

# Orff in Time!

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## *Follow the Leader*

1. **Objective:** Watch. Follow. Wait. Listen. Demonstrate. Lead.
2. **Gameplay:** Students must watch the person in front of them, follow them, and play exactly what they play as they play it. Students have two jobs:
  - Lead successfully – make sure they show clearly to the person after them. (I recommend my students make sure the next 2 students can see.)
  - Follow accurately – make sure they are attentive and absorb as much from the leader as possible.
3. **Progression:** In the beginning, this need not be in time. As students become more advanced, the leader can create patterns and grooves that fit together as the group is rotating/following.
4. **Tips:**
  - This game will require debriefing at the end of a round to discuss what happened with the students and what to change for next time.
  - This is a great game to play at the beginning of each music class.

## *Follow the Bouncing Ball*

1. **Objective:** Watch. Follow. Wait. Listen. Anticipate.
2. **Gameplay:** One student tosses a ball into the air. All other students must play/sing (whatever has been determined) one sound when the ball bounces.
3. **Progression:** In the beginning, this need not be in time. As students become more advanced, the leader can create patterns and grooves that fit together as the group is rotating/following.
4. **Variations:**
  - Have the bouncer bounce the ball only once. Or twice.
  - Try different types of balls.
  - When the ball finishes bouncing and remains on the ground, have the students make continuous sound (roll/sustained pitch).
  - Have the students make up their own variations.

## *Follow the Conductor*

1. **Objective:** Watch. Wait. Anticipate. Lead. Understand basic conducting concepts.
2. **Gameplay:** One student faces the ensemble and conducts them. Afterward, the students rotate and the next student conducts.

3. **Progression:** When first playing this game, it's important to give the conductor limited options and clear instructions. For example. Start the group, then stop the group, then rotate. As the students become more familiar, more options and gestures may be added. Some of gestures I use:
  - Start the group.
  - Stop the group.
  - Crescendo.
  - Decrescendo / Diminuendo
  - Play beats in time.
4. **Variations:**
  - Advanced: each of the gestures can be directed to sections or individuals.

“Repeat after me!”  
Aaron Williams

### *The Metronome Game – “Once Together”* (2<sup>nd</sup> grade and higher)

**Metronome, metronome,  
Listen to the metronome.**

**Can we play\*, once# together  
After \_\_\_\_ beats.**

1. **Objective:** Anticipate the beat. Follow the pulse. Internalize the tempo. Start and stop together. Learn different BPMs (beats per minute).
2. **Gameplay:** As students say the rhyme, the metronome operator sets the speed. After the rhyme is finished, the operator starts the metronome. Students wait the designated number of counts before playing together. EXACTLY together! Choose a new operator and repeat.
3. **Progression:** The fewer beats, the more difficult the game. Also, extreme tempos are more difficult than medium tempos. Once the original game is comfortable, introduce variations and randomization.
4. **Variations:**
  - Have the metronome projected onto a screen, and students will anticipate the tempo, which is a great lesson on bpm (beats per minute).
  - \* Vary the amount of times to play together (“twice,” “thrice,” “9 times”).
  - # Vary the playing method (“clap,” “snap,” “tap,” “sing do,” “play C-G”)
  - Have the metronome hidden from view.
  - Have students guess the tempo before switching operators.
  - Use dice or another method to determine how many beats. More beats require greater concentration.
  - Most students will use their eyes. Challenge them to try with their eyes closed.
  - Say the rhyme at the most recent tempo rather than the same tempo each time.
5. **Caution:** It is impossible to determine the tempo from only 1 beat. Some student(s) will inevitably discover this fact, if given the opportunity.

## *Telepathic Time* (4<sup>th</sup> grade and higher)

1. **Objective:** Make subtle tempo adjustments. Follow a varying pulse. Learn *accelerando* and *ritardando*.
2. **Gameplay:** Participants form a circle & play a pattern in unison. One participant slowly changes tempo at random, and everyone else must adjust so quickly that it seems as though everyone is speeding up or slowing down together, telepathically!
3. **Progression:** In the first iteration of this game, everyone should play a steady beat. Subsequent iterations can involve more complicated rhythms or phrases.
4. **Variations:**
  - Have one student, the “tempo detective,” exit the room. Decide who will lead the *accelerando/ritardando*, and then have the tempo detective return. As the game progresses, the detective tries to discover who is leading the tempo.
  - ADVANCED: Set up a network of listening, where each student is listening to a different person, and only the leader knows that they are the leader. This requires great adjustment abilities from each member. At the end, see if anyone discovered who the leader was.
5. **Caution:**
  - If the leader’s instrument is not audible, this game will be impossible.
  - With younger students, it can be helpful to have the leader play a different timbre or louder volume than the others.
  - The leader does not have to be louder than everyone else. As the ear develops, it will discriminate more easily.

## Tips for Developing Great Time in the Classroom

1. Model great time in your classroom. Your students will learn from you.
2. When something is out of time, take the time to fix it. You will not regret it!
3. One of the best ways to quickly develop good time is to play at varying tempos. Have the students sing or play a section, then change the tempo for the next repetition. Then again. And again. They will quickly learn to adjust. This is a simple and effective technique that hardly anyone knows about!
4. Don’t be afraid to use a metronome with your students. Create situations in which students **MUST** listen to the metronome in order to be successful, and they will benefit from it.
5. Walk while speaking/singing the part. Align the rhythm of the steps with the music.
6. If your students cannot stay with the metronome, here are a few possible solutions:
  - a. Slow the tempo down.
  - b. Isolate the first note or syllable, and have them play that with the metronome. When this is accomplished, add in more syllables until the full part can be spoken and/or played in time.
  - c. Have the student(s) play the part with you or with a partner who plays in time