

The Orff Echo

SPRING 2024

VOLUME 56 NUMBER 3

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ORFF-SCHULWERK ASSOCIATION



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OF THE AMERICAN
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on the cover

"Cowbells" by Sloane Agee, a student at Snyder Elementary School, Spring, TX.
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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 Schulwerk approach. 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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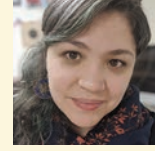
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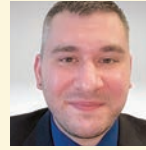
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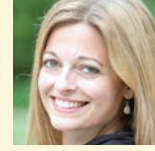
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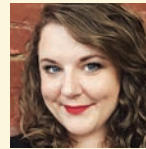
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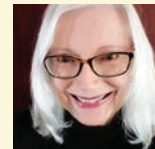
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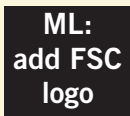
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mission statement

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 is:

- to demonstrate the value of Orff Schulwerk and promote its widespread use;
- to support the professional development of our members; and
- to inspire and advocate for the creative potential of all learners.

AOSA diversity statement

AOSA is committed to supporting a diverse and inclusive membership, promoting an understanding of issues of diversity and inclusion, and providing teaching and learning resources and professional development that respects, affirms, and protects the dignity and worth of all.

our core values

As music and movement educators dedicated to the creative music and movement approach developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman, we believe that:

- Every learner deserves the opportunity to actively create, improvise, sing, play, move, speak, and listen.
- Every learner should experience music and dance from cultures represented in both our diverse American society and the larger global community.
- Every learner deserves a passionate, committed music educator who values the importance of active music making.
- Every Orff Schulwerk educator deserves high-quality opportunities to improve their pedagogy and musicianship through active, collaborative professional development.
- Every Orff Schulwerk educator should cultivate the creative potential in all learners.
- Every AOSA member deserves opportunities to engage in open and constructive dialogue regarding the future and well-being of their chapter and the national organization.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Josh Southard

Communications that Connect Spring 2024

“I liked that piece the kids were playing today. You do that piece every year.” The teacher, whose room shares a wall with mine, meant that as a compliment. For quite some time after that comment, though, I could not shake off the feeling I was failing as a teacher; that I was letting down all of the Orff Schulwerk educators that had taught me; that I was not being creative

enough. Whenever those thoughts begin, I spiral quickly. This occurred about 11 years ago, and it is still fresh in my mind. It was not the fact that the teacher liked the piece and had heard my students play it before; it was the “You do that piece every year” part that hit a nerve. Knowing the teacher was right compounded my discomfort. The piece? *Music for Children*, Volume I, page 136, #44. Canon. Also known as *Ding Dong Diggi-Diggi-Dong*. No doubt even non-Orff people know this piece. Let’s face it—it is a good one.

I’ll pause while we all sing through it in our heads for a minute ...



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A large graphic advertisement for 'Teaching With Orff'. It features a portrait of Carl Orff, an elderly man with glasses, resting his chin on his hands. The background is a vibrant red watercolor wash with faint musical notation. The text 'no strings attached' is written in a handwritten style above the main text. The Orff logo is a red speech bubble containing the word 'Orff' in white.

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One of my biggest fears as a teacher is becoming stagnant. I am sure that most of us have that fear. The fear of doing the same thing, over and over, year in and year out. It can be a healthy fear. I will admit that, for me, it did not start out healthy. “You do that piece every year” shattered my confidence for a while. That being said, “You do that piece every year” was probably the best comment I could have received. It forced me to grow.

That summer, I rewrote my curriculum and objectives. I reached out to other music teachers to see what they were doing in their classrooms. I sat with an alto xylophone and played through pieces in the *Music for Children* volumes that I had skimmed over in the past. Using my AOSA Teacher Education Levels notes and homework as starting points, I composed a few new pieces to teach the kids the following year. I even challenged myself to write or teach a piece from each process that Steve Calantropio demonstrated in his book, *Pieces and Processes*. “You do that piece every year” really pushed me to move out of the comfort zone I had been sitting in for the first 10 years of my teaching career. How did that next year turn out? It was fine. I tried the new pieces, the new processes. They were not perfect by any means, but I did grow. My teaching became more refined, those new processes started to come more naturally, and most importantly, as I tried the new things, my comfort level with them increased.

What I did not do for the next four years was *Ding Dong Diggi-Diggi-Dong*. The “You do that piece every year” still caused me to avoid page 136 altogether. Now, before you start thinking that the main idea behind this message is to encourage you to avoid the *Ding Dong* canon, let me finish, because I promise it is not!

In May 2017, Dr. Paul Cribari had an article in *Reverberations* titled, “Moving Beyond *Ding Dong Diggidiggidong*: Finding Your Own Voice in the Schulwerk.” I was so happy as I was sure his article would reaffirm my decision not to use the piece anymore—despite loving it and missing hearing my students perform it. What Paul wrote about was the exact opposite; I highly recommend you go to the Resource Library and read the whole article. He noted how he had learned a process to teach this piece when he was taking his Levels courses. (I emphasize *a* to remind us that there is never just one way something can be taught.)

And it was magical. We can all relate to that feeling, the feeling of experiencing an amazing process and final performance during an Orff Schulwerk workshop or Levels course, and wanting desperately to recreate that with our students. Paul then explained to readers how he began to explore new ways to teach the piece. Letting the children explore with the rhythmic elements and adding different borduns made the experience not only new and refreshing for him as a teacher, but more of a “student-driven final product that is more in keeping with Orff and Keetman’s original goals” (Cribari, 2017, para. 13).

I remember sitting at my desk and shaking my head while thinking, *This is brilliant*. What Paul’s article did was lift a huge weight off of me. He had just given me a *new* way to look at all of those wonderful pieces in the Volumes. A new way to grow.

The following September, I opened up *Music for Children*, Volume I, page 136, #44. Canon. You know the piece. During the summer, my friend Charlie Tighe had shown me a cool activity using different colored cups to teach ostinati. It could be done in one group, or multiple groups that would lead to layered ostinati. It was this activity that I paired with the melody of *Ding Dong*. I used body percussion to teach the rhythm of the melody that the students could also perform in two- and four-part canon. The next step was having them create their own four-beat ostinato using the cups. After a week or so, we moved this entirely rhythmic piece over to the barred instruments. Another week or so later, we had gone from a body percussion piece with student-composed body percussion ostinati, to a melodic piece with student-composed ostinati and bordun. The students were so excited about *their* piece, because it was theirs. I gave them four bars of melody. They created the rest. I was excited, too. Thanks to Paul and Charlie sharing their ideas and expertise, I was able to teach this piece with an entirely different process than I had used for so many years. Since then, I’ve managed to come up with a couple of different processes for *Ding Dong*, some working, some ... anyway. But it is no longer stagnant. And when the inevitable “You do that piece every year” comes, I know that, in actuality, it is not the same. A different group of students created something completely different.

Arvida Steen wrote in *The Orff Echo*, Fall

1998 issue, “If a teacher stops learning, so do the students” (p. 13). This could not be a truer statement. “You do that piece every year” really forced me to step back and look at my teaching. It made me look at new processes and actually try them. Instead of recreating exactly what was done at a workshop or session, that statement gave me the motivation to look more at the process and how what I had seen could be applied with my students. Simply put, it made me grow. And the more I learn and grow, the more successful my students become. It is one of those “Well yeah!” statements, but sometimes we have to say it out loud for us to really *hear* it.

The next time you go to a workshop or conference session, or the next time you open up one of the Volumes, I challenge you to think to

yourself, *What is another way I could do that?* Or take a “You do that piece every year” piece and try a completely different process. The best thing that could happen is that it works. The worst is that it does not work exactly how you planned, you rework it, and you try again the following class. Either way, you are growing.

As another school year winds down, surprise your students with a new process. Or a new game. Or a new piece. And teach them *Ding Dong Diggi Diggi Dong*. ■

JOSH SOUTHARD is the music specialist at Smoky Row Elementary School in Carmel, Indiana, where he teaches kindergarten through Grade 5 music. He is a past president of the Indiana Orff Schulwerk Association and has served on the AOSA National Board of Trustees. Josh teaches Basic I, II, and III AOSA Teacher Education Levels Courses, and is currently serving as AOSA president.

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IN THIS ISSUE

By Linda Hines with Ian Cicco and Christa Jones

Grow

We often think of Orff Schulwerk metaphorically as a wildflower that grows and blossoms in diverse settings and in unique ways. In this issue, Orff Schulwerk practitioners relay their experiences with nurturing environments that stimulated many aspects of their growth and the growth of their students.

We begin with “Advocating for Emergent Bi/Multilingual Students,” in which **Victor Lozada** examines terminology surrounding students with multiple languages, including the implications of labels such as Limited English Proficiency, English Language Learner, and Emergent Bilingual. He further explores models for supporting these students in learning music, specifically through the Orff Schulwerk approach.

Sometimes traveling to a faraway place provides the means to perceive what was not seen before and to stimulate growth. In “Spinning Webs of Connectivity in Orff Schulwerk and Guinean Drumming,” **Yeshima** describes a trip to West Africa to learn Guinean drumming and its traditions from native experts. During this experience, the similarities between Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming became apparent and inspired further exploration.

In our next article, “Reflecting on Professional Growth,” **Eric Ventura** details his professional journey and what growth has looked like for him at multiple stages during his time as an Orff Schulwerk practitioner. He poignantly uses reflective prompts to underscore the various ways growth can be interpreted and offers helpful resources for Orff Schulwerk practitioners who endeavor to reflect on their own professional journeys.

Kim Friesen Weins continues in the same vein with her piece, “What Does the Schulwerk Mean to You?” She explores a journey of self-reflection with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding of the principles of Orff Schulwerk and provides valuable insights for music educators.

Switching the focus to student growth in “Creative Exploration: Improvisation and Composition with Primary Elementary Students,” **Katherine Reardon** describes a project to observe the process of improvisation and composition with young students. Her findings, which align with prior research on children’s growth and capabilities relative to composition and improvisation, showcase the ability of primary students to produce an array of creations.

In our research offering, “What Makes a Good Teacher Great? – The Nature of Expertise in General Music Instruction,” **Jean Hersey** details her case study of Orff Schulwerk teachers who continually reflect on their practices in order to grow and enhance their craft. The results underscore the tenets of effective Orff Schulwerk practices and how they mesh with the expertise of these teachers.

This issue’s children’s books, *Octopus’s Garden*, reviewed by **Spencer C. Thornton**, and *Tap Tap Boom Boom*, reviewed by **Kateri Miller**, invite teachers to guide their students in creating a unique story and to embrace the rhythm of a thunderstorm. In her review of this issue’s Supporting Our Learning offering, *Sounds Abound! Harmony and Orchestration in the Orff Instrumentarium*, **Christine Ballenger** highlights the featured examples and explanations of harmony and accompaniment techniques, which the author based on the historical beginnings of Orff Schulwerk.

Options to grow abound for Orff Schulwerk practitioners and, subsequently, for their students. As this issue’s contributors have noted, following a path that leads to opportunities to grow brings far-reaching and, at times, unexpected benefits. ■

LINDA HINES is editor in chief of *The Orff Echo*. Coordinators **IAN CICCO** and **CHRISTA JONES** collaborated on this issue. They are Orff Schulwerk practitioners and enthusiasts.

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Advocating for Emergent Bi/Multilingual Students

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VICTOR LOZADA is an assistant professor of bilingual education in the School of Education at the University of North Texas-Dallas. He taught elementary general music to emergent bi/multilingual children for 14 years in Texas. Victor completed AOSA Teacher Education Levels I–III and currently serves as the interim vice-president of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access for AOSA.

ABSTRACT

Limited English Proficiency, English Language Learner, or Emergent Bilingual? How should teachers refer to their multilingual students? In this article, the author describes the experience of students who speak multiple languages and outlines ways to support their learning through the Orff Schulwerk approach.

By Victor Lozada

انا اتكلم عربي

For many of you, the previous writing had no meaning. For some, you understand it says, “I speak Arabic,” written in Arabic and sounding like “ena atakalam earabiun.” Many of our students experience school in much the same way; that is, without being able to interact with people. Educators need to be purposeful in how they open doors for their bi/multilingual students. We, as music educators, are fortunate to have both linguistic and nonlinguistic ways of communicating.

Emergent Bi/Multilingual Student Concept

To clarify the concept of emergent bi/multilingual students, it is essential to recognize that all children possess inherent bi/multilingual abilities. Initially, children develop oral language skills from birth. Subsequently, they might develop other named languages, including written language. Distinguishing between spoken and written language is essential for the development of the communication skills of all children. For instance, in written language, such as in books, it is necessary to denote the speaker, which is not required in speech.

Beyond oral and written language, children also develop musical language (Wooten, 2008). We must understand that, as Orff Schulwerk teachers, we not only guide children to new aural landscapes, but also we unlock the door to written musical notation. With that, many of our students—even those who speak only English—are

actually quadrilingual. As we add additional named languages, the variety multiplies exponentially. Knowing this, we must ensure we include all students with a variety of linguistic abilities and levels of proficiency.

“Emergent” in the description *emergent bi/multilingual* indicates that these children might still be developing their ability to communicate in different modalities and languages. To be clear, I believe we are all developing our ability to communicate through language and music, for we encounter new words and music daily. As Orff Schulwerk teachers, it is important that we encourage our students to develop their musical ideas through their languages as well, while at the same time continuing to work to ensure our minoritized students who might not be a part of the linguistic majority feel welcome and included.

Who Are Our Bi/Multilingual Students?

