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ORFF SCHULWERK FOR NEW EDUCATORS

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Orff Schulwerk for New Educators

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ABSTRACT

Entering the world of music teaching can present challenges. Finding an approach that fits both the style of the teacher and the needs of the classroom is one such challenge. This paper, which accompanies a presentation, provides an introduction to one popular music teaching approach: Orff Schulwerk. The paper includes a review of existing research and provides information on the history of the Schulwerk, the uses and benefits the program provides, and the challenges and successes new teachers find when beginning to use it. The paper further explains and explicates an hour-long presentation. The presentation shows how to incorporate the core pedagogies of the Orff Schulwerk—exploration, imitation, improvisation, and creation—with an existing piece of repertoire from *Music for Children* in conjunction with the children's book *Wendell the Narwhal* by Emily Dove. Furthermore, this paper will go into detail regarding the process that was followed when creating this lesson, and the educational resources that were used.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Thesis Statement

Introduction and Background

Music is a core subject in elementary schools across the United States. Many elementary students are required to learn music. What do their teachers need to know to set them up for success? In undergraduate music education programs, methods courses are often vital components of the degree program. Yet with overwhelming requirements there is only so much time to cover all of the elements that could be used to teach music to students ranging from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Once aspiring music educators graduate, they are left to fend for themselves. Many new teachers find themselves isolated and overwhelmed in the field (McCallum, 2018). Often, the elementary music curricula that music educators are provided acts as a framework not a guide. There is no set map to follow; the teacher creates the lessons and activities for the year by themselves. One teaching approach to help provide structure in the creating process is Orff Schulwerk.

Orff Schulwerk is an approach created by composer Carl Orff that incorporates singing, speaking, dancing, and playing (both playing instruments and simply playing) but it is rhythmic at its core. When Carl Orff first founded his school for gymnastics, music, and dance in 1924, he saw the possibility for working out a new kind of rhythmical education as well as a reciprocal interpretation of movement and music education.

Rhythm is introduced in the early phases of the Schulwerk through rhythmic building blocks. The building blocks allow for students to gather information around the concept of rhythm and then build more based on their understanding. While the Schulwerk is rhythmic at its core, melodic components are still a vital part of the compositions for children by Orff and Keetman. In the Schulwerk, melodies follow a pentatonic scale, because Orff believed that in the

pentatonic realm, “the child can most easily find the individual possibilities for expression, without being exposed to the danger of leaning upon the over strong examples of other music” (Carl Orff as stated by Keetman 1974, p. 18).

The Schulwerk is complex, in that it has many aspects to it. The process used to encompass the ways of teaching within the Orff Schulwerk involves guided play, imitation, exploration, creation, and composition. This process is cyclical. Part of the complexity behind teaching elementary music, according to Orff, is that it is “never music alone...”

...but forms a unity with movements, dance and speech. It is music that one makes oneself, in which one takes part not as a listener but as a participant. It is unsophisticated, employs no big forms and no big architectural structures, and it uses small sequence forms, ostinato and rondo. Elementary music is near the earth, natural, physical, within the range of everyone to learn it and to experience it, and suitable for the child. (Orff, 1963, p. 6)

Orff intended for the Schulwerk to be enjoyable to artistic and creative people. The use of the Schulwerk should stimulate independent growth for both the student and the educator, so that the method is constantly developing and ever-changing. There is no catalog of melodies with pre-arranged accompaniments and activities.

One of the most common challenges for teachers when first using the Orff approach is remembering to be patient not only with the students, but with themselves. Lisa Lehmberg and Chet-Yeng Loong (2018) found that new teachers who saw an amazing activity presented at a workshop were not successful in the classroom if they didn’t know how to teach the foundations to their students (p. 35). Remembering to be patient while taking on a new adventure, learning

how to teach 20 to 30 inquisitive young minds (Lehmberg and Loong, 2018, p. 34), is vital for success in the Orff approach.

The key teaching resources of the Orff Schulwerk are the five *Music for Children* volumes by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman. These volumes of music that were created by Orff and Keetman are meant to act as a guide to the educator. The pieces are a foundation to build and grow from, it is encouraged to stray and change the piece as the educator sees fit.

Problem Statement

While Orff Schulwerk is a tremendous resource for a new teacher, approaching it for the first time can be intimidating. The Orff Schulwerk is not a prescribed method, but rather an approach that is used and shaped by the educator's and the student's creativity. This can be hard to grasp for new educators. However, understanding the basic components of the Orff Schulwerk approach and how to use it could help new teachers navigate the earliest years of their teaching career. This project will demonstrate and codify those basic components of the Orff Schulwerk.

Purpose Statement

For the purpose of this project, I will create a lesson that demonstrates for someone who is unfamiliar with Orff Schulwerk how to incorporate the core pedagogies of the Orff Schulwerk (exploration, imitation, improvisation and creation) with an existing piece of repertoire from *Music for Children* in conjunction with the children's book *Wendell the Narwhal* by Emily Dove (2016). I will present this lesson during an hour-long workshop, paired with a more elaborately detailed paper that provides content of the history of the Schulwerk, the uses of the Schulwerk, and the benefits the Schulwerk can provide new educators. This paper and presentation will encompass the core pedagogies behind the Orff Schulwerk and the choices made behind the creation of each activity throughout the lesson presented.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Completing my Orff training gave me many tools to help me in my classroom. In using the Schulwerk with my students, I have witnessed many benefits firsthand. In researching the approach, I found many other teachers wrote of the same experiences and conducted research on the topic supporting the benefits of the Schulwerk. My goal is to help introduce new teachers to Orff Schulwerk. While there are many benefits to this approach there are also many challenges that can arise when first starting out. This chapter contains reviews of articles and resources that support the benefits and challenges that a new teacher can expect, and how the Schulwerk may be helpful.

