see Figure 4) provides opportunities for students to comprehend rhymes and sort words, helping them improve their abilities to recognize and reproduce sounds, also known as phonological awareness (Pullen & Justice, 2003).

Developing a student’s singing voice is very important to Orff educators because singing is the foundation for musical instruction. Students must practice healthy singing habits early and experience strong vocal models in order to develop a solid base for music making. Songs containing a two- to six-note range are very appropriate for early elementary students (Choksy, et al, 2001). In addition to developing children’s voices, a fairly simple melody develops speech-language skills because it allows the sounds of the text to be more easily navigated (Mizener, 2008). To perform “Cookie Jar” as a song with so-mi-la,

Figure 5: Music and process for the “Pass the Cookie” game.



SOURCE: ARRANGEMENT BY THE AUTHOR.

**Process:**

1. Sing and pat the words.
2. Discuss which words are on the beat. Remind students that these are the words on which the cookie is passed.
3. Students pat while singing and passing the cookie.
4. The round is over when the “cookie” stops on the word “you” in a student’s hands. That student is then “out.”
5. The “out” student names his or her favorite cookie in rhythm while patting. Then the student provides a short explanation or reason why the cookie is a favorite, with or without rhythm before leaving the circle (See Table 1: PKI, 4, on page 37).
6. When students are “out” they sing and pat while the song continues.

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Students who leave the circle can return to seats or sit on the floor outside the circle. They can play patterns on rhythm sticks while other students sing. Sometimes, it can be fun to have the first few students who are out sit in the center of the circle before it gets too small.

provide an excellent vocal model and use echo-response to teach each phrase (Choksy, et al, 2001).

Choosing pitched percussion instruments from the Orff instrumentarium exposes students to additional timbres and adds a layer of excitement and musical learning to this activity. Students playing the do and so bars simultaneously create an open fifth accompaniment that is appropriate to accompany the song (Frazee & Kreuter, 1987). Depending on the number of barred instruments available, students can play individually to promote ownership in the activity. Alternatively, they can play with partners, which promotes teamwork and sharing. Select players and singers and ask students to take turns playing the accompaniment and singing “Cookie Jar.”

**Learning Teamwork With “Pass the Cookie”**

Students should be afforded a variety of fun, valuable opportunities to work with their peers, because they learn a great deal from peer modeling (Frazee and Kreuter, 1987; Mizener, 2008). The activity “Pass the Cookie” is derived from a song called “Pass the Acorn.” This activity helps students internalize and

demonstrate knowledge of steady beat by passing a plastic cookie or object (see Figure 5).

Students stand in a circle, singing, patting the beat, and passing a plastic cookie around the circle. The game promotes teamwork because children must receive from and pass the cookie to a neighbor on the beat for the game to continue. Students are naturally multi-tasking by singing in tune, patting to help classmates keep the beat, accepting the cookie in their hands on the beat, and passing the cookie on the next beat, all while maintaining the steady pulse and correct pitch of the song.

Word recognition as well as peer interaction, demonstration, and reinforcement help to improve speech-language skills (Mizener, 2008) as well as musical skills. Students who struggle with feeling the steady beat can learn that there are certain words associated with the downbeats where the cookie is passed. This highly visual representation of the pulse allows students to watch their peers demonstrate the steady beat as they pass the cookie around the circle. Struggling students receive further kinesthetic reinforcement of the steady beat from

their neighbors because students with the correct internal pulse will only give the cookie to the student or receive the cookie from the student on the beat. In this way, students are provided many positive peer models and learn in an encouraging environment where students are motivated to help one another in order to continue the game.

### Summary and Conclusions

The use of language in Orff elementary classrooms provides wonderful opportunities to build musical knowledge while improving the speech-language skills outlined in the Common Core Standards. The Standards ensure students meet developmentally appropriate benchmarks by helping teachers make informed decisions about appropriate teaching methods. To assist students in meeting these Stan-

dards, teachers can choose any methodology that will help students achieve goals.

As music educators, we understand the value of a music education for every student. We know the enrichment of working and playing as a group to learn about and create music in a safe, supportive environment, where students' needs, desires and abilities are respected. It is this supportive environment, filled with free expression and the sharing of ideas, that gives Orff elementary music teachers perfect opportunities to teach meaningful musical concepts and improve speech-language skills simultaneously.