Understanding that all children are emergent bi/multilingual—and the population of what many call English Language Learners (ELLs) is ever-increasing in our public schools—we as music educators must actively work to include students whose languages might not include the dominant language. Who are these students? The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) applied the term Limited English Proficiency (LEP) to these individuals. Although the term served as a way for teachers to identify students who needed additional linguistic support, it did so in a deficit-oriented way. It limited consideration only to the ability of students to speak English and ignored valuable knowledge and skills they had in their home language and in music.

The next iteration to describe this group was the aforementioned term, ELLs, from the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015). This terminology represented a more accurate description; however, it still centered on knowledge of English. Many people throughout the world do not speak English; to consider the knowledge of English as the only way of comprehending this world reflects a limiting perspective of reality.

A more appropriate way to describe these people from an asset-based perspective would be *emergent bilinguals*. García (2009) described emergent bilinguals as those who are developing multiple languages whether they be named, dialects, or language variations. Knowing that people are bi/multilingual because they, for the most part, learn both written and spoken language, it would seem that all of us could be considered emergent bilinguals on some level.

García and Wei (2014) purposely chose to define these individuals as bilingual rather than multilingual because it was much easier to understand from the perspective of the general population. On the other hand, referring to our students as bi/multilingual might be warranted because they come to us with many linguistic abilities in written and spoken language (Martinez, 2018). Given this, we can go one step further by understanding that all people are in the process of developing their languages and literacies and thus would be more appropriately termed *emergent bi/multilinguals*.

Why Does This Matter to My Music Classroom?

Elpus and Abril (2011, 2019) have noted that students who are ELLs (or, more accurately, emergent bi/multilinguals) are often excluded from music education courses because other classes might be considered more critical to their progress. Studies have shown the social and learning benefits of music and the arts in student comprehension and language development (Latta & Chan, 2010; Lozada et al., 2022). Considering this, as Orff Schulwerk teachers, we must actively work to ensure the inclusion of our emergent bi/multilingual students in our classrooms.

These students need opportunities to express themselves with all of their languages or linguistic repertoires to enable a positive learning experience for them. It is important to allow them to translanguage—use their full linguistic repertoires—regardless of our ability to understand them (García & Wei, 2014). When we provide a classroom environment in which our students’ languages are valued and included, they begin to lower their affective filters and, through music, are better equipped to learn language.

Beyond their ability to socialize in our classrooms, emergent bi/multilingual students can also benefit academically through active music-making experiences. As Orff Schulwerk teachers, we use language as an entry point to music (e.g., Keetman, 1974; Warner, 1991). These experiences can begin with words, body percussion, movement, or instruments. The linguistic and nonlinguistic approaches lend themselves to an active music-making process. Children, especially emergent bi/multilingual children, who participate in active music making score higher on phonological awareness measures, an indicator of early literacy ability (Lozada, 2022).

Lastly, emergent bi/multilingual students can benefit musically from inclusion. Often, these students lack the

means to express themselves linguistically. When they are able to use music as a form of communication, they experience a greater sense of inclusion and belonging. This not only benefits them, but also enriches the lives of their fellow students. Including the musical cultures of all brings opportunities for growth and allows us not only to make our curriculum culturally relevant, but also to lovingly sustain our students' cultures in a respectful manner (Paris & Alim, 2017).

Rosa (2019) called a monolingual imaginary student population in which all students speak only English. In contrast, the approach is centered on elemental music, one of the most basic of human experiences. How is this possible? Through another basic human experience—language.

Warner (1991) encouraged us to use language as a starting point for musical experiences. She advocated for the use of proverbs, riddles, poetry, traditional stories, and creative play-acting in our teaching. One example of incorporating a proverb is Orff and Keetman's (1958) use of Benjamin Franklin's "early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy and wealthy and wise" (p. 18). Many cultures have their own words of wisdom, including Spanish-speaking cultures, in which they are referred to as *dichos*.

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What Does This Mean for Orff Schulwerk Teachers?

Knowing who these children are and why they matter is important, but often people raise the question, "How can I equitably provide a music education for these children?" First, Orff Schulwerk is not meant for what

Figure 1. El Tamal



SOURCE: CREATED BY VICTOR LOZADA.

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I have used the dicho, “al que obra mal, se le pudre el tamal” (those who do the work badly, let the tamale rot) successfully in my classroom. To introduce this to your students, invite them to play with the dicho and create a shared rhythm to the phrase. From there, explore the natural scansion of the dicho, which to my ear suggests a duple compound meter (see Figure 1, p. 12). Then play with the rhythm to the dicho through pitched or unpitched percussion instruments.

Another activity that brought engagement in a fun way to my classroom was the use of Carmen Agra Deedy’s (2007) adaptation of *Martina, the Beautiful Cockroach*. This folktale provided opportunities for my students to use their full linguistic repertoires through translanguaging by labeling objects with both their Spanish and English names. To do this in your classroom, start by inviting students to create leitmotifs—short melodic phrases that represent an aspect of the story—of each character. Then, invite them to add movement or even a dramatic reenactment of the story—creative play-acting, as Warner (1991) noted.

Though the previous examples come from Latin culture, the process can be applied to any language and culture. Tools, such as the process of linguistically responsive teaching, help educators support students with a variety of linguistic backgrounds (Lucas et al., 2008). Linguistically responsive teaching necessitates educators’ familiarity with their students’ linguistic and cultural backgrounds, an understanding of the language demands of each learning task, and the use of appropriate scaffolding techniques.

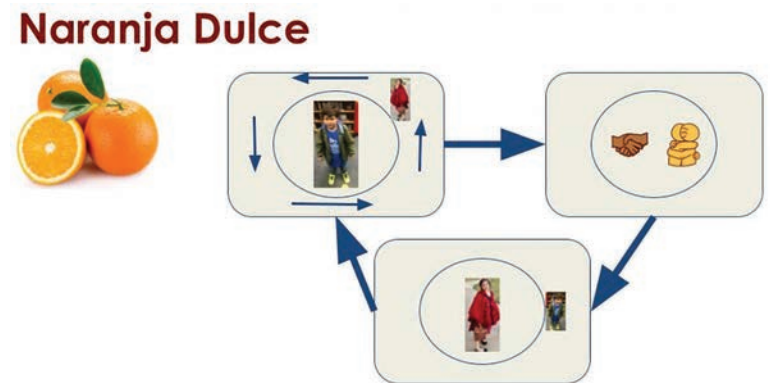
Understanding language demands means understanding a little bit about teaching language. For every task, it is important that teachers consider what they are requiring students to listen to, speak, read, write, and view. Breaking down each task to provide appropriate scaffolding will facilitate the process. For example:

- Use visuals.
- Supplement or modify texts.
- Supplement or modify oral language through translanguaging.
- Give clear, explicit instructions.
- Provide opportunities for emergent bi/multilingual students to interact.
- Encourage the use of home or heritage languages.
- Minimize anxiety through norms against teasing.

Figure 2. Word Wall Visual with Multilingual Labels



Figure 3. Naranja Dulce Game Visual



SOURCE: CREATED BY VICTOR LOZADA.

Many of these scaffolding techniques are self-explanatory. For example, the use of visuals can be done in many ways, such as gesturing, providing a multilingual word wall, or using non-linguistic representations of activities. Emergent bi/multilingual students benefit when they learn content vocabulary in more than one language because it offers multiple pathways to understanding information. One option is to post the English vocabulary word alongside students’ home or heritage language. Adding images along with the vocabulary presents another aid, visual input (see Figure 2). Other non-linguistic representations, such as iconic reading of music, graphic organizers to help students learn games (see Figure 3), and visual reminders of common tasks, such as how to set up instruments for a certain pentatonic scale, can be helpful as well.

Finally, through our knowledge of conducting, a number of Orff Schulwerk teachers are familiar with the power of gesture. Unlike other subject areas, a warm smile, a raised eyebrow, or a little movement

of the arm can invite students to engage joyfully in music class.

Conclusion

When we know who our students are, value their input either in the dominant language or another, and develop activities that support their learning, we create inclusive classroom environments that show our students they matter. We all teach emergent bi/multilingual children. Whether that is because of their multilingualism, multiple dialects, or the fact they are learning to use language with speech and writing, we must acknowledge and appreciate their contributions to the classroom in a

way that decenters us as the knowers and recenters our students as co-creators of knowledge.

At the beginning of this article, you might have felt uncomfortable not knowing what the Arabic script said. That is OK—we need to embrace our discomfort. When we facilitate our students' use of their home and/or heritage languages in the classroom, it opens a way for them to reveal more of their musical and linguistic knowledge. We, as teachers, are not all-knowing beings. We are in the continuous process of growing our own use of language and music. I invite you to engage in and embrace this growth along with your students. ■

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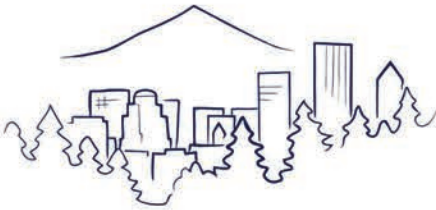


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Spinning Webs of Connectivity in Orff Schulwerk and Guinean Drumming

16



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ABSTRACT

Have you ever wondered what inspired the Orff Schulwerk approach to making music? Or have you actively listened to West African drumming and noticed the similarities to Orff Schulwerk? In this article, the author shares various approaches to teaching and learning the drumming traditions of Guinea, West Africa, and draws comparisons between the music-making approaches of Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming.

By Yeshima

Just like those that spiders spin, no two webs are alike. Spiderwebs do, however, share commonalities, including a circular shape and the purpose of attracting prey. To some, these webs symbolize existence, creativity, and the interconnectedness of all things. With that in mind, the spiderweb can serve as a metaphor to portray two entities—Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming—that share commonalities and connectedness in their music approaches.

In January 2022, I traveled to Guinea, West Africa, to learn about the musical culture, which included singing, dancing, and drumming. My three-week visit also entailed the study of djembe, dunun, and dance under the guidance of Bolokada Conde’, a well-known *djembe karamo* or *djembefola* (master djembe player) from Conakry, Guinea. Through these experiences, I witnessed a connection between Orff Schulwerk and the musical culture of Guinea. The similarities of the instrumentation, pedagogy, and teaching/learning process of both music traditions deepened my appreciation of one of the cultures that influenced Orff Schulwerk.

Pedagogy

According to Merriam Webster, pedagogy is the process by which a person is educated (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Orff (1978) developed elemental music, a pedagogical process that includes exploration, imitation, improvisation, and

creation (Frazee, 1987). Orff described elemental music as “music that was magical and spiritual and pure, played on the instruments of primitive peoples and using movement as a fundamental component” (Frazee, 1987, p. 9). This quote prompted me to reflect more deeply on the origins of Orff Schulwerk and the shared pedagogy between the music of Guinea and Orff Schulwerk.

In an interview, Mamady Keïta, a well-known master djembefola from Balandougou, Guinea, stated, “There is no pedagogy in Africa; you learn during festivals” (as cited in Price, 2015, p. 69). My first inclination was to disagree with Keïta’s statement because I saw a clear pedagogy of how he and other djembefolas from Guinea taught the traditional rhythms and songs of the culture. Reflecting on his words, I was curious about the perspective that informed his assertion. As a participant learning Guinean rhythms, songs, and dances, the pedagogy seemed very similar to that of Orff Schulwerk. Digging deeper into research related to Guinea’s musical culture revealed that Keïta might have been speaking from the perspective of how Africans learn this music and dance. This prompted me, as an Orff Schulwerk practitioner, to search for the pedagogical similarities and differences between how individuals in the East and West approach learning music.

If we compare Keïta’s definition of pedagogy with that of the Western world, the absence of pedagogy in Africa is indicated. A method of teaching African music does exist, however, even if the term “pedagogy” is not used to characterize it. For example, at community gatherings where people were playing music, singing, and dancing, I learned through a process of simultaneously listening, responding to the call of the lead singer, and imitating the dancers, while also imitating the accompaniment part of the second djembe.

Similarly, Keïta noted that students in the village who are interested in learning to play djembe are taken to a master drummer. They learn by listening and observing at special ceremonies and events where they perform the accompaniment parts and are immersed in the music until they are ready to advance (Billmeier, 1999).

Orff Schulwerk Approach

According to Frazee (1987), Orff Schulwerk can be described as elemental music making that uses speech, song, rhythm, and movement, and which involves a

pedagogical process of learning that includes the four stages of imitation, exploration, literacy, and improvisation. Frazee further noted that improvisation flows naturally from the first three stages, and these stages of musical development can be presented in any order, provided that the first two have been thoroughly enacted.

Additionally, Orff Schulwerk is often used to achieve outcomes that are not purely musical. As Shamrock (1986) noted, “it has a strong connection to cultural and social learning” (p. 51). Also, according to Goodkin (2001), Orff Schulwerk practitioners “emphasize active music making, beginning with the ear rather than the eye, incorporate some form of movement, and see music as essential to the total education of the child” (p. 19). Orff Schulwerk teachers use the question-and-answer technique in melodic and rhythmic phrase building (Frazee, 1987). This technique mirrors and might have been influenced by the form of call and response in African music present in the voice and instruments of both cultural music traditions (Orff, 1968; Shamrock, 1986).