My intention for this project is to create a lesson that demonstrates how to incorporate the core pedagogies of the Orff Schulwerk (exploration, imitation, improvisation and creation) for someone who is unfamiliar with the approach. This literature review provides detailed information about the Schulwerk to help new educators have a better understanding of the approach beyond what is possible in a 1-hour presentation.

The History of the Schulwerk

The first assignment of my first levels course was to read Orff's opening speech to the Orff Institute in 1963. This speech tells the journey that led to the Schulwerk, and understanding and knowing the history behind the approach is an important tool in understanding the approach. Orff Schulwerk is an approach for music education that first came into fruition in Germany in 1924 by composer Carl Orff. In 1963 at the opening of the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Carl Orff delivered an opening speech to the aspiring Orff Educators in attendance. The speech encompasses Carl Orff's intention for the Schulwerk. This resource provides the historical background of the approach. Orff starts off by explaining how the approach came to be, starting

in the 1920s. In 1924, there was a surge of new teachings of physical fitness, gymnastics, and dancing. The methods of Jaques-Dalcroze were spreading around the world, and Carl Orff was developing a great interest in the field. So, he opened a school with a gymnastics and dance instructor, Dorothee Günther. The school was called the Güntherschule. This is where Carl Orff began to form ideas on a new kind of rhythmic education and his own interpretation of movement and music education (Orff 1963, p. 1-2). Focusing on the rhythmic center of the approach, Orff needed instruments to match his vision. He went to a piano maker named Karl Maendler to create what we now know as Orff instruments, which include xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels. These xylophones were different than a typical orchestral sized mallet instrument, Orff intended to encompass a more medieval or exotic prototype mimicking Indonesian models of the instruments (Orff 1963, p. 4).

In the speech, Orff talked about several publications and acknowledged the contributions his former pupil and colleague, Gunild Keetman, had made to the approach. She was influential in his first publication, *Rhythmic-Melodic Exercises* (1930) and was a co-author of the 1931 book called *Orff Schulwerk – Music for Children* published by Schott, which is described further in Chapter Three: Resources and Processes.

Around this time, a political change had come underway in Germany, and World War II began. This shift led to the destruction of the Güntherschule and all of the instruments, and in turn the ending of Carl Orff's work on the Schulwerk. Orff states he was "waiting, quite unconsciously, for a new call" (Orff 1963, p. 6), which came in 1948, when the Bavarian Radio commissioned him to write music for children that would be performed by children and aired by the station. With the partnership of Gunild , Orff accepted the commission and began to put together live radio shows featuring children performing selections from *Music for Children*. This

is where the approach of the Schulwerk started to really take form. Having children as the performers, he focused much more on elemental techniques and components and how to encompass them into his music as well as in the approach of teaching it to the children (Orff 1963, p. 6).

By the autumn of 1948, the broadcasts were aired and received a positive response. Many schools reached out asking where they could acquire the instruments and the compositions used so that they could use them with their students. This led to Karl Maendler, the piano maker, opening his own instrument creation studio, which is still around today and known as Studio 49. By 1951, Gunild Keetman had begun teaching classes to children using the Schulwerk. This is where the movement aspect of the approach took off, as it had not been possible to demonstrate movement through radio broadcasts. Foreign visitors began to show interest in becoming acquainted with the Schulwerk, and soon the teachings of the Schulwerk had spread to around 15 different countries (p.7).

In the widespread appeal of Orff Schulwerk, Carl Orff was overwhelmed with questions of where to obtain proper training in the Schulwerk. The Schulwerk was intended to be interpreted and set as a guide for teachers, but learning that the Schulwerk was being amateurishly interpreted convinced Orff it was time to create an institute, the Orff Institute. This school served to teach the Schulwerk in the way Orff and Keetman intended it. Orff ended his speech at the opening of the institute with this statement:

Though here in this Institute we continue to work, collect experiences, and make experiments, the Schulwerk complex is complete and proven, so that one has to accept it as a fact. The structure of the Schulwerk, however, is such that the existing material can be developed in many ways. In all modesty, but with emphasis, I would like to conclude

with Schiller: “*Ich habe das Meinige gethan...*” (Translates to “I have done my part. Now do yours.”). (Orff 1963, p. 8)

Orff Uses and Benefits

The Schulwerk has many redeeming qualities to it, but most importantly it uses concepts that are natural to children to guide them in developing their musical abilities. That is part of why the Schulwerk became so popular in the United States. Orff stated in his 1963 speech that through his experience he has very rarely seen an unmusical child; more often he saw children’s natural ability repressed through poor teaching (p. 7). Being a rhythmic based approach, the Schulwerk uses rhythmic building “bricks” (Keetman, 1974) in various meters. These bricks are then used to create more complex rhythmic patterns for the students to perform through speech, movement, and playing.