Typically, music educators help students improve musical skills, while classroom teachers focus on speech-language skills. However, when music educators incorporate thoughtful techniques, we are uniquely equipped to improve both areas. ■

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# You Just Have To Be There: The Workshop As The Heart of Orff Training

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**DOUG GOODKIN**, an internationally recognized Orff Schulwerk teacher and author, has taught in over 40 countries. He is currently in his 39th year at The San Francisco School, San Francisco, CA, teaching children between three and nine years old. He teaches regularly at the Carl Orff Institut Salzburg, directs The San Francisco International Orff Certification Course in San Francisco and Carmel Valley, CA, and teaches his course on jazz and Orff Schulwerk worldwide. Doug blogs regularly at “Confessions of a Traveling Music Teacher.” In 2013, he presented at TEDxConejoSalon, “Learning Through Music and Art” (viewable at <http://tedxconejo.com/>).

## ABSTRACT

*How can a teacher truly learn the Orff Schulwerk process? The author investigates the importance of physically experiencing the Orff process through workshops and other live teacher training. While books, videos, and other media can be great supplements to an Orff workshop experience, this article argues that to truly understand and integrate the process in a teacher’s skills, “you just have to be there” at an Orff workshop.*

## By Doug Goodkin

**H**ave you ever told a story that you found hilarious or profound or even life-changing, and were met with a stony silence? There was nothing to do but shrug your shoulders and confess, “I guess you just had to be there.”

Similarly, whenever an airplane seatmate asks me, “What do you do?” I inevitably sigh. I struggle to describe the Orff approach, to find the words that will make sense, knowing that none of them really will. It might be more honest to say, “You just have to be there.”

“There” is the Orff workshop, where knowledge and wisdom are passed on. The word “workshop” is secretly imbedded in that obscure German word “Schulwerk,” a word often loosely translated as “schoolwork,” but meaning something quite different from math sheets and spelling lists.

When Carl Orff chose “Schulwerk” to describe his approach, he may have been thinking of something closer to *atelier*, the French term for “a studio or workshop where an artist works.” Through his experience, this author believes that Orff sensed that his vision could not be transmitted through books, study

guides, or university curricula. Instead, it would grow and prosper in a gathering of artists mutually pursuing their work in an atmosphere of experimentation.

The Güntherschule, where Orff first began his experimental work in the 1920s, was that type of gathering. Its spirit of mutual experimentation continues to inform his work with music for children. Today, with over 60 years of active practice behind the Orff approach, gatherings continue to be the primary mode of transmission in Orff trainings worldwide.

Why is a workshop the ideal Orff environment? Since the Orff approach is based on active doing, we must “actively do” to understand it thoroughly. If we want the classes we teach to involve the bodies, hearts, and minds of children, then we ourselves must be wholly engaged in the training. As bodies move, people connect, and music begins to flow in the workshop, we feel alive and engaged in a way difficult to reach by other means. It’s precisely that spark that convinces us, “I want more of this.” As a result, we attend the next workshop, sign up for the Orff Conference, or enroll in a summer course. Because we “have been there,” we want to return again and again.

The Orff workshop, the heart of the Schulwerk training, is a distinctive form of learning. Most presentations at educational conferences—including some music education conferences—entail people seated in rows, looking at digital or slide presentations or down at their laptops, and listening to a speaker. Compare that to the Orff teacher’s “presentation,” where people are up and out of their seats, playing, singing, or dancing in circles. They’re not preparing to learn, they’re not hearing about something, they’re not watching others learn, and they’re not listening to descriptions or music played by others. They are learning it themselves, in real time, in a physical place, with other people, using the full measure of their bodies, voices, and imaginations.

Orff teachers learn the Orff process in the same way their students will learn it. The emotions, conviviality, laughter, and joy of the experience become inextricably tied to the material. Afterwards, when teachers bring the workshop’s songs, dances, and pieces to their classroom’s students, they also bring the pleasure they had in learning. This makes the material come alive differently than if they had learned it from a book, a lecture, or a presentation.

Noticing this experience, people new to Orff Schulwerk are often intrigued. The experience of learning while moving instead of sitting at tables,

of using their own bodies as instruments of knowledge, and of fun as they open themselves to essential ideas sets the Schulwerk apart from other disciplines. The teacher is teaching from the body to the body, from the heart to the heart, and from the imagination to the imagination. For those prepared to notice, an Orff experience is not merely the specific games, songs, or pieces, but the whole *gestalt* of how those elements are taught.

Everything an Orff teacher does is part of teaching the process. She not only knows about music. She is music, embodying the rhythms, melodies, dynamics and expressive qualities of music as she teaches. She is not standing behind a podium pointing to a presentation slide; she is in the classroom, moving among the students, directing their singing with expressive hands, guiding mouth shapes, and lifted eyebrows. She energizes students’ whole-body rhythms in her own bounce as she demonstrates clapping play. The flow of the class resembles a musical composition, with an enticing beginning, connected middle, and satisfying ending. She guides it all like a master conductor, maintaining the flow with a maximum of gesture and sound and a minimum of explanation. Inspired by the teacher’s model of musicality, students participate wholly, with alert senses and all musical impulses at the fore.