Guinean Drumming Approach

Price (2015) stated that a djembe karamo in Malinke culture is an accomplished musician who also serves as an elder responsible for teaching the next generation of djembefolas “to play for their communities’ revered ceremonies and celebrations” (p. 61). According to Amoaku (1971), “The traditional African approach to music is through speech, rhythm, and movement” (Preface). Consider the following statement by Amoaku (1982) as well: “In traditional African societies, the acquisition of knowledge is a lifetime occupation based on the process of enculturation and, of course, oral tradition” (p. 116). In this regard, Amoaku spoke about the transmission and acquisition of musical skills from the time children are babies until the time they can walk and play with other children. Corney (2007) noted that their music learning often occurs through intergenerational participation in community celebrations; exposure and participation in music and dance are “emphasized more than formal teaching, although formal education does occur in a master- and apprentice-style of education” (p. 9).

In our drum classes with Bolokada, we learned how to play the djembe through a traditional African process—oral transmission or oral tradition. According to Amoaku (1982), “oral tradition simply connotes the process of transmitting knowledge from generation to generation by word of mouth” (p. 116). During these

classes, I noticed sub-categories within the oral tradition of the rhythms that consisted of vocal mnemonics and oral notation. The rhythms were transmitted through vocal mnemonics (Peterson, 1982), which translate the rhythms and the articulations of the drums such as the open tone, slap, and bass tone. The other sub-category of oral transmission of rhythms, timbres, and techniques comes from oral notation (Burns, 2001; Campbell, 1991; Charry, 2000; Locke, 2004; Schippers, 2005), which is an aural reception of rhythm.

The nuances found in the oral and aural tradition of rhythm acquisition in Guinean drumming cannot be decoded from written notation alone. For example, Billmeier (2004) contended that notation does not capture the feeling of the music. Relative to this, Tolno (2008) stated, “depending on the region, the lineage, even the particular village, there will be variations on the way that rhythms are played” (p. 1). Table 1 (p. 21) features a discography listing djembefolas in Guinea from which these written musical examples come.

Orff Process in Guinean Drumming

Imitation

Echo imitation is a method of teaching that occurs in the initial stages of learning music in an Orff Schulwerk lesson (Frazee, 1987). It refers to copying sounds or movements after the teacher presents them. Thus, during echo imitation, the teacher plays a part and students are asked to remember the rhythm, movement, sound, or melodic phrase, and play back the same thing the teacher performed (Frazee, 1987). In our drum classes, Bolokada would say and play the rhythm on his drum as participants listened. Immediately after he completed the rhythm, we played the passage back to him, imitating the correct articulation of the tones and rhythm on our djembes. We repeated this process numerous times while adding small chunks until everyone was comfortable playing the part correctly.

Simultaneous imitation, moments during which students copy movements or sounds at the same time as the instructor (Frazee, 1987), and echo imitation were implemented in our dance classes. We copied dance movements at the same time they were given in the warmup during our classes with Ibrahima Soumah, our dance instructor and leader of Ballet Soleil d’Afrique, a dance troupe in Guinea. When we learned a new dance, however, we learned each movement through echo imitation.

Exploration

Frazee (1987) identified exploration of musical materials as important, actionable steps that lead to improvisation. During my study in Guinea, unstructured time for the Westerners to warm up and explore our tones on the djembe was provided. For me, this was much needed because it was difficult to hear what my tones sounded like when everyone was playing at the same time. For the structured portion of the class, Bolokada included time to warm up our hands with rhythmic passages that included the tones of the djembe.

Improvisation

Improvisation in Orff Schulwerk is more structured and allows for numerous individuals to participate in the process. The context of improvisation occurs when students demonstrate their knowledge of musical elements. According to Frazee (1987), “Form is the element which provides the Orff teacher with an abundance of improvisation opportunities” (p. 31). She also noted that “because exploration involves altering some element of known material and improvisation involves inventing new musical ideas, improvisation is usually the culminating activity in the teaching sequence at every stage of music learning” (p. 31).

In Guinean drumming, the djembefola improvises the rhythms, interacting with the dancer (Nicely, 2021). The back-and-forth exchange was exciting to watch as the improvisation gave shape to the performance. As we became more proficient in playing the three tones on the djembe (open, slap, and bass), we were invited to improvise a solo while everyone accompanied at a quieter dynamic level. Improvisation in African indigenous music occurs during the performance “within a formal structural guideline” (Nkosi & Niekerk, 2017, p. 126). Bolokada explained his improvisations as recycling previously played material. This aligns with Kongo and Robinson’s (2003) notion of improvisation as a range from “elaborating or modifying existing pre-composed material to free improvisation” (p. 95). Kongo and Robinson also stated that “structural and thematic stock patterns are subject to manipulation in improvisation” (p. 105). My experiences with improvisation in Orff Schulwerk are quite similar to those of improvisation in African music. As an Orff Schulwerk practitioner, I was taught to take thematic material and alter it using musical elements of pitch and rhythm. Learning about soloing and improvisation from Bolokada reinforced the concept further and expanded my worldview of the origins and purpose of improvisation.

Creation

The creation of original music in Orff Schulwerk is achieved when students use previous knowledge of rhythm, melody, form, harmony, and movement from nursery rhymes and folk songs to create something unique (Frazee, 1987). Calvin-Campbell (1998) described the process of creation as a culminating product after students have experience and knowledge in the elements of music, movement, and speech. From Shamrock's (1986) perspective, "creation consists of the combining of material from the initial phases of the Orff process into small forms such as rondos, theme and variations, and mini-suites" (p. 53).

Creating new music in contrast to playing traditional music is a concept that Keïta spoke about in an interview: "If my rhythms are transmitted from generation to generation, in 500 years they will be part of the traditional rhythms and it will be known where they came from, their history, and who created them" (as cited in Price, 2015, p. 63). Similarly, Price discussed the creation of new rhythms that Keïta referred to as "future traditional rhythms" (p. 62). Keïta and others who strive to keep indigenous cultural traditions alive, while at the same time transforming rhythms for today, are actively fostering the cultural identity of the present-day Malinke people (Price, 2015).

More similarities than differences exist between Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming and dance. The process of learning is comparable in that imitation, exploration, improvisation, and creation are used. Both approaches use echo and simultaneous imitation, though during my classes, simultaneous imitation was used only in learning the dances of Guinea and not with the drumming. We were taught to use simultaneous imitation as a way to warm up and prepare the body to learn the movements in the dances. Often, we warmed up in a follow-the-leader style, with the instructor demonstrating a dance movement across the floor and participants following behind. In contrast, Orff Schulwerk movements tend to be individualistic and non-uniform. Learning movement from a native Guinean lead dance instructor taught me new ways my body could move and how to approach movement from a different perspective using voice and instruments.

Exploration, whether through Orff Schulwerk or Guinean drumming, allows participants to discover different sounds of the instruments and different ways their bodies can move, which leads to a deeper

When we deepen our knowledge of the origins of Orff Schulwerk, we expand our perspective and begin to understand the commonality of purpose between Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming.

vocabulary when they are asked to improvise. Improvisation is approached differently in Orff Schulwerk and in Guinean drumming. As noted earlier, with Orff Schulwerk, improvisation is structured and can include numerous individuals at one time, whereas in Guinean drumming, improvisation is inspired by recycled rhythmic material and follows a loose form.

Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming utilize the process of creation differently as well. For example, in Orff Schulwerk, nursery rhymes, poems, and stories are used as the impetus to create musical compositions. In Guinean drumming, the rhythms are created from a different source and purpose tied to the cultural identity of the Malinke people. As an Orff Schulwerk practitioner, I use this information to encourage my students to incorporate musical elements that reflect their own cultural identities in their compositions.

Instrumentation in Orff Schulwerk and Guinean Drumming

The instruments in an Orff Schulwerk ensemble consist of tuned percussion (e.g., xylophones and metallophones) and pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments that create sound through shaking, scraping, or striking. During the development of the Schulwerk, Orff used drums and rattles influenced by African, Indonesian, and other cultures (Kubinsky, 1998). According to Bilderbeck (2018), these instruments were the result of a "gift of an African xylophone that inspired the building of Orff instruments in the 1920s" (p. 5). Gray (1995) noted that this event set the stage for more dance activities with the xylophone. In addition to percussion instruments, the voice was often utilized for speech fundamentals incorporating rhymes and rhythmic building bricks that helped form a rhythmic and melodic foundation (Keetman, 1974).

The instruments used in Guinean drumming ensembles consist of djembes, dununs, balafons, and voices. The djembe is a drum shaped like a mortar

Figure 1. Djembe



SOURCE: YESHIMA. USED WITH PERMISSION.

(see Figure 1). In an interview, Bassidi Kone stated that the first djembe was created from a mortar when a man placed a skin on it and noticed it sounded better than a *tondunnu* (drum from Mali) or *bara* (drum made from calabash) (as cited in Damm, 2013). *Je* means “gathering” and *be* means “is,” therefore *jembe* means “there is a gathering,” suggesting that when you play the drum, people come together (Damm, 2013, p. 35). In an Orff Schulwerk ensemble, any drum can function similarly to the djembe. The djembe in Guinean drumming plays a lead improvisatory role as well as accompaniment rhythms, which is similar to the function of the rhythm instruments in Orff Schulwerk.

The dununs are three drums pitched low, medium, and high with a cowbell affixed to the top (see Figure 2). When I first played the dunun, it felt like a cross between a drum set and a marching bass drum. In an Orff Schulwerk ensemble, tubanos are pitched high, medium, and low like the dununs, though the functions of the two differ. Just three dununs are used to play interlocking rhythms, creating a melody between the pitches. Rhythms that do not create a melody between them are played in unison on multiple-pitched drums.

Balafons are diatonic pitched instruments constructed of various lengths of rosewood sitting on a bamboo frame. The bars rest over gourd resonators that have two small holes on each side covered with a thin membrane that buzzes when the bar vibrates. Players strike the bars with large wooden mallets that contain a thick piece of rubber wrapped around the end to create sound (see Figure 3, p. 21). The balafon resembles the Orff xylophone with similarities in its diatonic pitch structure. The music played on the balafon is both harmonic and melodic because of the polyrhythms commonly heard in West African music (Charry, 2000).

Nicely (2021) noted that voices create another layer to the rhythmic texture of the percussion instruments that incorporate the call and response, which is very well known in West African music. He further stated, “In many cases, either the call or response is repeated with variation, creating a larger two-part structure” (p. 156). This is congruent with my experience performing with Bolokada and his community in Morowaya. The call and response occurred between the dununs and the vocalists. The characteristic differences between the call and response can be heard in the timbral difference of muted and open tones on the drums and melodic motives in the voice.

Figure 2. Dununs



SOURCE: YESHIMA. USED WITH PERMISSION.

Figure 3. Balafon



SOURCE: YESHIMA. USED WITH PERMISSION.

Similarities of Orff Schulwerk and Guinean Drum Ensembles

The similarities between Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drum ensembles are noteworthy. Specifically, they are almost identical in texture, instrumentation, and their relationship to speech, song, improvisation, and movement. This was emphasized by Bilderback (2018), who affirmed that “Orff principles interface logically with West African music” (p. 7). Amoako, in his book *African Songs and Rhythm for Children*, “makes a close comparison between African musical traditions and the Orff Schulwerk with regard to speech, rhythm, movement, tuned percussion, and the process of imparting knowledge through imitation, improvisation, and exploration” (Mason, 2013, pp. 72–73).

Conclusion

Worlds apart, we are connected. When we deepen our knowledge of the origins of Orff Schulwerk, we expand our perspectives and begin to understand the commonality of purpose between Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming. Both approaches use rhythm as a form of communication to preserve and share

Table 1. Discography

- Conde', B. (2005). *Sankaran*. Abaraka.
- Conde', B. (2005). *Morowaya*. Abaraka.
- Conde', B. (2012). *Djiraworo*. Self-produced.
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- Keïta, M., & Sewa, K. (1998). *Afö*. Fonti Musicali.
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ideas and tradition. As Orff (1978) noted, “It was only given to me to present these old, imperishable ideas in today’s terms, to make them come alive for us” (p. 249). Similarly, Keïta stated, “The traditional

rhythms represent what and how we think and live. Without the traditional rhythms our history would not exist” (as cited in Billmeier, 1999, p. 17).

The use of speech in both approaches transfers to instruments and results in music that represents the

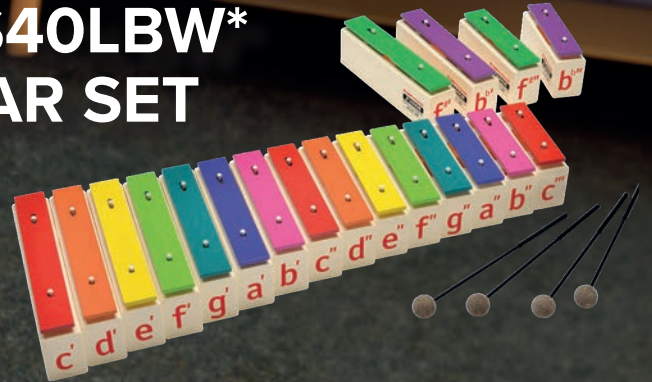
people who create it. Pathways of sound woven and layered upon each other in a cyclical fashion spin the webs, until the ostinati present in the sounds of both Orff Schulwerk and Guinean drumming emerge with their notable connectivity. ■

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Reflecting on Professional Growth

24



ERIC VENTURA is an elementary music teacher in Massachusetts. He holds a Bachelor and a Masters Degree in Music Education, a CAGS in Educational Leadership, and an EdD in Education. He has presented at state and national levels, including AOSA chapters and national conferences, has written for *The Orff Echo*, and has served on the board of the New England AOSA chapter. Eric completed AOSA Teacher Education Levels I–III, Master Class, and various supplemental courses.