Melodically, the children start singing in thirds, they then begin on barred instruments using fifths and octaves based off the note C. The first set of melodies the students play follow a pentatonic scale, removing the fourth and the seventh interval of the scale. Removing these notes lets the child play without the danger of error. The music provided through the Schulwerk is designed to set the students up for musical success, letting the students to feel comfortable and capable of creating their own melodies and rhythmic patterns. This sets up success for what Orff intended: new independent growth in the classroom. The students can take the lead and grow musically while the teacher takes the role of merely guiding, not instructing their creativity.

In a study done on elementary music educators completing their levels courses, an Orff classroom was described as a place where “students ask – not just answer – questions, pose – not just solve – problems, and help to construct curriculum out of their own linguistic and cultural resources rather than just receive preselected and predigested information” (Cochran-Smith &

Lytle, p. 101 as cited by Robbins 1994, p. 51). Giving students this much freedom can be a hard adjustment for both teachers and students in a classroom that has never used Orff Schulwerk before. As teachers in Janet Robbins' study of educators learning through their Orff levels courses suggested, it can lead to "bumpy lessons" and "creative fallout" as well as poor behavior and task management (Robbins 1994, p. 51). The transition is not always easy, but with consistency the students are able to learn. There is room for evaluation when it comes to older children encountering the Schulwerk for the first time, versus students that have experienced it since nursery school. This is why it is important to not assign activities by grade level, rather the students' level of understanding. The condition of the classroom needs to be assessed to know where to begin.

What is effective music teaching? This is the question Argabright addressed (2005) when she generalized music educator effectiveness as personal and academic interactions, the environment, and teaching methods and assessments. According to Argabright, effective general music teachers create a positive environment in their classrooms, utilize movement frequently and unexpectedly in activities, encourage students to share ideas and validate student opinions, enhance the physical space with visual stimuli, and assess student learning. Furthermore, she stated that effective music teachers should create lessons that allow students to use speech, singing, movement, playing, and creating to make music (Argabright, 2005, p. 6). While Argabright was not specifically referencing Orff-based teaching, her points encompass the learning processes and pedagogic materials used within the Orff Schulwerk classroom.

Orff Schulwerk training has been shown to increase music educator's perceptions of effectiveness in their classrooms. Williamson (2011) interviewed twenty-four elementary music educators who had completed at least one level of Orff Schulwerk training. Upon completion of

the training, teachers reported increases in students' composition and improvisation in the classroom. In addition, teachers were able to allow their students to take a more active role in their learning by contributing ideas (Williamson, 2011, p. 87). The participants indicated that the training gave them resources and tools to develop and manipulate lessons in the moment, and said they even felt an increase in their confidence level in the classroom (Williamson, 2011, p. 87).

Traits of a successful teacher include caring, demonstrating dedication, showing interest in the students, having a sense of humor, communicating, having a positive attitude, being disciplined, showing respect, and being persistent. These traits are not only for the novice educator, but the master educator as well (Williamson, 2011, p. 35). One of the commonalities Williamson found between the master educator and the effective educator was the continued learning in the profession, which Orff Schulwerk provides many opportunities to do through the American Orff Schulwerk Association (AOSA).

In developing the Schulwerk, Orff was also concerned with the development of gross motor skills in children. Martins, Neves, Rodrigues, Vasconcelos, and Castro (2018) researched whether Orff-Based music training enhanced children's manual dexterity and bimanual coordination. They compared the Orff-based music training to sports (basketball) and no specific training at all (p. 1). They conducted a longitudinal training study with 74 children in the third grade, 34 boys and 40 girls. The students were taught in test groups for 24 weeks (about 5 and a half months) one group in an Orff-based music class, one in a basketball course, and one control group in neither. The students were assessed using the Perdue pegboard test, which tested their hand eye coordination and motor speed, and the grooved pegboard test, which tested their manipulative dexterity. The results showed that the students in the music group outperformed the

sports and the control groups at the posttest and the follow up test that occurred 4 months after in the Purdue pegboard test with both hands and with the dominant hand. The music group were performing at the upper level (80th percentile and up) at their follow up test, with no students in the lowest percentile. The music group was the only group to have no students in the lowest percentile at the follow up test. This research suggests that Orff Schulwerk does in fact enhance students' fine motor skills through the rhythmic training involved.

The literature reviewed supports the benefits of Orff Schulwerk. Many researchers have found the approach to encompass the qualities of effective music teaching, while enhancing student involvement and creativity. To further support the benefits, the approach has been found to improve students' motor skills through the use of play. The Schulwerk demonstrates benefits for the students in their learning of music, as well as in their development of life skills that they will use in other aspects of their learning.

Orff Schulwerk for New Teachers

In the first five years of teaching, new teachers need to enable creativity, allow risks in a safe setting, and the ability to guide students to musically sound decisions (Tommasone, 2018). In the early stages of becoming accustomed to the classroom, these expectations may be challenging to accomplish. Tommasone (2018) states, "For various reasons, new educators typically enter the elementary music education world underprepared for challenges." (p. 14). Colleen Conway (2015) also notes common problems that new teachers face. These include, "classroom management, isolation, time for planning, unrealistic vision of success, multiple teaching assignments, difficult schedules, teaching outside of content area, and administrator evaluation and observation" (p. 65). While the Schulwerk can be a helpful approach to new educators, it does not provide a detailed curriculum to follow in the classroom. It is very much an

approach, in that it provides educators with tools and outlines of musical components and examples, and then allows teachers to create lessons and activities on their own. This allows for endless possibilities in what can be created. Bridget Warner (1991) states,

Although Orff Schulwerk is one of the most enjoyable ways to teach music, it is probably one of the most difficult as well. This is so because we constantly learn and create as we teach our children. But creativity in teaching calls for discipline in organization and planning. (p. 266)

While it can be difficult to implement originally, the Orff Schulwerk approach creates an environment where students explore their creativity and become musically independent. The book *Elementaria*, by Gunild Keetman, is another source that is practically a step-by-step guide on how to teach using the Schulwerk. Then using the *Music for Children Volumes* books, teachers can create using the compositions provided by Carl Orff. Both *Elementaria* and *Music for Children* will be further reviewed in Chapter Three: Resources and Processes.