Equally important is the way the teacher attends to students. She observes their responses, adjusts the pacing, and offers encouraging comments or gentle critiques. She invites students to show their own interesting ideas, or throws out a “ping” to the group, which can then hit back a “pong.” Then the teacher steps aside and lets the students go off in small groups to create something on their own. This give and take between teacher and student, student and student, and among bodies, voices, and minds, charges the air with an electric energy that makes the class itself feel like music. In the hands of a musical and sensitive teacher, an Orff workshop is a living experience where participants feel both the teacher’s and their own warmth and light.

As Carl Orff so brilliantly foresaw, this attention to the art of teaching, combined with the full participation of the learner, is possible only in a workshop venue. None of this could happen online or through a book or presentation. This is what makes the Orff approach so distinct from other music-teaching disciplines.

The nuances and complexity of the Schulwerk make it maddeningly difficult to master. At the same time, it is wonderfully enticing to attempt. This makes it unlikely that the Orff approach will ever be a mass movement. Though experiences to learn the approach are freely available, learning to teach with the Orff approach requires a level of dedication, thought, imagination, and commitment that few are willing to commit. Orff Schulwerk requires a predisposition to a way of teaching that cannot be captured in a methodical list of steps, but constantly uses a state of flow. Orff thrives best when teachers are tuned to their own creative spirits, sensitive to their students' imaginative responses, and alert to what is needed in each moment of the class. As Orff himself said in 1963:

*“Those who look for a method or a ready-made system are rather uncomfortable with the Schul-*

*werk; people with artistic temperament and a flair for improvisation are fascinated by it.”*

An Orff Schulwerk workshop is a gathering place for people with artistic temperaments, the venue where their “flair for improvisation” is exercised. It is the heart of the Orff practice, and the way we train the bodies, awaken the senses, open the hearts, and cultivate the minds of students. If you are a veteran Orff teacher, you have myriad memories of dynamic workshops that not only improved your teaching, but also opened your imagination and connected you with your fellow participants. If you are new to Orff Schulwerk and have not yet had the good fortune to experience such pleasures, run to your nearest website and find out the dates of the next Orff workshop. For the full experience of this marvelous pedagogy, you just have to be there. ■

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## REFERENCES

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# CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Nicola Mason

## All the World

By Liz Garton Scanlon

Illustrated by Marla Frazee

La Jolla, CA: Beach Lane Books, 2009

**A**ll the World invites readers to contemplate the beauty of the simple things in life. From work to play, author Liz Garton Scanlon, presents common, every-day tasks, the beauty of sharing them, and the reality that “All the world is all of us.” The book provides a sense of humility, presence, an appreciation for community, and a strong realization that small things are a part of a bigger picture.

This book evokes an inviting calm. Flowing rhythms and alliterations feel like lullabies. A sunny morning, which turns into a rainy afternoon and concludes with a quiet evening, takes us from beach, to market, to park, to restaurant, to home. Every page invokes a sense of community.

*Nanas, papas, cousins, kin*

*Piano, harp, and violin*

*Babies passed from neck to knee*

*All the World is you and me*

The book's simplicity and gentle storytelling are exquisitely illustrated by Marla Frazee, winner of the 2010 Caldecott Honor Award and the 2009 *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book. Frazee's illustrations reinforce the compassionate message of the book. She shows intertwining events seen from different perspectives. Hidden landscapes connected by people and objects in various settings evoke familiarity. Every page provides a rich sketch of the story, drawing the listener into a world of awareness and compassion.

Scanlon collaborated with author Natalie Dias Lorenzi to design a curriculum guide that connects various subjects with the book. Available as a free download on her website, <http://www.lizgartonscanlon.com/All-the-World.html>, the guide helps students boost vocabulary, explore colors, and create instruments,

puppets, silhouettes, and artwork related to the book's elements. Suggestions for mindful listening, reflective exercises, and critical listening provide opportunities for assessment and creative ideas.