ABSTRACT

Professional growth is an integrated part of an educator’s work, no matter the career stage. In this article, the author reflects on the nature of growth, including how and where growth occurs. He further discusses professional growth through the lens of the Orff Schulwerk practitioner, incorporating the influences that formal and informal advanced learning and practical experiences have on educators.

By Eric Ventura

The work of an Orff Schulwerk teacher is inclusive of various phenomena, such as a child’s curiosity and the aspect of play (Goodkin, 2002). Educators might recognize that such phenomena hold two important properties: (1) they have the capacity to evolve during a school year (or longer), and (2) they can springboard a teacher’s lesson into new directions. Similarly, the knowledge, skills, and disposition of the teacher might also realize new directions, which is a signal of change. If we first accept that growth is a partner to change, then it is with that understanding professional growth is framed here.

Orff’s vision of the Schulwerk as wildflowers spreading from one place to others over time is a metaphor for professional growth (Orff, 1977). Just as a mother plant sheds seeds so new seedlings can grow, we similarly recognize the importance of the teachers who came before us as mentors, instructors, colleagues, and friends. We might have met these individuals in person, or know of them by professional reputation alone. We become a continually-renewed version of ourselves from these experiences, which we impart onto others contemporaneously and as our careers come to closure. We also encounter growth opportunities while pursuing casual and formal opportunities to improve our knowledge and skill sets, whether the springboard consists of college courses, books focused on pedagogy, or other recognized professional activities.

I define professional growth as the increase in the knowledge and/or skills used to meet the demands of career responsibilities. Many factors overlap and influence the parameters and actual realization of the growth process; thus, discussing professional growth as an integrative phenomenon (Clark & Caffarella, 1999) seems appropriate. For the Orff Schulwerk teacher, niche topics such as improvisation and rhythmic speech add to other areas common to non-Schulwerk teachers, such as singing and basic music theory. These areas represent potential pathways for growth to take root and flourish, all for the betterment of the careers of educators and, ultimately, the students they teach.

There is a quote by Gilda Radner, a famed original cast member of *Saturday Night Live*, that exemplifies growth as I have described it: “Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what’s going to happen next” (as cited in Kuehn, 2023). This perspective represents several topics in my career, which began in 2002: Following the education industry’s interest in Gardner’s (1983) multiple intelligences theory, various educational pursuits have emerged, such as cross-curricular unit planning, differentiation as a preemptive teaching practice, social-emotional learning, and Hammond’s (2015) culturally responsive teaching. This list is certainly not exhaustive, nor does it necessarily represent the career or school district of other teachers. With that said, each of these topics requires new knowledge and skills, or a new interpretation of existing knowledge and skills. As one moment in a lesson can springboard into a new opportunity, our experience with a given educational practice can lead to a new or revised practice. This is an example of how professional growth can manifest organically during a career.

The emphasis on professional growth and making the best of it is likely a common theme for all of us. Because of my experience in Orff Schulwerk, I was able to be flexible with curricula and school-based mandates, consider other’s views when planning a shared unit with colleagues, be spontaneous with my instruction, and keep the whole in mind while attending to a specific part—a helpful skill when balancing long- and short-term goals. Those who have completed AOSA Teacher Education Levels Courses, other instructional programs, and chapter workshops will note the alignment of some pedagogic elements to the list of behaviors mentioned regarding processes of change. Take, for example, flexibility and

No general rule stipulates a specific format to undertake for professional growth; individual, small groups, and large groups all have their advantages.

considering others’ views, which arise from group work, an important and common element of the Orff Schulwerk experience. Thus, while growth can be observed and measured in a moment in time, the benefits do not fade into the distance; instead, they remain in our toolbox of professional skills and knowledge for future events.

Reflecting on how my teaching has evolved over the years, I considered various areas of growth as well as the mechanisms for how growth occurred and under what conditions it did so. I also considered the impact of my teacher education, both in general terms, as well as experiences specific to Orff Schulwerk education. After reflecting, I organized some important moments into a series of prompts. I invite you to consider them as they relate to your own career and professional growth.



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How Is Growth Expressed?


This question seeks to understand the nature of professional growth. Academic growth suggests a newly acquired or refined area of skill or knowledge. This is a familiar, clearly observable view of growth, such as using a new skill set after completing an AOSA Teacher Education Levels Course. A teacher who begins using different strategies to facilitate improvisation in the classroom is signaling that professional growth occurred. This example comes to mind from collaborating with colleagues in a particular school early in my career, a time at which being an Orff Schulwerk practitioner was a mark of pedagogical differentiation. One might also observe academic growth from a certain book or other form of media in a colleague's classroom. Doing so, however, requires an intimate working knowledge of the colleague's classroom and overall practice. A colleague might notice that a given song is set in D major for use with students when in past years the teacher used C major. The intimate observer, attuned to their teacher-colleague, will interpret this as guidance to better access the lowest pitch in a young

voice, for example. Alternatively, teaching movement to children in partnership with speaking and singing skills, rather than only rote teaching a prescribed folk dance, is another display of a teacher's professional growth. The fact that multiple modes of movement are possible, as well as the models of instruction for the movement, signal how growth can occur from an Orff Schulwerk background.

Yet, there are other ways growth can be expressed, such as social and emotional growth. For instance, an individual who wants to be a better communicator within a team might decide to explore some work on interpersonal skills. Although this appears as a growth opportunity for educators in general, the Orff Schulwerk frame provides a unique opportunity. Specifically, I recall many moments during my AOSA Teacher Education Levels Courses and beyond, when talking and working with a peer afforded me a trust-building opportunity. During a course focused on creative movement, I was directed to sit back-to-back with a classmate and then let inspiration take us into our movement exploration—all without breaking the back-to-back contact. My partner and I quickly became aware of how our typical communication preferences were challenged by this new intimate format, and years later, it allowed me to be open with teaching colleagues when new curricula ideas were proposed. As these different areas of growth are dynamic and interconnected, choosing to grow in one area will have a natural impact on others.

Where Is the Growth?


The location of growth is likewise an important consideration. For instance, growth can exist within a certain subject or area, such as recorder instruction or scoring a body percussion piece. Growth can also be carried to other situations, often described as a transfer of learning. A common research perspective is that instruction, guidance, and practice work in an integrative manner in order for a transfer of learning or skills to occur (Hajian, 2019). Thus, an AOSA Levels experience is a prime incubator of transfer. Another example of transfer among Orff Schulwerk teachers could be lifting skills from a recorder lesson, such as teaching an ostinato using G and A, to a rhythmic lesson, where an ostinato is performed using stomps with alternating feet. An individual might excel at certain tasks or grades, whereas others remain challenged. This proposition speaks to the need, and benefit, of lifelong learning.



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Further, the work we do in a classroom each day is compounded during the year, both with benefits and areas to grow. Singing, recorders, barred instruments, other percussion instruments, movement, composition, and improvisation represent a large core of the instructional areas for an Orff Schulwerk teacher, and yet there are several more possibilities. A new teacher simply has too little time to gain all the knowledge and skills for a given teaching role. The veteran teacher realizes the benefits of time, much like an interest-bearing savings account. Tasks get easier, the pace of new information slows, and we can hone our craft in specific and meaningful ways. No matter the career stage, the growth continues.

The “What” in a Team Approach to Growth

We can identify what has grown through a macro view of our teaching (i.e., pedagogical knowledge and skills, musical artistry, and professional responsibilities specific to a district or building), or a micro view (i.e., classroom management for special learners and recorder composition strategies). Because creating a list of growth topics can be an exhaustive effort, we might consider coordinating efforts with others to make the experience richer and more efficient (here we step a bit into the *who* and *how* of growth). I believe a cooperative learning framework, regardless of topic, better addresses the “what.”

No general rule stipulates a specific format to undertake for professional growth; individual, small groups, and large groups all have their advantages. In the same way we would consider different models for student growth, curating our professional growth can take a similar appearance. In fact, Steen (1998) wrote about such a topic, and moments from her own growth journey. She imparted many wonderful suggestions, as well as the need for such efforts. In the end, “choosing partners with trust, honesty and respect in mind is the first important element in creating the conditions for growth” (p. 14). In other words, by ensuring that positive conditions for psychological and emotional well-being are the foundation for a professional collegial encounter, a desired growth outcome is more likely to occur.

Who is Growing?

This might seem like a rhetorical question. Of course, the individual teacher pursuing knowledge and actions is growing, whether the framework is a solo endeavor or a group scenario, as described earlier. But we must

also consider the aspects of the Orff Schulwerk teacher as an identity—we are teacher-artists who recognize the need to and benefits of developing both sides of our professional selves (Ventura, 2019). Furthermore, if we consider the unofficial roles a teacher fulfills—especially as caretaker and counselor—then we expand the view of the teacher’s self. The need for professional growth remains intact, whether the purpose is to better a teaching practice or otherwise. In this view, professional growth might cross into the personal growth realm, too. Becoming more curious, more self-aware, or more health-conscious can benefit teachers’ personal and professional lives.

When Is There Growth?

As we gain experience working with children, we learn through presented material, as well as first-hand knowledge, that learning occurs differently for different individuals. For adults, some truth remains to that principle of child development. As adults move through a career, professional needs change due to the passage of time and the accumulation of experience. During a given moment in time, even for an experienced teacher, new needs might appear, signaling the necessity for growth. No matter when, timing is key for aligning the unique qualities and needs of the individual with the learning situation, a prime ingredient in adult learning (Knowles et al., 2012). For example, learning about the Portuguese folk music genre of *fado* might hold more meaning if the teacher is both interested and envisions the learning as a way to connect to the Portuguese student community of the school. This particular effort would add to a teacher’s growth in culturally responsive teaching, as it brings the individual closer to the core of a culture (Hammond, 2015). A self-directed growth opportunity is much more powerful than an administrative edict.

Additionally, when we critically reflect on existing beliefs and values we have not yet examined, or what Cranton (2006) referred to as transformative learning, an important type of growth occurs. Ample opportunities are available for adults to learn or reflect, particularly in the education profession. For instance, prior to my initial experiences with Orff Schulwerk, I did not consider speech as a viable and important musical element—for its own merits and for its relationship to the other media specific to Orff Schulwerk. After opportunities to experience it and discuss its role in Orff Schulwerk pedagogy, I acquired a new perspective and positive associated

Table 1. Serrat's Five Whys Technique

Problem: My classes cannot create meaningful dance improvisations.

- 1) Why? The students do not include creative or novel choices.
- 2) Why? The students have not built a substantial movement vocabulary.
- 3) Why? They have not had enough exposure to varied choices that include pathways, level, non-locomotion, and different tempi.
- 4) Why? I have not incorporated enough creative movement opportunities.
- 5) Why? My current curriculum map is weighed heavily on instrumental and vocal performances.

Answer: The curriculum documents might need revision to better balance music and movement in an Orff Schulwerk classroom.

1. Collect stories.
2. Ask “what happened?”
3. Ask “why did it happen?”
4. Ask “what might it mean?”
5. Ask “what are the implications for practice?” (pp. 51–54)

Alternatively, teachers can use the Five Whys Technique (Serrat, 2009) to unpack cause and effect relationships to find the root causes. The process begins with stating a problem then listing five consecutive “whys” until the underlying cause becomes clear (see Table 1).

Conclusion

Using the reflective process as a tool to understand and foster growth, Orff Schulwerk teachers might investigate several pedagogical topics, such as instructional choices, when to introduce canonical singing, how best to teach a song for a particular group of students (or a knowledge area), and determining which instruments can be played easily while also moving. In the end, the insight gained from a reflective process might direct Orff Schulwerk teachers toward particular actions to match a need with an opportunity that solves it. For instance, a book study with a colleague, participating in a chapter workshop, and observing others teach are possible avenues toward professional growth. Thus, such a reflective process might have the potential to reveal more than just a single answer to a given why and, ultimately, elongate the process into multiple paths of inquiry that unlock the possibility for deeper understanding of our growth. ■

SOURCE: CREATED BY ERIC VENTURA FROM OLIVER SERRAT'S “FIVE WHYS TECHNIQUE.”

value. Thus, taking a fresh look with sincerity can bring forth new perspectives and efforts to the work done in the classroom.

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Reflection: An Action Toward, and for, Growth

Reflection can be an informative tool for understanding the what, how, and why of things we, as professionals, do. Simply reflecting on how the previous class went or the success of a particular activity is a familiar routine to teachers. For those who wish to dig a bit deeper into a reflective process, let us consider the guided reflection protocol described in McEntee et al. (2003), which includes the following steps:

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What Does the Schulwerk Mean to You?

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KIM FRIESEN WIENS is an Orff Schulwerk Teacher Educator for Levels II and III and levels course director at the University of Alberta. She has been teaching elementary music, pre-kindergarten through Grade 6, for over 20 years in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Kim is currently pursuing a PhD in elementary music education at the University of Alberta, specializing in culturally responsive and sustaining practices.

ABSTRACT

Have you ever taken the time to analyze the specific tenets within Orff Schulwerk that resonate deeply with you? In this article, the author highlights a personal journey of self-reflexivity, through which she sought to gain a deeper perspective of Orff Schulwerk principles. She invites educators to pause and reflect on what Orff Schulwerk means to each of them as it relates to their life experiences and teaching contexts.

By Kim Friesen Wiens

Developing the ability to examine critically one's own beliefs and actions directly influences the nature of the encounters and relationships that emerge with teaching-learning contexts, and ultimately determines one's ability to enact culturally relevant, decolonizing music education practice. (Bradley, 2012, p. 415)

A significant portion of a recent conversation over coffee with a music educator colleague centered on a troubling revelation: Despite having over 20 years of teaching experience and a strong commitment to learning and professional growth, we realized we felt less confident in what we were doing and how we were connecting with our students than we had earlier in our careers. Even though we were regarded as master teachers in the field of elementary music education, we were grappling with feelings of inadequacy and wondered how the Orff Schulwerk approach could offer us a path forward in our continued learning and growth.