Janet Robbins examined six music educators over the course of two years while they completed their level 1 and level 2 training in Orff Schulwerk. The educators were given assignments to journal about their experience, while also meeting in person multiple times a year in between their courses. A frequent topic in the meetings documented was the experiences of being an elementary music teacher. Entering a new career as a music teacher can be daunting and even isolating (Robbins 1994, p. 48). Feeling unprepared in your role only makes the matter worse. Often, educators find a method to turn to in their first year of teaching. Through the training, community and comfort in the classroom is found. Teachers that participated in Robbins research stated,

To find out that other teachers often experience the same or similar frustrations and triumphs that I have encountered... makes me feel like what I'm doing is OK. The group helps to validate me as a teacher with serious goals and aspirations, when the facts of my teaching situation trivialize and marginalize my efforts." For other more experienced teachers, "being able to talk to others" always left them with new ideas and taught them to "learn to consider aspects of teaching" that had only been "given slight attention. (pp. 51-52)

Stephanie Tommasone (2018) tells how, as a new teacher, finding a local American Orff Schulwerk Association chapter helped her add practical lessons and materials to her collection of resources. She dedicates an entire section of her article to the professional community of Orff Schulwerk practitioners. Because of its spirit of collaboration, the Orff Schulwerk community is one of the best resources to guide fellow educators through their challenges. Workshops within the Orff community provide tremendous resources, lesson ideas and inspiration for all who attend. Most resources and lesson examples that new teachers will find useful can be found through the American Orff Schulwerk Association website, as well as their Facebook group, on top of attending their local AOSA Chapter's workshops. These lessons are created by Orff educators using their own creativity with pieces found in the *Music for Children* volumes written by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman. In my experience as a new teacher, I obtained many of my lessons and activities through workshops. The workshops helped me to understand the feeling behind the approach as well as how to go about executing activities. Through completing my levels courses I learned how to then take compositions written by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman in the *Music for Children* volumes and arrange them with text to fit a lesson to my needs. Learning how to do this is what inspired me to want to create and share lessons of my own.

Chapter 3: Resources and Processes

Resources

Within the realm of Orff Schulwerk, there are countless resources available to music educators utilizing the approach. When looking for an introduction to the approach, it is best to go straight to the source. There are many resources written by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman, these texts serve as a direct introduction and guide to the approach.

Gunild Keetman's *Elementaria* is a tremendous resource to Orff Schulwerk educators. This book highlights the pedagogical approach that is the Schulwerk while fostering creativity, rhythmic exploration, and natural musical development among students. *Elementaria* acts as a guide for educators to learn how to embody the core principles of the Orff Schulwerk. Keetman includes exercises aimed at developing a child's innate musicality through movement, speech and instrumental play. At its core, *Elementaria* emphasizes a child-centered approach to music education. The Schulwerk promotes a child's experiential learning through engagement in singing, moving, and playing. Hence the American Orff Schulwerk Associations slogan "sing, say, dance, play." Through integrating rhythmic exercises, improvisation, and ensemble playing, Keetman provides activities and ideas to act as a starting point for music educators to nurture students' musical creativity.

In the opening chapter on fundamentals, Keetman introduces the core concept of "rhythmic building blocks." Keetman describes these building blocks as "the smallest rhythmic unity in two-four time derived from children's rhymes, songs, and names. They can be formed from quarter notes, eighth notes, and half notes, without up-beat." (Keetman 1974, p. 17). The building blocks allow for students to build understanding using small chunks of information. Students build knowledge from the basic two-beat rhythm patterns they know through rhymes,

songs, and children's names. Once students have built their knowledge of rhythmic notation, they can notate the rhymes and songs (Keetman, 1974). Keetman also describes the use of the pentatonic scale in the Schulwerk, for as Carl Orff stated, the pentatonic scale allows for the child to "most easily find individual possibilities for expression, without being exposed to the danger of leaning upon the over strong examples of other music." (as stated by Keetman 1974, p. 18). While using fundamental rhythms and building blocks, one of the key movements that Keetman advises educators to incorporate is body percussion. Keetman describes body percussion as clapping, patschen (patting the lap), stamping, and snapping. In using these sound gestures, the students are led to a movement oriented elemental music making.

Elementaria differs from the other well-known Orff Schulwerk resource *Music for Children* because it offers activities suitable for learners of varying ages and abilities, while the *Music for Children* Volumes primarily provide music compositions. These activities range from rhythmic games that lay the groundwork for understanding musical structure to structured improvisation exercises that encourage students to explore their creative potential. *Elementaria* emphasizes the use of collaboration within the classroom. Through the Orff Schulwerk, ensemble playing, and group activities foster a sense of community among students, encouraging teamwork, listening skills, and mutual respect within a musical setting.