This is an ideal platform for teachers to collaborate and integrate different subjects. For the music teacher, the book also provides a rich improvisation resource. Bountiful words, colors, objects, and feelings presented in a constantly rhyming sequence could also serve as a wonderful drone for adding melodic content. Most words are consistently presented as quarter or eighth note patterns,

*Table, bowl, cup, spoon*

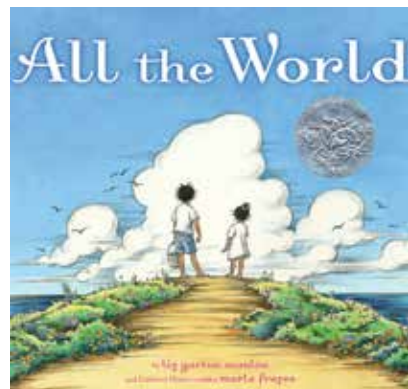
*Hungry tummy, supper's soon*

*Butter, flour, big black pot*

*All the world is cold and hot*

All the World conveys a timeless message highly appropriate and adaptable to the elementary music classroom. Illustrated with exquisite detail, the book celebrates connections, the contemplation of important things in life, and the need for taking time to think and be still. It is an enchanting read and a visually inspiring delight. ■

**NICOLA F. MASON** is currently a PhD candidate and elementary music methods teacher at the University of Kentucky. Originally from South Africa, she is certified in the highest level of Orff Schulwerk teacher education, and is focusing her research on the integration of Orff Schulwerk instruction in beginner band.



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Reviewed by **Katie Traxler**

## The Pout-Pout Fish

By Deborah Diesen

Illustrated by Dan Hanna

New York, NY: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2008

I was delighted to stumble across Deborah Diesen's *The Pout-Pout Fish* on the bookshelf. Children and adults who are already fans of fish stories like Marcus Pfister's well-known *The Rainbow Fish* can't help but fall in love with this "gloomy Gus" and quickly add his tale to their list of favorite aquatic adventures.

This is a touching story of an adorable little fish suffering from a case of the "dreary-wearies." We swim along with Mr. Fish through the ocean, carried on the waves by Deborah's skillfully crafted poetic text that is saturated with playful alliteration and rhythmic pulse. One by one, we meet Mr. Fish's ocean friends who try to cheer him up with some encouraging words. But, convinced his frown is permanent, he stubbornly chants his mantra over and over:

*I'm a pout-pout fish  
With a pout-pout face,  
So I spread the dreary-wearies  
All over the place.*

Listeners and readers alike soon join him in his mantra as the book progresses.

In a surprising twist of fate, just as Mr. Fish sinks to the ocean floor from the weight of his woe, a beautiful newcomer silently swims by

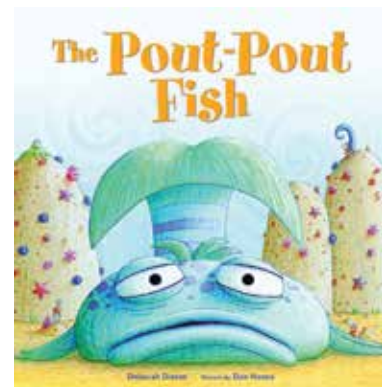
and kisses him on his "pout." Slowly Mr. Fish's frown turns upside down into a smile as he realizes that he doesn't want to be sad anymore. It's a happy ending that always brings cheers from the listening crowd.

This book is a wonderful opportunity for children to explore their personal experiences with feelings of gloom and sadness. It can start conversations about why children feel depressed or sad. It also presents opportunities for the class to brainstorm ways to overcome sad feelings. Starting with Mr. Fish's unexpected kiss, children extrapolate other solutions to escape the "dreary wearies": A kiss from a parent, a hug from a sibling, a high-five from a friend, or playing a favorite game with a buddy. Because many children are embarrassed to show their feelings when they are sad or upset, using Mr. Fish as a stepping stone helps young students talk about feelings without having to be the focus of the conversation.

**This book is a wonderful opportunity for children to explore their personal experiences with feelings of gloom and sadness. It can start conversations about why children feel depressed or sad.**

The powerful message of the story is greatly enhanced by Mr. Hanna's colorful and humorous characters. The vibrant illustrations are so imaginative and detailed that children discover new facets of Mr. Fish's ocean life every time they read the story.

The variety of ocean animals included in the story and illustrations—clams, jellyfish, squid, octopus, fish, snakes, crabs, seaweed, starfish, and more—begs for movement exploration. Try asking a few students to choose percussion instruments such as ocean drums, sandpaper blocks,



wind chimes, or glissandi on glockenspiels to create a sound carpet for the ocean. Encourage another group of students to choose unpitched percussion instruments to represent each ocean friend that Mr. Fish encounters. A third group of children can use movement to pretend to explore life in the “ocean” using different pathways, levels, and weights while accompanied by their chosen sound.