Early in 2023, I was invited to join a small sub-committee of teacher educators focused on curriculum review and development for Carl Orff Canada. In preparation for my first meeting, the committee moderator forwarded an article by Wolfgang Hartmann (2022) detailing eight principles “based on the characteristic way of teaching and other typical features that are essential to put the artistic and

pedagogical spirit of the Orff-Schulwerk into practice” (p. 2). These eight principles are rooted in research, history, and expertise in the field of Orff Schulwerk. Yet, as I read through them, I was both nodding my head and furrowing my brow. Although much of it resonated, it felt as though something was missing. Pursuing these feelings further would require a significant amount of time for personal reflection. At the same time, I was finalizing the candidacy proposal for my dissertation research. Ideas began swirling and mixing in my mind and wound up as a jumbled heap of confusing thoughts and questions.

This period of personal reflection and growth led into spring 2023 and my preparation for facilitating AOSA Basic Pedagogy Level II Teacher Education. While preparing to teach Level II for the first time, I contemplated which aspects of my PhD research—primarily focused on a critical examination of curriculum, repertoire, and pedagogical approaches—should be incorporated in the course content and how best to reflect the principles Hartmann (2022) had articulated. This process highlighted the importance of taking a step back and thoroughly assessing my understanding of Orff Schulwerk, music education, and the world. I also wondered if this opportunity for self-reflection would address my feelings of insecurity as an elementary music teacher and contribute to my further growth.

Considering Our Lens

It is essential that music educators understand the personal lens through which they make sense of the world and teach their students. The performance of self, as Goffman (1959) outlined, is “all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers” (p. 22). Multiple versions of self exist, depending on the various situations encountered. According to Turino (2008), it is imperative to recognize that “people typically shape their self-presentation to fit their goals in particular situations” (p. 102) and must be aware of the identities held in different spaces. He further proposed that social identity is formed through the development of particular habits, and that we share specific habits with social or cultural groups. Considering habits, which can be both stable as well as dynamic or changeable, provides a valuable perspective on ourselves, our identities, and our interactions with diverse cultural and social groups.

Our habits permeate all aspects of our lives. They can be situationally, culturally, and socially based.

Understanding that historical and cultural contexts influence every facet of our lives brings to mind Geertz’s (1973) insistence on providing thick, context-specific descriptions of culture rather than viewing culture as an isolated or independent power or social component. He specifically made the case for rich descriptions needed in ethnography and used the example of a wink to address the sociocultural aspect of identity: “You can’t wink ... without knowing what counts as winking or how, physically, to contract your eyelids” (p. 12). This also exemplifies the need to understand how we, as social beings, are connected to the various cultural communities in our lives. According to Geertz (1973), meaning is constructed socially through each of the culture groupings to which we associate.

Jorgensen (2021) addressed the multifarious nature of cultural identity, emphasizing that culture permeates every facet of our lives from our daily interactions to our social, political, artistic, and belief systems. When music teachers engage in critical self-reflection regarding their individual worldviews, they begin to contemplate the multiple lenses through which they engage with others. This purposeful reflection helps them unpack their own perspectives and embrace their students’ ethnocultural and musical identities in the Orff Schulwerk classroom.

A significant aspect of individual reflection is recognizing how our childhood experiences affect how we learn, grow, and teach students. As Lind and McKoy (2016) emphasized, “all of us are shaped by our lived experiences and cultural heritage, and we make explicit and implicit assumptions based on those lived experiences” (p. 28). As a white child living in a predominantly white community, I grew up with musical experiences passed down to me in authoritarian ways with the assumption of a shared set of lived experiences. As a result, making music with my students mirrored my own childhood experiences and I quickly discovered a disconnect between them and the experiences of many of my students. This tendency for educators to teach in a way that is reminiscent of how they were taught as children supports the importance of *self-reflexivity*—as many scholars have stressed—particularly reflecting on individual positionality in given situations (Gay, 2018; Hess, 2017; Howard, 2016; Howard, 2022; Jorgensen, 2021; Martin et al., 2017; 2017; Paris & Alim, 2017;

Table 1. Kim’s Current List of Key Principals of Orff Schulwerk

1. Orff Schulwerk explores and sustains the music, languages, cultures, and communities of our students and beyond. Students are actively involved and centered in this process.
2. Orff Schulwerk opens spaces for creativity and exploration in both safe and challenging ways.
3. Orff Schulwerk incorporates the voice, the body, and various instruments. These can all be used for rhythmic and melodic creation and replication as well as accompaniment.
4. Orff Schulwerk relies on aural, oral, and kinesthetic learning.
5. Orff Schulwerk can be adapted to meet the needs of students and learning contexts.
6. Orff Schulwerk is a place to embrace the mess and mistakes. It is about the process, whatever circuitous route that may be, not the product.
7. Orff Schulwerk does not need to exist in isolation. When connected to other approaches and, specifically, connected to the students and place in which it is taught, its potential and possibilities expand.
8. Orff Schulwerk is comprised of practitioners and scholars who can enrich the pedagogy by continually reflecting on best practices for facilitating the transfer of learning to our students. There are pieces and repertoire not meant to be arranged for our classrooms. We, as Orff Schulwerk educators, must always consider why and if we should be using the repertoire we have selected for our students.

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Singleton & Linton, 2006; Stemberge, 2020). As Jorgensen (2021) noted:

Self-reflexivity means opening myself up to the idea that I may be wrong, I may find a better way to think about and do this thing, and I need to seek constantly to interrogate my ideas and practices and search for an improved way of thinking and doing. (p. 215)

Self-reflection and examination of personal experiences and positions can help us, as educators, recognize that we all enter our classrooms with different experiences and varying musical understandings. We cannot simply replicate another person’s lesson. Instead, we must acknowledge that we each bring our unique set of experiences to our teaching (Acevedo et al., 2015, p. 31).

Contemplating the Way Ahead

Taking that step back to examine my perspective clarified what ideas and principles in the Orff Schulwerk approach were most dear to my heart. During that time I read Shamrock’s (2021) article, *A Consideration of Cross-Cultural Adaptation of the Schulwerk Pedagogical Model*, which included these core concepts:

1. Active participation by all learners, in group settings, with content analysis emerging from reflection upon experience;

2. Rhythm as the starting point, developed from the child’s natural desire for playful activity;
3. Primary learning experiences involving spoken language, singing, movement, and playing instruments;
4. Improvisation and invention of original material included in all activity areas;
5. Song and speech activities developed from traditional material. (p. 16)

Reflecting on my foundational beliefs and incorporating the perspectives of others who have written about Orff Schulwerk—while also drawing from my own personal and professional experiences—has made me realize that each of us develops our unique set of “fundamental” ideas about actively engaging in music making with children. This inspired me to create a list of key principles that helped me hone the ideas that currently hold the most significance for me (see Table 1). By reflecting on the musical and non-musical facets of my upbringing, and then considering the diverse perspectives my students bring into the classroom, I was able to ground the ideas and thoughts that emerged. Then, by focusing specifically on my list of key principles while facilitating the outcomes of Level II, I was able to demonstrate more fully to my students the principles Orff Schulwerk espouses.

My key principles will, no doubt, morph and grow and be adjusted as I continue the process of self-reflexivity. Presently, they keep me focused on my

goals to foster a spirit of continuous learning, personal growth, and accountability for mistakes or missteps I make along the way.

Conclusion

Looking back to the profound sense of inadequacy that surfaced as my friend and I conversed over coffee, I can see that self-reflexivity produced a cathartic release and contributed to my learning and personal growth. Unintentionally, I had been moving in too many directions at once, trying to learn about and engage in as many unique and interesting aspects of music education as possible. To grow as a music educator, it was necessary to acknowledge my limitations.

The relevance of Orff Schulwerk's significant aspects can vary in different contexts and individual

lived experiences. What inspires some will differ from what inspires others. I encourage you to contemplate the Orff Schulwerk principles that deeply resonate with your teaching philosophy and share your insights and reflections on this matter. Fostering a collaborative dialogue can lead to a richer understanding of these principles within the broader educational community. It is also worth considering the potential impact of self-reflexivity on your growth as a music teacher, specifically as it relates to interacting with diverse student populations and selecting repertoire that is relevant and meaningful to them. This reflexive practice can pave the way for more culturally sustaining and profound music education experiences, fostering both personal and professional growth. ■

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Creative Exploration: Improvisation and Composition with Primary Elementary Students

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KATHERINE REARDON

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ABSTRACT

Music composition is often less emphasized at the primary level, even though students of all ages naturally engage in various forms of it. In this article, the author explores the diverse opportunities she used in her classroom to engage her primary-age students in composition. Her observations revealed findings that align with prior research on children’s capabilities in composition and improvisation.

By Katherine Reardon

In the realm of music education, creativity knows no age bounds. The Orff Schulwerk approach, which includes progression from improvisation to composition, offers an ideal framework for nurturing student development through musical play. The approach, in which improvisation is recognized as a form of musical play, allows children of various ages to engage in improvisational activities. Through these musical play experiences, children undergo significant growth. Play empowers students to take control and assume ownership of their learning and musicality (Guilbault, 2004). Ideally, students should spend their initial years of music education exploring, experimenting, and playing with the elements of music—essentially following the Orff Schulwerk approach. This concept parallels the science behind language development, which has found that children are exposed to a language for three to five years before they are able to read and write (Scott, 2004). Growth is a process that requires time and exploration.

Observations of children experimenting with music reveal that primary-age children create music pieces characterized by form and shape, as opposed to producing random sounds. These children engage in musical “games” that introduce patterns and structure to their compositions (Scott, 2004, p. 24). Allowing children the freedom to create and explore music comes with an element of controlled chaos (Shaw, 2015). Over time, however, these explorations and chaotic sounds lead to

the growth of student compositions. Solomon (2000) highlighted Keetman’s identification of three key areas that help transform child exploration and improvisation into composition: melodies, accompaniments, and the use of rhythmic building blocks to construct their own music.

Composing with Primary Students

I have engaged my intermediate elementary students with composition projects, although such endeavors have been less frequent with my kindergarten and first-grade students. I wanted to observe the growth and creative processes of primary-age students within the Orff Schulwerk approach, discerning whether their approach to music creation primarily involves imitation or spontaneous expression. Additionally, I sought to investigate any inherent structure or form in their musical compositions and determine the level of support young students require to improvise and compose music successfully.

I created a project, *Listen to Our World*, to explore these ideas and test my estimations about play, improvisation, and how they inform composition in early primary music education. To focus the project, I set clear definitions for improvisation (spontaneously created music) and for composition (music that students can come back to and adjust into a formal creation). Four classes of first-grade students participated in the one-week project in spring 2023, which concluded with a brief in-class presentation of their compositions for their teachers.

The students followed a weekly rotation schedule, which meant they spent one week in each related arts class—art, music, PE, and STEM—before rotating through the other three related arts classes. Although this schedule posed challenges for students’ information retention, it allowed for in-depth projects. We centered our composition work around the children’s book, *Listen to Our World*, by Bill Martin Jr. and Michael Sampson, illustrated by Caldecott Honor artist Melissa Sweet. The book’s captivating illustrations offered a global perspective by showcasing various animal habitats from around the world (Martin & Sampson, 2016).

The project was integrated into the first-grade science curriculum, aligned with a unit about understanding the functions of animals’ physical characteristics. During this unit, students explored concepts such as the purpose of wings for flying and the role of long, pointy teeth in eating meat. Additionally,

Determining an order and form for free movement was challenging for first-grade students; through this I learned primary students struggle with conceptualizing a story out of song that is not elemental.

they were learning about the rotation and reflection of two-dimensional objects. This exploration led me to the art of tessellations, mathematically designed images that can be reflected, rotated, and assembled into an endlessly repeating pattern. These images presented a fantastic opportunity to discuss the interconnectedness of nature in a hands-on, musical, and artistic way.

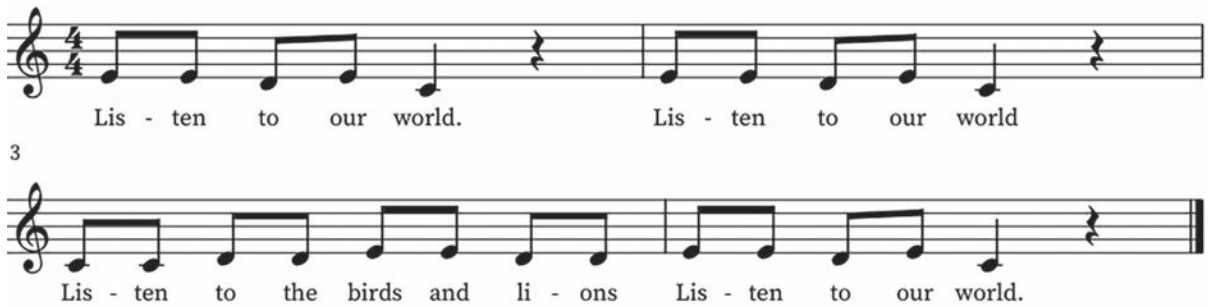
Procedures and Timeline

The project spanned a week-long unit with each class. On the first day, I introduced the book and encouraged students to experiment with creative movement. The following day, students—inspired by listening and responding to a musical piece—created movement vocabulary and then used it to craft their own compositions. On the third day, students used elemental building blocks to write their own body percussion compositions. The fourth day included an arts integration project about tessellations, during which students developed musical compositions inspired by their tessellation art projects. If the rotation extended to a fifth day, it entailed further explorations of movement that remained connected to the prior day’s art project. Following are observations of each day of this week-long unit detailing the unique experiences and creative endeavors that unfolded throughout our journey.