Keetman's writing style is both accessible and scholarly, catering to educators and practitioners seeking to deepen their understanding of the Orff Schulwerk methodology. The resource is well-organized, presenting concepts in a paced manner, making it appropriate for both new and experienced music educators. While *Elementaria* is an outstanding resource for music educators, it is important to acknowledge that its effective use relies heavily on the expertise and adaptability of the educator. Successful utilization of the book's exercises requires

creativity and an understanding of the developmental needs of the students being taught. The teacher's role in the Schulwerk is to take the music and concepts given and to use their creativity to engage the students in elemental music making.

There are many other teaching resources written by Gunild Keetman. The frequently utilized works are books of compositions that Keetman wrote to contribute to the Schulwerk. Included in these works is the *Rhythmische Übung* (1970) which is a book of rhythmic exercises notated using sound gestures (body percussion) such as clapping, patschen, stamping and snapping. Another book of compositions written by Keetman is the *Erstes Spiel am Xylophon* (1969) which translates to “beginning exercises for xylophone” and the *Spielbuch für Xylophon* (1966) which translates to “playbook for xylophone.” The book for beginners consists of xylophone arrangements that only use the C pentatonic scale, while the playbook consists of arrangements that use various pentatonic scales for more advanced players. These books are additional compositional resources to the *Music for Children* volumes.

There are five volumes of *Music for Children*, the German title *Musik für Kinder*, written by both Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman. Since Keetman was such an integral part of the Güntherschule and the teaching of the Schulwerk, Orff asked Keetman to write the compositions for children with him. When the Schulwerk began to migrate to other countries there became a need for translations in each dialect the works had spread to. The first English translation was released in Canada in 1952, this was adapted by Arnold Walter and Doreen Hall. In later examination, it was realized that there were many discrepancies between the Canadian version to the original. For example, the original *Musik für Kinder* included thirty-six pieces in the third volume, whereas the Canadian adaptation only included twelve (Spitz, 2019, p. 24). After noted discrepancies and criticism of the Canadian adaptation the British writer, Margaret Murray,

began to independently develop her own version between 1957 and 1966. Murray decided to create her adaptation to fulfill the needs of the United Kingdom educators. To this day Murray's adaptation is "the fundamental teaching resource for workshops and courses throughout the United States" (Frazee 2013b, as cited by Spitz, 2019, p. 25). Murray's British adaptation stays true to the original works, and for the most part is a direct translation of *Musik für Kinder*. Margaret Murray is also responsible for the English adaptation of Gunild Keetman's *Elementaria*.

The volumes of music created by Orff and Keetman are meant to guide the educator. The pieces provide a foundation to build and grow from; it is encouraged that educators stray and change the pieces as they see fit. Each volume focuses on a specific setting of the compositions included. *Volume I – Pentatonic* focuses on C (do) Pentatonic compositions. This volume contains speech and rhythmic exercises using only the five-note scale, with instructions and notes. Part one contains nursery rhymes and songs, part two contains rhythmic and melodic exercises, and part three introduces instrumental pieces. *Volume II – Major: Drone Bass Triads* focuses on songs and instrumental pieces using the full major scale. The accompaniments start with a drone bass, later to add major scale triads translating to simple chords. *Volume III – Major: Dominant and Subdominant Triads* increases the instrumentation and range of keys used throughout the pieces. The composition settings include chords on the fourth and fifth notes of the major scale. *Volume IV – Minor: Drone Bass Triads* introduces a new world of sound: minor. The practice utilized in the minor keys begins with a drone bass, and then advances on to triads just as it did in *Volume II* with major. Though now the compositions have left Ionian mode, and venture into the realm of Aeolian, Dorian and Phrygian modes. *Volume V – Minor: Dominant and Subdominant Triads* includes pieces that make further use of the skills learned in *Volume IV*.

This volume adds the more usual forms of the minor scale with the sharpened seventh. This volume adds more drama to the pieces and concludes the series. Each volume is numbered and paced to scaffold the child's learning. Each setting is to be practiced before moving on to the next. Orff gives a statement at the beginning of each volume advising which set of rhythmic exercises to regularly practice with the students as they learn the volume's pieces. The earlier volumes suggest going back to the exercises in *Volume I*, whereas the more advanced volumes suggest using the exercises in *Volume V*.

Processes

These teaching resources are the fundamental texts of the Orff Schulwerk levels training courses. I was first introduced to these materials during my levels training courses and was taught how to utilize the compositions in creative ways to access my students' music making abilities. The resources gained through my level training and through utilizing the *Music for Children* volumes guided me through my creating process when composing the lesson for new educators that is the purpose of this paper. I began by choosing to use a piece of children's literature as the focus, so deciding on a topic meant choosing a children's book. My choice was the story *Wendell the Narwhal* by Emily Dove (2016). Utilizing children's literature is a fantastic way to create interdisciplinary connections within the subject, but also a fantastic way to present a message to the students beyond music making. With *Wendell the Narwhal* students are shown that you do not need to be the same as everyone else to have something of value to contribute. Wendell could not make music, but the jellyfish were kind and offered for Wendell to play with them anyway, and helped Wendell realize that he could conduct their music using his tusk.