My students and I discovered that these activities could be turned into a musical play. We added

some pieces from Lynn Kleiner’s *S.O.S. Songs of the Sea* (Alfred Music, 2008) as interludes while turning pages in the book. Acting out the story of the pout-pout fish plus incorporating ocean songs for instrument play and movement created an exciting ocean-themed musical drama that the students begged to repeat over and over. ■

**KATIE TRAXLER** is the K-5 music teacher at P.S. 51 Elias Howe in New York City. She is the president of the local NYC chapter of AOSA.

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Spring 2014	Critical Thinking and the Orff Approach	Michelle Przybylowski Nick Wild	September 15, 2013
Summer 2014	Teacher Evaluation	Patty Reed Donna Gallo	December 15, 2013
Fall 2014	Orff Schulwerk and 21st Century Skills	Chet-Yeng Loong TBD	March 15, 2014
Winter 2015	Open (Tentative)	Carol McDowell TBD	June 15, 2014
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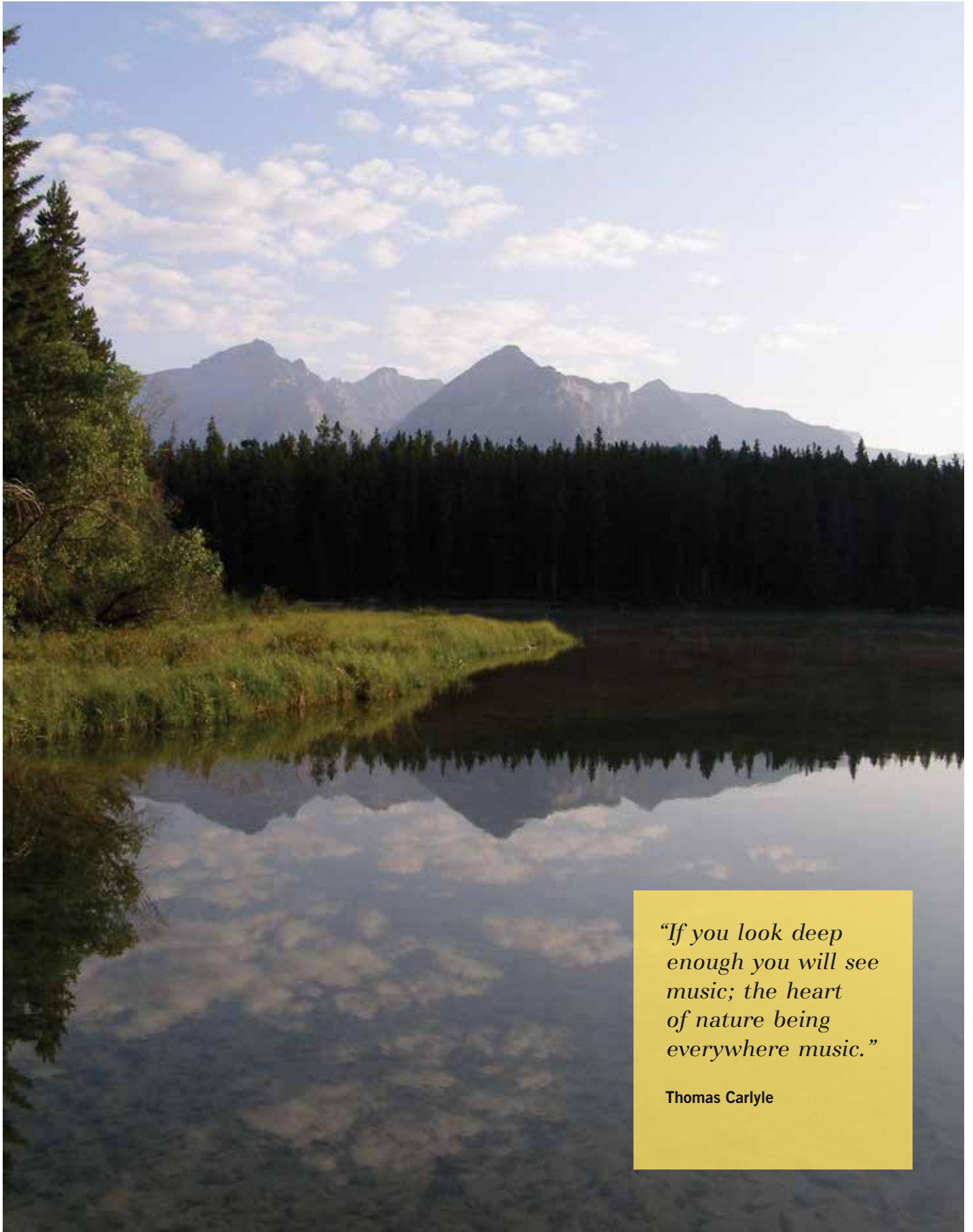
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