Day 1: Introduce the Project

On the first day of each rotation, students were introduced to *Listen to Our World* along with its central song, which I created for classroom use. The song, following an elemental form of *aaba*, featured the lyrics “Listen to our world, listen to our world, listen to the birds and lions, listen to our world” (see Figure 1, p. 36). These lyrics were inspired by the book’s text and the various animals depicted within. I displayed the book’s illustrations as giant pictures within a Google slide, ensuring all students could see the artwork clearly. As we progressed through the book, students sang the song following the introduction of each new animal and engaged in vocal improvisation by mimicking each animal’s sounds. To enrich our

Figure 1. Song Notation



exploration, each class was assigned three animals from the book and encouraged to share their insights and descriptive words about them. These were recorded on chart paper and saved for the next day.

Day 2: Movement and Improvisation

To start Day 2, we reviewed each class’s animal sounds chart from the day before, then students were given pieces from *The Goat Rodeo Sessions* musical collaboration featuring Chris Thile, Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer, and Stuart Duncan. I selected this music for several reasons: its resemblance to the music

commonly heard in our home state of Kentucky, its use of familiar instruments, the absence of lyrics, and the presence of contrasting musical sections. Titles of the songs were not revealed to students, only instructions that they would be adding movements specific to their animals on our chart.

Determining an order and form for free movement was challenging for first-grade students; through this I learned primary students struggle with conceptualizing a story out of song that is not elemental. During this activity, three distinct types of movement in the classroom emerged:

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1. The first group of students engaged in creative movement, applying ideas they heard in the music to their physical expression.
2. The second group included students who moved as if they were the chosen animal, going for a literal interpretation of the animal rather than interpreting the music.
3. The third group of students did not demonstrate movement that connected to the animal or the music; these students were either off-task or had difficulty focusing on the task at hand.

To observe what naturally occurred during this lesson, I did not interfere with their exploration that day. The majority of students fell into the second group.

We added instruments using two different approaches to the creative movement and the sound words they had chosen the day before. Students in all classes started the lesson by listening to music while adding movements based on their previously connected words. Then they decided which instruments would best complement each movement idea.

In some classes, we concluded the lesson by having the entire class play instruments in the order they collectively decided upon. Although this approach might not have been the most open-ended or exploratory, it served as a valuable option for classes that needed the structure of limited choices and the opportunity for music making in a large group.

For my high-achieving classes, I wrote the movement words the class chose collectively on index cards. The students were then organized into small groups, with each group receiving an index card with one word. Their task was to express that word using musical

instruments. For example, words for kangaroo included “jump,” “fast,” “strong,” and “bouncy.” Their creative choices stunned me. Some groups even added their own lyrics, something that did not occur to me when I formed the project’s original parameters. Their lyrics often matched the theme, adhered to elemental and repetitive patterns, and provided a small window into their creative minds, revealing what they considered musically and thematically significant. Several groups created ostinato patterns. These patterns sometimes contained the same notes with a repeated rhythm. Other times they consisted of random notes played in a repeated rhythm, reminiscent of bebop jazz. The patterns set certain groups apart from those who simply played random notes without a steady beat, creating soundscapes. My students’ creativity showed significant, noticeable growth after just two days of increased musical exploration and freedom of choice.

Day 3: Composition Through Iconic Notation

On Day 3, we began with a more structured approach, focusing on iconic notation. To do this, I selected six words related to various elements of the animals, the sounds they made, and their habitats. For example, the vocabulary selected for the Gila monster, a venomous lizard native to the desert regions of North America, encompassed terms like “Gila monster,” “desert,” “tall cactus,” “long tongue,” and “hiss.” The lesson started with our clapping and vocalizing the words together. Afterward, to offer more opportunity to make individual choices, I encouraged students to independently select four words. We practiced articulating and clapping the selected words in the order each student chose.

Figure 2. Beat Strip



Figure 3. Fish Tessellation



Figure 4. Bamboo Tessellation



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I made the composition process into a mixer game. At the start of the game, students each pulled one word out of a box. Several beat strips (long pieces of paper with a $\frac{4}{4}$ side and a $\frac{3}{4}$ side, with the $\frac{4}{4}$ side having four hearts representing four beats in a measure) were posted throughout the room (see Figure 2, p. 37). Students walked around the room singing our *Listen to Our World* song; when the music stopped, they scampered to the closest beat strip. Each strip displayed just four hearts, one per student at each strip. We then went around the room and the students performed the rhythm they created in their group. Each time the game repeated, students ended up in a new group with a totally different rhythm, which exposed them to repetition, rhythm with a steady beat, and the support of several classmates of varying abilities, naturally creating leaders and helpers in each group every time the process repeated. The game progressed quickly, allowing students to be in a number of groups and practice multiple times.

Day 4: Visual Arts Integration

The art and movement day began with a short mini lesson on M. C. Escher, a Dutch printmaker who made art with tessellations informed by architectural

patterns (Sooke, 2015). I invited students to move their bodies in a way that represented the tessellations displayed on the smart board. This grade level had not previously experienced art as inspiration for movement in our classroom; the tessellations presented a new way for them to play with music and grow as creators and musicians (see Figures 3 and 4).

Experimenting with sound and instruments can inspire students to embrace their self-expression and encourage them to love the arts throughout their lives (Shaw, 2015). Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the act of improvisation and making up new musical ideas can reveal a unique part of ourselves, potentially making students feel vulnerable in this setting (Edmund & Keller, 2020). The element of visual art introduced a unique aspect to my students' experiences, perhaps mitigating some of the vulnerability associated with creative expression.

Next, students created a tessellated image. Each class received a template consisting of a tessellated pattern and lots of little pieces of paper to glue, allowing them to generate textured and patterned effects. The only instruction I gave was to not glue over the edge of the template. Students found it puzzling,

initially, to engage in art activities during music class. Their enthusiasm grew, however, as they realized they could craft their own unique piece of art and witness its incorporation into the class project. The creations resembled the gorgeous patterned mosaics like those in the walls and floors of ancient buildings. The next step was to use the art as inspiration for musical expression. Some students found inspiration in the order of the colors, patterns, and shapes; most students were inspired by the essence of the animal created, similar to my findings from Day 2 when they responded to music with animal motions (see Figures 5 and 6).

Day 5: Integrating Art with Text

On the final day, students continued to work with the tessellation art they had created the day before. This time the composition project focus was movement with props. I read a passage about an animal from the book and instructed students to embody that animal by drawing inspiration from the tessellations. They were organized into entirely new groups, and each group was assigned a different prop from a selection that included paper plates, pool noodles, scarves, and ribbons. These served as tools to facilitate exploration and additional inspiration, helping my young students overcome any perceived awkwardness in their movements.

Outcomes

Each method of composition had its strengths and weaknesses in the music classroom. I noted where students were successful, where they had manageable challenges, and where they faced more significant difficulties with lessons. In each rotation, students engaged in the creation of three main compositions, with the fourth composition exclusively undertaken by classes with a full five-day rotation. These projects were:

- movement composition;
- iconic notation compositions through building blocks; and
- music or movement inspired by visual art.

Students were most successful with the building-block style of iconic notation, likely due to its familiarity. They were most excited to create music from their art, which was a huge success. This was something new and different that captured their many interests.

Students were excited to create their own music. Additionally, I was impressed with their high level

Figure 5. Penguin Tessellation



Figure 6. Feather Tessellation



of collaboration. Although the potential for student disagreements over creative directions caused some anxiety initially, most were able to come to a compromise with their peers, whereas some needed adult intervention to talk through the process of compromising. If the problem involved choosing between two ideas or two instruments, my solution was to have the arguing parties play “Rock, Paper, Scissors.” This tool, as silly as it sounds, worked well for resolving the little conflicts that arose.

Significance

Students of all ages are composers.

Composition does not have to be a grand gesture of musical greatness. Children can simply decide whether they think an elephant trunk should be represented with the sound of a rain stick or a vibraslap. They can determine when to use slow movement while tiptoeing or fast movement while jumping around the room. Composition is about students making their own choices, and improvisation is the exploratory nature of how they decide to make those choices. Students grow through their musical choices, as people and as musicians.

Students have a natural desire for creative expression.

In their developmental journey, children are first immersed in the sounds and cultural elements around them. They absorb these experiences then progress to copying what they hear—not always correctly—before eventually reaching a stage where they can reproduce sounds accurately. Previous studies (e.g., Scott, 2004) suggested that children who converse with adults who have a large lexicon and use proper grammar and accurate pronunciation go on to develop “better language skills” (p. 21). This principle applies

to music as well. Students hear the world around them and apply those sounds, words, and musical elements to their own lives. Their musical lexicon grows as they hear new sounds and learn new ideas for musical expression.

Conclusion

The first time I instructed a group of first-grade students to select a set of instruments and compose a piece of music, I had reservations about their ability to create a new musical composition and was concerned they might end up simply producing a bunch of noise. Instead, their musical thoughtfulness and creativity astounded me. They collaborated and listened to each other, though they needed guidance on occasion to overcome typical first-grade frazzles.

Through this experience, I learned to let go of some teacher anxiety about control, perfectionism, and my personal vision and let my students lead me on their journey. Much of my anxiety stemmed from worrying that they would not produce what I considered to be an adequate project. It was sheer pleasure watching them take their creations in surprising and joyful directions. Their growth throughout this process was enlightening and inspiring for me and helped me evolve as a teacher. ■

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What Makes a Good Teacher Great? The Nature of Expertise in General Music Instruction

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JEAN HERSEY is the founder of the AOSA Teacher Education Levels program at VanderCook College of Music in Chicago, Illinois, where she instructed Level I Basic Pedagogy, Curriculum and Design, and Introduction to Orff Schulwerk from 2004 to 2021. She has presented at Orff and Kodály workshops at local, regional, and national levels, and has worked with area school districts to develop general music curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Jean teaches Grades 5 and 6 at Deer Path Middle School in Lake Forest, Illinois.

ABSTRACT

What makes a good teacher great? In this article, the author answers this question by sharing results of a multiple instrumental case study on master teachers' methods and motivations. The practices of 10 AOSA teacher educators were examined to discover similarities in lesson planning and instruction. Through the analysis of multiple videotaped lessons and recorded interviews, 17 themes were identified in the areas of 21st century skills, creativity, critical thinking, musicianship, and self-expression.

By Jean Hersey

Orff Schulwerk practitioners have likely discovered the positive impact of the Schulwerk on their teaching. For me, it was a life-changing experience when I founded an AOSA Teacher Education Levels program in which I taught Level I for 17 years. I loved seeing my teacher-students inspired by the approach. Growing through their educational experiences, they felt rejuvenated and excited to go back to the classroom to try everything they had learned. When it came time to pick a topic for my doctoral dissertation in educational leadership, though, I still had questions. What does growth look like for great general music teachers? How do we foster an environment where students can grow musically and personally, and how does Orff Schulwerk help us with this? Additionally, how can we, as Orff Schulwerk practitioners, grow by studying the beliefs and habits of experts in our approach?

In all areas of education, expert teachers provide a model for other teachers to follow (Gün, 2014; Yazdanmehr et al., 2016), but determining what makes a teacher an expert is a difficult task. Results of studies on the nature of expertise in areas outside of music education indicate that knowledge and the application of knowledge determine expertise (Yazdanmehr et al., 2016). However, some scholarly reports on music teacher expertise are not as clear (i.e., Duke & Simmons, 2006; Gün, 2014; Parkes & Wexler, 2012; Yazdanmehr et al., 2016).

Even less is known about elementary general music teacher expertise. Thus, questions are left unanswered when considering what growth means when one considers hiring, retention, teacher evaluation procedures, and teacher leadership roles. Accordingly, I developed a case study to advance knowledge in the area of general music teacher expertise to improve instruction and student learning. The following research questions guided the study:

- 1) What are common practices exhibited by expert Orff Schulwerk teachers in the general music classroom?
- 2) How do expert Orff Schulwerk teachers foster creativity, critical thinking skills, and self-expression in elementary students?

- 3) What kind of verbal, non-verbal, musical, and physical cues do Orff Schulwerk teachers provide for students that lead to creative music making?

Methodology

The study initially consisted of a bounded system of 10 instrumental case studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Zadrozny et al., 2016), yet only eight participants completed all procedures. All participants were selected from the approved Orff Schulwerk Teacher Educator list (American Orff Schulwerk Association, n.d.) and were actively teaching in music classrooms at the time. These participants represented various regions of the country (i.e., West, Southwest, Midwest, Northeast, and Southeast) and many types of school communities

Table 1. Participants and Lessons

Participant	Featured Grade Level	Lesson Objective(s)	Featured Element(s) of the Schulwerk	Featured 21st Century Learning Skill(s)
Anne (Case 1)	Second Grade	Melodic ear training, using voice and barred instruments	Imitation Exploration Visualization	Critical Thinking Collaboration
Brandon (Case 2)	Fourth Grade	Melodic and rhythmic discovery of a piece using voice, recorder, and barred instruments	Imitation Exploration	Collaboration Creativity Critical Thinking Communication
Catherine (Case 3)	Fourth Grade	Creative movement inspired by art	Exploration Creation	Creativity Collaboration Communication Critical Thinking
Elizabeth (Case 5)	Second Grade	Rhythm-performing, reading, composing, using speech, singing, movement	Imitation Exploration Visualization	Critical Thinking Collaboration
Faith (Case 6)	Fourth Grade	Creative movement inspired by opposites/ Creative music inspired by movement	Exploration Creation Improvisation	Creativity Collaboration Communication Critical Thinking
Grace (Case 7)	First Grade	Rhythm-reading, performing, improvising, composing, using speech, singing, movement, barred instruments	Imitation Exploration Improvisation Visualization	Critical Thinking Collaboration
Ivy (Case 9)	Fifth Grade	Functional Harmony – identifying I-V aurally and visually, performing vocally and on instruments	Imitation Exploration Visualization	Critical Thinking Creativity Collaboration
Jack (Case 10)	Third Grade	Visualization of Sol-Mi-La performing vocally and on barred instruments	Imitation Visualization	Critical Thinking

SOURCE: CREATED BY JEAN HERSHEY.