The Orff Schulwerk is not designed for any specific grade level. It is designed to meet the students where they are at in their music making abilities. With that in mind, I designed my

lesson for a second-grade class based off the second graders that I teach. Depending on any other teachers' students and situations this lesson could be presented to a variety of age groups. With my situation, my second graders are just exploring barred instruments for the first time, they are comfortable with the pitches do, re, mi and sol. Knowing this information, I chose a piece of music from *Music for Children, Volume I* because a beginner level pentatonic piece would best serve the students I am teaching. Page 113, number 32 from *Music for Children, Volume I* is the piece used for my arrangement. This piece utilizes sol, mi, re, do, in a way that my students will be able to identify and imitate. The text is changed to coincide with the story *Wendell the Narhwal*. The first arrangement that I created did not work well when taught to my students, because there were too many words for them to remember. Due to this I re-arranged the piece with a simpler text. In the end the successful text resulted in being “Wendell will you play with us? You can lead us with your tusk!” This text was simple, matched the rhythm of the piece, and was attainable for the students. The bordun accompaniment for the piece was also simple, utilizing the tonic and dominant note on the first and third beat of every measure. This piece and arrangement are suitable for my current second grade music makers at their current ability levels. This piece was utilized in my classroom as an introduction to playing a piece on the barred instruments, building up the student's skill levels from this point of practice. The arrangement can be viewed in Chapter Four: The Presentation.

The process of choosing the activities to go along with the arrangement began with identifying the elements that needed to be covered. First the core pedagogies, imitation, exploration, improvisation, and composition. Next, vocalization (both speech and singing), movement, and play. I decided to follow a similar teaching format that is demonstrate daily with my classroom routine. The first activity usually incorporates movement or vocal exploration,

then a movement activity, a children's story if applicable, and then active music making using instruments and creation. With this roadmap to follow, I decided to first incorporate a vocal exploration activity utilizing "whale voices." This activity would also include some light movement, as the class will move around to have "whale conversations" where they ask the classmates that they pass questions and provide answers before moving on to someone new. This would transition into a movement exploration activity where students will explore various movements that could be demonstrated to imitate sea creatures. This movement activity will be performed to the piece "Aquarium" by Saent Sans, this piece comes from a popularly used work "Carnival of the Animals." Upon completing the movement activity students will create and improvise using their singing voices with solfege patterns. Students will have a chance to read and perform and also to compose their own patterns. In following the creating process, students will create four bar rhythmic compositions that will be performed on small handheld percussion instruments as a B section to the arrangement from *Music for Children Volume I*. The last layer involves students putting the piece to pitched percussion, using the barred instruments such as xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels. Students will imitate the melody, then the bordun, before being guided through improvising a B section on the instruments using sol, mi, re, and do. This process would not take place within one music lesson/class. I designed the activities and the lesson to be scaffolded and taught to students in a paced manor. My definition for pacing in this context means taking an overall idea or lesson and dividing it into sections to last the span of multiple class times, like a unit. In my teaching, I began with vocal exploration with movement the first week. Then I introduced the story and handheld percussion instruments. Then I introduced the solfege and creating process. An entire lesson was spent composing rhythmic patterns. Lastly, the students would reach performing on the barred instruments. With

each lesson, I would incorporate activities from the weeks prior to remind the students of their previously learned skills. As a novice teacher, pacing my lessons was a challenge for me. I designed this lesson to be easily spread out over at least months' worth of classes to encourage new teachers to use this approach. This helps the students retain the content more and increases their ability to apply the skills they are learning.

Chapter 4: The Presentation

The lecture recital presentation took place at William Paterson University on January 27, 2024. This presentation was given to the Northern New Jersey Orff Schulwerk Association. The presentation was an hour long and was presented to approximately 20 people. The attendees varied from novice to experienced educators. The lesson presented incorporates the core pedagogies of the Orff Schulwerk approach through song, speech, dance, and play. See Figure 1 below for the project overview, purpose statement, and process utilized in putting together this presentation.

Figure 1.