(i.e., urban, suburban, rural, private, public, Title 1). Pseudonyms were used to provide anonymity.

Lessons took place in Grades 1 through 5 on a variety of topics relevant to the general music curriculum (see Table 1, p. 43). Three interviews, a questionnaire on participants' demographics, and anywhere from one to four videotaped lessons (along with some written plans) were submitted, which provided ample opportunity to triangulate data to address credibility (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Data analysis resulted in 17 themes relevant to Orff Schulwerk music teacher expertise. Initial codes and categories were derived after analyzing the data several times, after which overarching themes emerged. Following are findings related to the first research question.

Themes – Common Practices of Expert Orff Schulwerk Teachers

Orff Schulwerk Process

The phrase “Orff Schulwerk process” was mentioned by every participant as critical to good teaching and was used to describe scaffolding of instruction to ensure student success. All participants broke down skills and concepts to their simplest forms, aligned them sequentially, and presented them in ways that were playful or childlike, which Beegle & Bond (2016) described as hallmarks of good teaching. By listening to and observing students' music making, participants determined when they were ready for the next step. Additionally, Jack and Ivy used specific probing questions to encourage students to discover knowledge rather than simply revealing it to them. When asked how his lesson reflected Orff Schulwerk, Jack replied,

[The lesson] was very playful, and the process teaching of it was the best, the most essential part of it, just a slow development from simple to complex. And just very slowly pulling back a veil of mystery to being aware, cognitively aware, for the student is the other hallmark of the Schulwerk, I think. (Jack, personal communication, May 6, 2019)

Exploration

Exploration is one of the four elements of Orff Schulwerk (Göktürk, 2012; Shamrock, 1986). It was isolated as a theme in the current study, given its prevalence in the observed lessons and the value ascribed to it by the participants. Considerable time is allotted in the Orff Schulwerk lesson to a new concept or small amount of new musical material,

which is manipulated and rearranged as the child wishes without judgment. This exploration can be an end unto itself and does not always lead to another stage, such as improvisation or visualization. Although exploration can manifest in a variety of ways, playfulness, movement, and multimodal activities were the most prevalent in the observed lessons.

Playfulness

“Games are what kids are always drawn to. Even if you call something a game. It’s just their mindset” (Anne, personal communication, May 4, 2019). Playfulness is what makes difficult musical concepts accessible to children. In many of the lessons, the emphasis was on imagination, but other types of play were also featured (e.g., games and competitive play). For example, Ivy’s Grade 5 students pretended they were royalty to create a dance in the style of the Renaissance music they were learning. As the students danced, they internalized the music they would soon learn to play on recorder.

Movement

Orff Schulwerk was originally a music and movement education approach (Beegle & Bond, 2016; Orff, 1963), and movement was emphasized in every lesson I observed. This was exemplified by movement lesson sequences for Catherine and Faith that could have been an end unto themselves. For instance, Catherine used a recording of “Norwegian Song *Gjeite – Lok*” from *Music for Children*, Volume IV (Keetman, 1976) for the students to perform, but only after they had created their entire dance, as the music influenced the way in which the dance was performed. Additionally, Faith partnered dancers with musicians and asked the musicians to interpret the dance through sound using unpitched percussion instruments. This was a reversal of the more common order in which music influences dance (i.e., a choreographer creating a dance for a specific piece of music).

Multimodal Activities

In every lesson, except those that were strictly movement-based, students were asked to perform many different activities, often simultaneously, such as sing/play, sing/move, move/play, speak/read, or read/play. Encouraging students to learn through multiple modalities increases engagement and learning retention (Harwood & Marsh, 2012). Even children in first grade can sing and move or sing and play. This was evident in Grace’s lessons, where she started with rhythmic

speech, added movement, and then added singing and instruments as students demonstrated competency.

Collaboration

Students in the current study also worked together to create, discover, practice, or provide feedback in most lessons. Together, they identified problems and solutions and ways to create original material. Pair and small group work are ubiquitous in Orff Schulwerk classrooms, allowing students to explore new material in a safe way before they are ready to take sole ownership (Shieh & Allsup, 2016). As such, the collaborative activities built trust and teamwork, which Brandon found had a greater impact on students in the music classroom itself:

Collaboration is something that I try to incorporate very often in my lessons for a lot of reasons.... I find it a very discrete skill that they have to develop to be able to work face to face with another person that may or may not disagree with them or have the same ideas that they do. (Brandon, personal communication, April 1, 2019)

Post-Experiential Visualization

The idea students should experience music aurally before seeing a visual representation was not universally stated by all participants, but those who did mention it felt strongly about visual representations coming after other musical experiences. As Shamrock (1986) noted, literacy is a means, not an end. The participants expressed this in two ways: 1) students need prior experiences as context for visualization, and 2) it is a lower priority for them in the scheme of elementary music education. Brandon mentioned visualization “came last;” Elizabeth said it was “the last thing I spend time on;” and Faith said,

I wouldn't say literacy is my major goal, honestly. Especially considering I have them 30 hours in a year. I want them to feel like a competent musician who creates their own music and owns their music and is familiar with the staff and familiar with those rhythms. I am much more concerned about their feeling as a musician. (Faith, personal communication, March 31, 2019)



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In direct contrast to participants who did not prioritize literacy as much, Grace, whose students were the youngest, incorporated literacy throughout each lesson.

Pacing

Pacing is important to any lesson in any subject, but it seems to have a special significance to the participants in this study. It involves the distribution of instruction over time and also determines how instruction is delivered. Participants planned out the spiraling of instruction over multiple lessons to ensure student success. The younger the student, the more activities or changes within an activity were needed for student engagement (e.g., standing up or trying the activity with a partner). As an example, Faith expressed, “The number of minutes of their age is how long you spend on any activity. I really do think I follow that pretty closely” (personal communication, March 31, 2019). In each lesson in the study, students’ physical positions shifted multiple times, even if the activity or topic did

not. This helped maintain student engagement in the concept or skill being taught.

Teacher as Model

Among many scholars, Beegle and Bond (2016) and Shamrock (1986) spoke to the importance of the teacher as both model and facilitator in Orff Schulwerk. Participants viewed themselves as models not only for music making, but also for how they wanted students to communicate, collaborate, think critically, and support each other’s ideas. Jack referenced how he always modeled expected behaviors for his students:

I’m, in that situation, modeling what ... behaviors and interactions look like when a healthy partnership is formed and carried out over the course of an activity to an aesthetic and artistic end. To try to model the whole experience as an artistic and aesthetic experience. (Jack, personal communication, May 6, 2019)

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Student Generated Input and Critical Feedback

Considering that Orff Schulwerk classes are active, with all students engaged in music making, decision making, and creating, they are thus expected to give their input and question results; communication requires musical sharing and critical feedback (Beegle and Bond, 2016). An example of this was Grace's distribution of visual manipulatives for first-grade students to compose and share their own rhythmic patterns. Other participants encouraged students to make suggestions about form, timbre choices, dynamics, and other musical elements. Additionally, in response to a question on critical thinking, Faith asserted,

One of my colleagues always got annoyed when he had to sub my class, because the kids would always raise their hands and say, "I think maybe we should play the second phrase louder because we need to have some more contrast." He would get so irritated and say, "I'm the teacher in there." But it's not really what I am teaching them. I let them do that all the time. (Faith, personal communication, March 31, 2019)

Participants actively practiced how to provide peer critiques. This was exemplified by Brandon, Elizabeth, and Jack's adaptations of the Harvard protocol for eliciting feedback from students with sentence starters such as *I noticed*, *I valued*, *I wondered* (Harvard Graduate School of Education, 2015). Catherine cued students to reflect and provide feedback to peers' performances. Harry also encouraged students to self-reflect. Consider, for example, Harry's statement regarding students sharing and receiving peer feedback when saying, "That's not what we meant!" He responded: "Yes, but that is what your audience perceived."

Conclusion

The concept of growth contributes to what it means to be an expert Orff Schulwerk teacher, and this was particularly underscored in the current study. The approach attracts music teachers who appreciate "stimulating the musical imagination" (Beegle & Bond, 2016, p. 42). As noted, each expert participant was on the AOSA Approved Teacher Educator List (American Orff Schulwerk Association, n.d.). This demonstrated

Table 2. Questions to Consider

- Are you breaking down your lessons into bite-sized, sequential chunks? (Process)
- Are you providing your students opportunities to manipulate new material without judgment? (Exploration)
- Are students allowed to create something of their own with the material? (Student-Generated Input)
- Are students working with others to further understanding? (Collaboration)
- Are you framing your lessons (or parts of your lessons) as games or including imaginative playacting? (Playfulness)
- Are you providing enough opportunities for movement? (Movement)
- Can students do two things at once, such as sing/play, move/play? (Multi-Modal)
- How quickly are you moving through your lesson plans? Are you providing enough time and enough variety of experiences to ensure student understanding? (Pacing)
- Are you modeling your desired outcomes as well as behaviors? (Teacher as Model)
- When do you visualize the concept you are teaching? (Visualization/Literacy)

SOURCE: CREATED BY JEAN HERSHEY.

that they found it important to grow in our profession in order to enable their students to grow musically as well.

General music teachers looking to grow in order to develop the qualities of an expert Orff Schulwerk teacher might first consider completing AOSA Teacher Education Levels Courses. The experiential model provides teachers the means to understand how children learn and how to create appropriate lessons for students. As noted, the approach provides opportunities not only to improve instruction, but also to grow as a person (Beegle & Bond, 2016). In addition to AOSA Teacher Education, reflecting on the results of this study and incorporating the practices identified as most valuable by participants might be helpful in developing expertise in Orff Schulwerk. Incisive questions (see Table 2) can help teachers reflect on their own instructional practices, but they are only a beginning. Making a habit of examining our teaching through the lens of 21st century learning—creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking—while refining our practice through growth, will soon lead us to discover how much more growth our students can achieve as well. ■

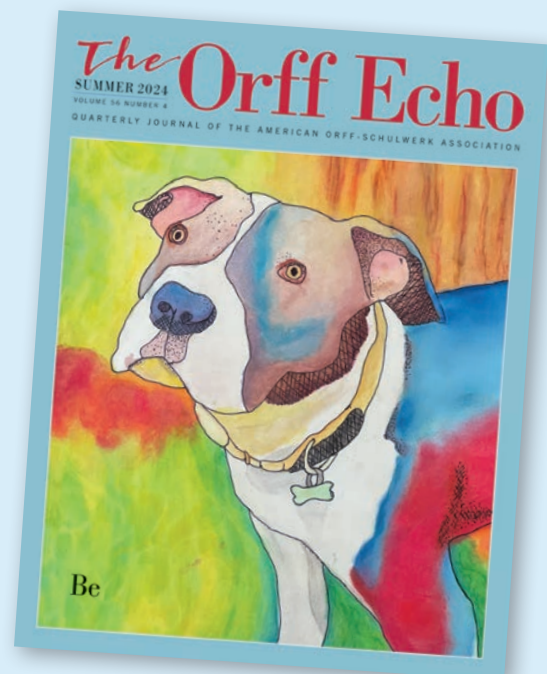
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Be

“Be.” Much of our conversation about teaching music and being music educators revolves around doing. But what if we take some space to think about simply being? Look to the Summer 2024 issue, “Be,” to explore themes of mindfulness, cultural responsiveness, radical being, silliness, imperfection, frameworks for student expression, and “Self as Instrument.”



CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW

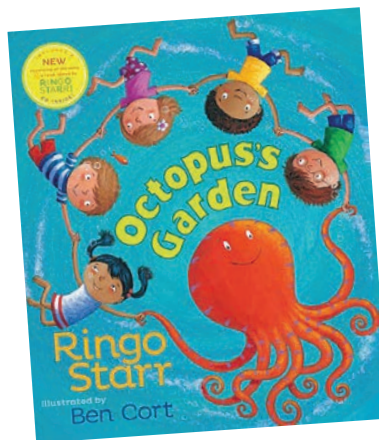
Reviewed by **Spencer C. Thornton**

Octopus's Garden

Written by Ringo Starr

Illustrated by Ben Cort

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division, 2013



The wonderful world of imagination is a child's very first playground. In a colorful and playful illustration of the Beatles song, Ben Cort's picture book, *The Octopus's Garden*, paints a vibrant portrait exploring curiosity and an imaginative inner world that only we, and those we invite, can experience.

The book begins with a little boy lying on the floor, gazing at his goldfish with eyes full of mystical wonder, pondering how it would be to live under the sea in the shade of an octopus's garden. He proceeds, "I'd ask my friends to come and see an octopus's garden with me." From here, children enter the aquarium, viewing beautiful coral reefs and various sea creatures, both big and small, dashing through the blue aquatic environment on the backs of smiling sea turtles. They all play together in jubilant harmony, participating in singing games and dancing, inspired by their newfound friendships. As the story concludes, the little boy expresses a sense of both security and independence, seemingly due to the protection of the sea animals and the freedom to be guided by his ideas without the influence of adults.