The Overview



PURPOSE STATEMENT

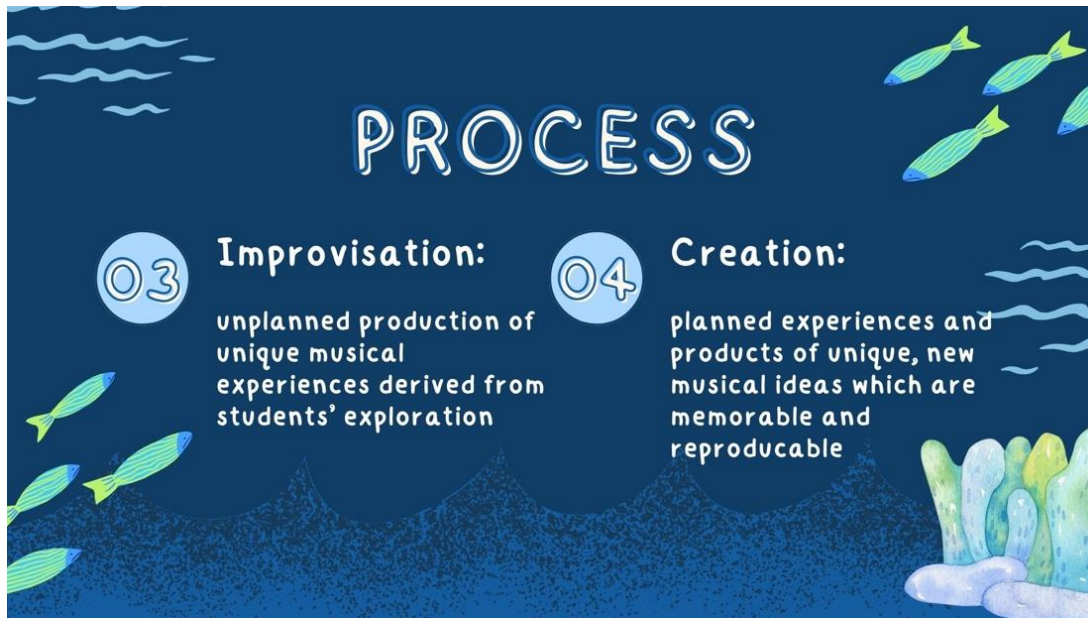


For the purpose of this project, I have created a lesson that demonstrates for someone who is unfamiliar with Orff Schulwerk how to incorporate the core pedagogies of the Orff Schulwerk (exploration, imitation, improvisation and creation) with an existing piece of repertoire from Music for Children in conjunction with the children's book Wendell the Narwhal by Emily Dove.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



This hour long presentation, in conjunction with a paper, will fulfill my thesis requirements to obtain a M.M. in Music Education.



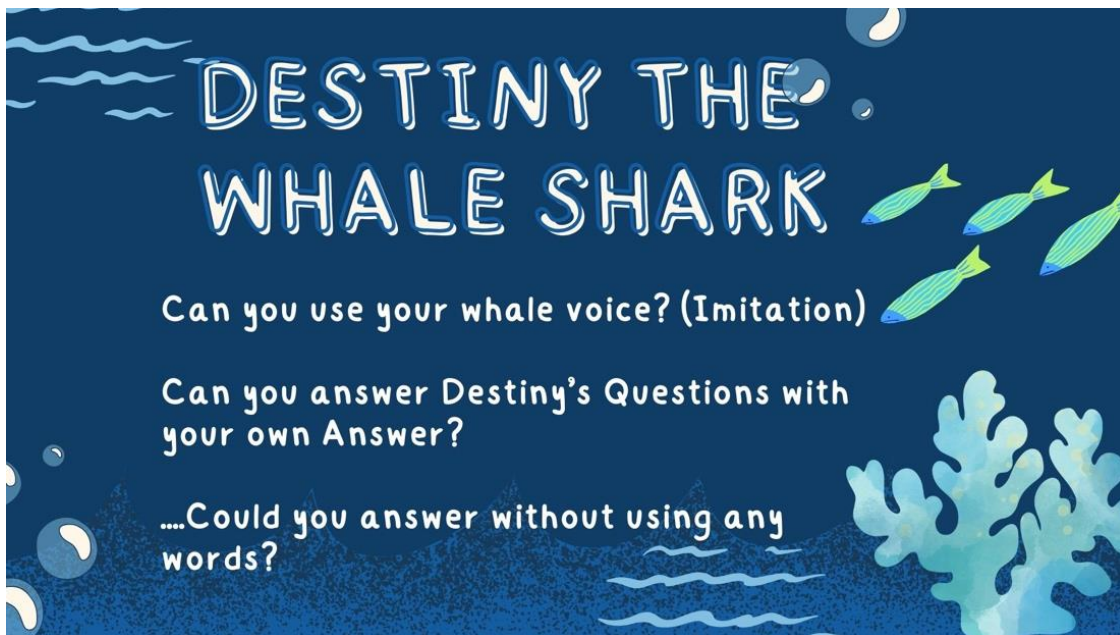
In Figure 2, I have included the section of the presentation that provides activities to be used within the lesson. The group/class will discuss what animals they have seen while attending an aquarium. The group will then imitate the teachers whale sounds using vowel and speech. The group will practice answering questions that are asked using their whale voices. For students that are not familiar with the movie *Finding Nemo* or *Finding Dory* examples will be played to demonstrate Dory's whale voice. After the video demonstrations, the group will once again