I believe this book would be most effective with students in kindergarten through Grade 2. Its welcoming text, vibrant colors, and diverse characters convey love, peace, music, and friendship. Orff Schulwerk-inspired teachers can use this book to encourage students to create a

unique storyline built around their own imaginative ventures or add additional ideas and narrative to the original story. Their newly composed text could follow the song's original rhythm/melody or feature completely new music, with students transforming the new text into their own song. For instance, this process might start with an invitation to students to create a motif on a barred instrument or a rhythmic pattern on a djembe drum or to sing an improvised melody. Depending on how well your students understand musical form, they could sing their created melody phrase by phrase, using selected shapes or symbols to write its form on dry-erase boards, and then proceed to add lyrics or an instrumental arrangement. Alternatively, have students form three groups—one to narrate the story, one to create and perform movements, and one to perform a vocal and instrumental arrangement the class composed. You will find many potential paths through which students can experience the process of bringing the story to life as a cumulative musical process.

The Octopus's Garden can be a treasure among the other music-related literary works in your classroom. Enjoyment of this well-meshed blend of imaginative text, illustrations, and music making awaits! ■

SPENCER C. THORNTON is a music educator at Park View Elementary School in Portsmouth, Virginia, where he teaches kindergarten through Grade 6 general music, elementary chorus, and a Grade 4 through 6 Orff Schulwerk ensemble. Spencer is a doctoral student at the University of St. Thomas and holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees in Music Education from Norfolk State University. He has completed AOSA Teacher Education Level I, is certified in Kodály, Feierabend, and Smithsonian Folkways World Music Pedagogy, and holds Level I certification in SongWorks.

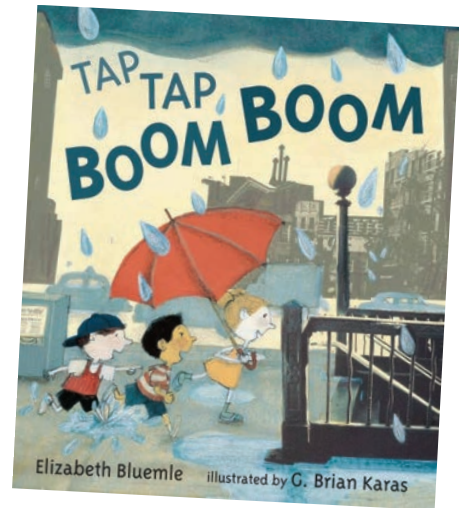
Reviewed by Kateri Miller

Tap Tap Boom Boom

Written by Elizabeth Bluemle

Illustrated by G. Brian Karas

Candlewick Press, 2014



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The book *Tap Tap Boom Boom* by Elizabeth Bluemle, illustrated by G. Brian Karas, begins just as a thunderstorm might begin, quietly, and then crescendos to a loud cacophony of sound. Where do you go during a thunderstorm in an urban neighborhood? The subway, of course! Friends, neighbors, strangers, young, old, tall, short—everybody flees to the dry shelter of the subway. In words and drawings, the author and illustrator evoke the sense that everyone helps each other underground and they all can have fun, even during a very wet and loud thunderstorm.

As the story begins, people on the streets feel a few drops of rain (tap **tap**); then they feel the water on their feet (tap **tap**). Wind whirls, thunder rolls, umbrellas open, and everyone hurries to a more secure shelter (tap **tap tap tap boom boom**). As they squeeze below, shorter children wonder about whose knees they are seeing. People and dogs shake off water, and confusion ensues with phrases like “Hey, hey! Watch spray!”

The words of the title appear interspersed before and after what is happening throughout the book. Every time the word “tap” appears, it always has a second “**tap**” in bold print. Tap **Tap Tap Tap Boom Boom**. As the storm crescendos, the size of the text increases, guiding readers to get louder as they progress. The rhythmic flow of the book assists the reader with shorter, more

frantic sound bites as the storm intensifies. The “tap” and “boom” text becomes less frequent when the scene is underground, and sharing is highlighted.

With a title like *Tap Tap Boom Boom*, I expected the book to be easy to read. I found, however, that the short, two-word lines can be challenging the first time through. It was not until I read the book a second time, with shorter sound bites, that I found a better cadence. The rhythmic flow, although better in shorter, two-word phrases, is still tricky at times. Some of the book's rhymes are perfect and others a stretch. After reading it several times, it became easier and more ideas on how to use it in the Orff Schulwerk-inspired classroom surfaced.

The easiest way to add to the book is, of course, to assign unpitched percussion to the taps and booms. Be careful, however, because the use of “tap tap boom boom” is unpredictable. For example, there might be four taps and two booms, or two taps, or three booms. Perhaps an easy solution is to read the story to students, and then have them echo the patterns of the text with their unpitched instruments. Considering the author always holds the second tap, I suggest guiding students to play their instruments more musically. Adding accents is a great way to start doing this.

Another option is to create a short “tap” and “boom” ostinato to perform at the end of each page, regardless of how the author has included the words. Performing the ostinato with body

percussion or unpitched percussion, and working with the concepts of crescendo and tempo, would make reading the book even more engaging and meaningful.

Many phrases and images within the book focus on kindness from strangers and bonding with neighbors. For example, a lady gives a child an umbrella because he does not have one, and two friends smile under one umbrella. The Orff Schulwerk-inspired teacher could extract additional short phrases from the story and assign them to different groups. Students can add instruments or movement to dramatize the phrases. The illustrations also show more phrases that could be

created. For example, someone is sharing a pizza and others are listening to a person making music. The story concludes the whole experience with—what else?—a rainbow, or as noted at the very end of the book, a “surprise in the sky.” I have no doubt that *Tap Tap Boom Boom* will also be a happy surprise in your classroom! ■

KATERI (KATE) MILLER, PHD is assistant professor of music education at Minot State University in North Dakota. She has over 23 years of experience teaching music to children and adults. Kate has completed AOSA Teacher Education Levels I–III, is certified in Kodály, and has training in Dalcroze Eurhythmics. She has presented at several state MEAs and AOSA chapters.

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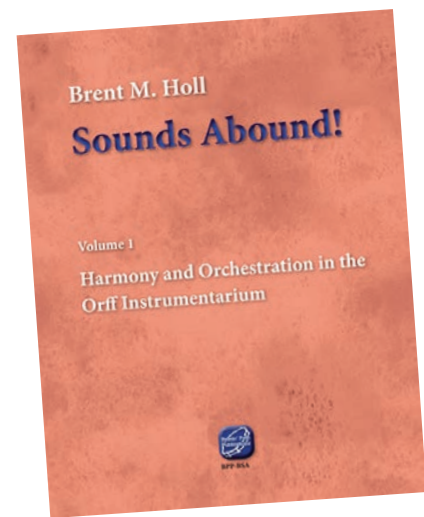
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Reviewed by Christine Ballenger

Sounds Abound! Volume I – Harmony and Orchestration in the Orff Instrumentarium

By Brent Holl

Beatin' Path Publications, 2023



52

Brent Holl's newest publication, *Sounds Abound! Volume 1 – Harmony and Orchestration in the Orff Instrumentarium*, is a masterclass in creating elemental, child-friendly, sequenced arrangements rooted in the Orff Schulwerk approach as created by Orff and Keetman, but also with the expansions and interpretations of Orff Schulwerk that Jos Wuytack shared during his time teaching in Memphis.

Holl's book begins with a brief overview of the history of Orff Schulwerk in general. He then introduces his own history with Orff Schulwerk and those he learned from, and describes his teaching career with both children and adults. The focus in this book, on harmony and accompaniment, comes directly out of the historical beginnings of Orff Schulwerk, where the women of the Güntherschule worked to accompany their own dances and songs.

Sounds Abound! is organized by increasing the complexity of harmonic accompaniments. "Simple Tonic," "The Simple Bordun," "The Moving Bordun," "Dominant Harmony," "The Blues," and "Beyond Primary Triads" are the main section titles. Each section defines a type of harmonic accompaniment, and then offers examples illustrating the accompaniment type within an arrangement of varying levels. In addition to the focus on harmonic accompaniments, Holl also defines and utilizes various other types of

accompaniment techniques found in the Orff Schulwerk approach, demonstrating increasingly complex options depending on the knowledge and level of the students with whom the teacher is working.

One particularly enjoyable accompaniment technique used is the hambone pattern, described in some detail, allowing readers to learn and then utilize hambone patterns from different regions—specifically "North Carolina style," "South Carolina style," and a variation of the African American hambone style known as "Patting Juba." Of note, Holl often shares arrangements of songs and tunes from Appalachia. He draws on those American musical traditions, giving information on how to incorporate some "old time" styles and instruments as well, living out the direction Orff gave in 1962 during the Orff Institute's first summer course: "The real Orff-Schulwerk is not playing out of books. The real Orff-Schulwerk is doing your own things in the local situation" (p. 4).

Although the title of this resource might make readers think the material included is for older elementary and middle school students where the focus is on functional harmony-related material, Holl spends considerable time discussing and demonstrating the effectiveness of the simple bordun, giving examples of all four types—chord, broken chord, crossover, and level. These borduns are "simple," though readers will appreciate seeing a variety of applications for each bordun type. The broken chord bordun section is a case in point. Holl introduces four different examples of how to

orchestrate with a broken chord bordun and details why those choices were made. This might be to better support a separate rhythmic ostinato, to mimic the sounds of a traditional folk style, or to play the dominant lower than the tonic, as is found in the *Music for Children* volumes and supplements as well as in folk, country, bluegrass, and old time string band tunes. Or, it might simply be to echo the historical style found in the Volumes.

Examining dominant harmony, Holl remarks, “Developmentally, our youngest students don’t have any problem with the simple bordun (drone) staying on the first and fifth degrees throughout, but as children grow and participate in popular and colloquial culture, a chord change becomes a pleasing option” (p. 43). Again, the author takes us through examples, increasing the level of complexity and clearly explaining why those accompaniment choices are more complex. He explores a helpful pedagogical tool in the “Tonic-Dominant (I-V)” section with three different accompaniment options for *Alouette*, where the common tone between

the I and V chords is played throughout the chord changes in an accompaniment part. This technique is important for those starting to improvise during chord changes, but also it helps ground students in a way that the chord change is also heard and experienced, though one part stays consistent.

Additionally, he explains and explores paraphony and diaphony before giving three additional accompaniment approaches for I-V. Then “Tonic-Subdominant (I-IV)” harmonizations are briefly considered, due to their only occasional occurrence in folk melodies, leading us finally to “Tonic-Subdominant-Dominant (I-IV-V).” This section has arrangements featuring American folk songs, folk songs from other countries, songs written as a nod to pieces found in the Volumes, and songs written/arranged for students in school studying specific topics from their general education. Finally, Holl reaches “The Blues,” which is a wholly American style of music and one that can be explored through the elemental style.

The book wraps up with a section titled “Beyond Primary Triads” that opens up students’ exploration

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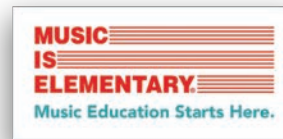
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of secondary chords and increases the complexity of the choices they can make. Again, Holl guides readers through multiple arrangements of the same song—demonstrating how a folk song from the Appalachian tradition with tonal ambiguity, *Cluck Old Hen*, could be adapted in five different ways with increasingly complex harmonization.

Holl’s myriad examples and clear explanations of the techniques he is using form a valuable and easy-to-access reference. Orff Schulwerk enthusiasts interested in expanding or improving their arranging skills within an elemental

framework will find value in adding *Sounds Abound! Volume 1 – Harmony and Orchestration in the Orff Instrumentarium* to their personal resource library. ■

CHRISTINE BALLENGER is an AOSA Teacher Educator in Basic Pedagogy Level I, Recorder Level I, and Movement Levels I–III. She teaches pre-kindergarten through Grade 5 general music in Maryland, and enjoys reading, process teaching, and being outdoors. Christine has served as president of the Prairie Winds Orff Chapter and as vice-president of the Texas Gulf Coast Orff Chapter and currently serves on the *The Orff Echo* Editorial Board.

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Join the Conversation ...

“Perform.” Performance is a large piece of many elementary and secondary music programs. Orff Schulwerk emphasizes the importance of the process of learning while giving attention to musicality and meaningful experiences. How do we authentically attend to the Orff Schulwerk approach AND have our students perform to the standards expected by communities, schools, and programs?

We wonder:

- How do we support our students in generating ideas and refining those ideas to become performance pieces?
- How can we help students overcome performance anxiety or reluctance?
- What are the processes that lead students towards meaningful musical expression?
- What is the teacher’s role in performance, “sage on the stage” or “guide on the side?”

You are invited to join our conversation around “Perform” for the Spring 2025 issue of *The Orff Echo*. Look for the official call for submissions on the AOSA News web page and in your Membership Essentials email.





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Winter 2025	Create	Roxanne Dixon Erika Knapp Diana Hawley	May 15, 2024
Spring 2025	Perform	Christine Ballenger Austin Cooper	August 15, 2024
Summer 2025	Respond	Ian Cicco Christa Jones	November 15, 2024
Fall 2025	Open Submissions	Erika Knapp Alan Spurgeon	January 15, 2025

“The way must be in you; the destination also must be in you and not somewhere else in space or time. If that kind of self-transformation is being realized in you, you will arrive.”

Nhất Hạnh



“FLOWER.” PHOTOGRAPHED BY 4WPHOTO, PIXABAY.

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