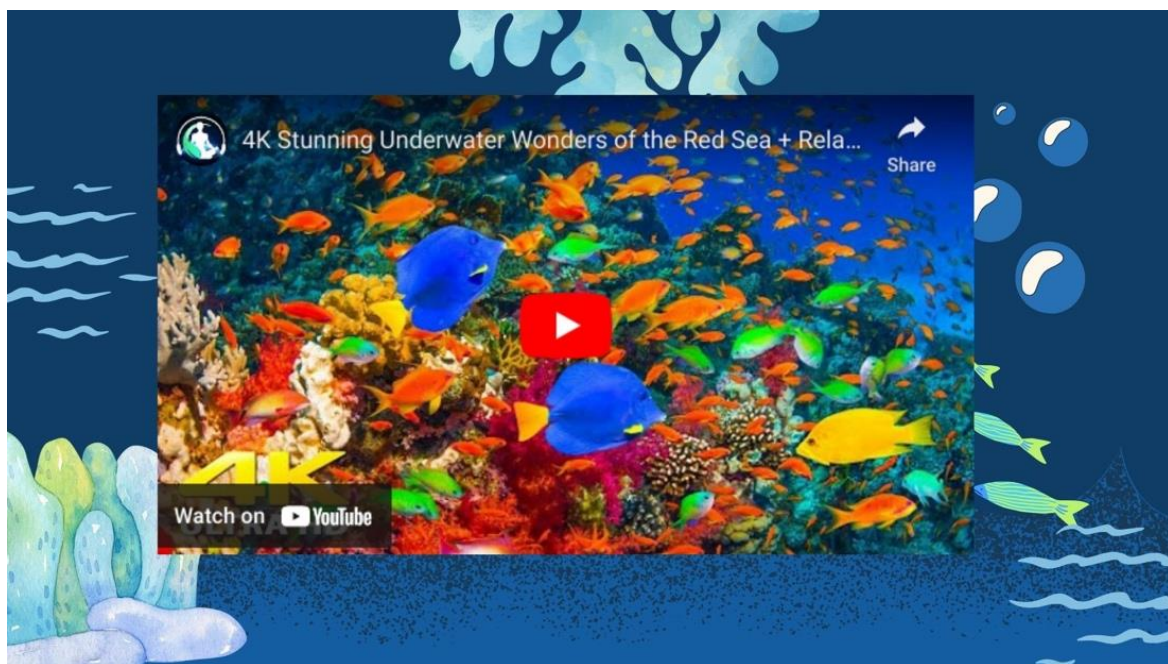
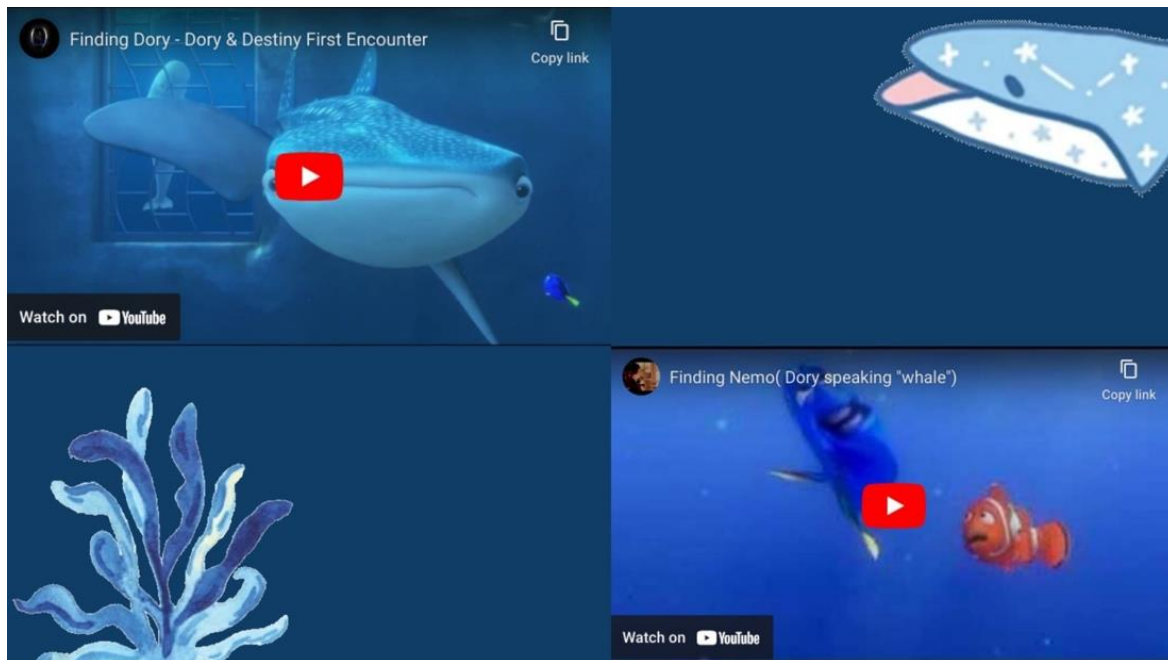
practice questions and answers using their whale voices with Destiny. Using the music in the video *Stunning Underwater Wonders of the Red Sea* ([youtube.com/watch?v=VAnZ8IJtBio](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAnZ8IJtBio)) the group/class will move around the room to find a partner to have a whale conversation with. They will ask questions and provide answers, and then move on to someone new. The group will be asked to return to their seats and watch the video for a moment. What do you notice in the water? How are the fish moving? What colors do you see? Is there anything that is not moving? This will segue into the movement exploration.

The group/class will then move like the animals they see on screen to the piece “Aquarium” by Sant Sans. The group will discuss what they noticed, wondered, and/or valued about the movements of their classmates. The group will perform the movement activity once again, this time in groups of 4 or 5. Each group will create their own aquarium using various animals, plants, and sea creatures. After the final movement performance, the class will sit to listen to the story *Wendell the Narhwal* by Emily Dove.

Figure 2.

The Activities





MOVEMENT EXPLORATION

AQUARIUM BY SAENT SANS

REFLECTION

I NOTICE...

I VALUE...

I WONDER...

Figure 3 includes the core activities of the presentation that center around the story of *Wendell the Narwhal*. The beginning of this sections starts with reading the story. The group will then listen to my Orff arrangement of the “Narwhal Song.” The group will perform the melody using solfege. The group will practice reading and singing various solfege patterns as shown in the figure. The group will have the opportunity to create their own solfege patterns using sol, mi, re, and do. Using a few small handheld percussion instruments, the participants will match each character in the story with an instrument.

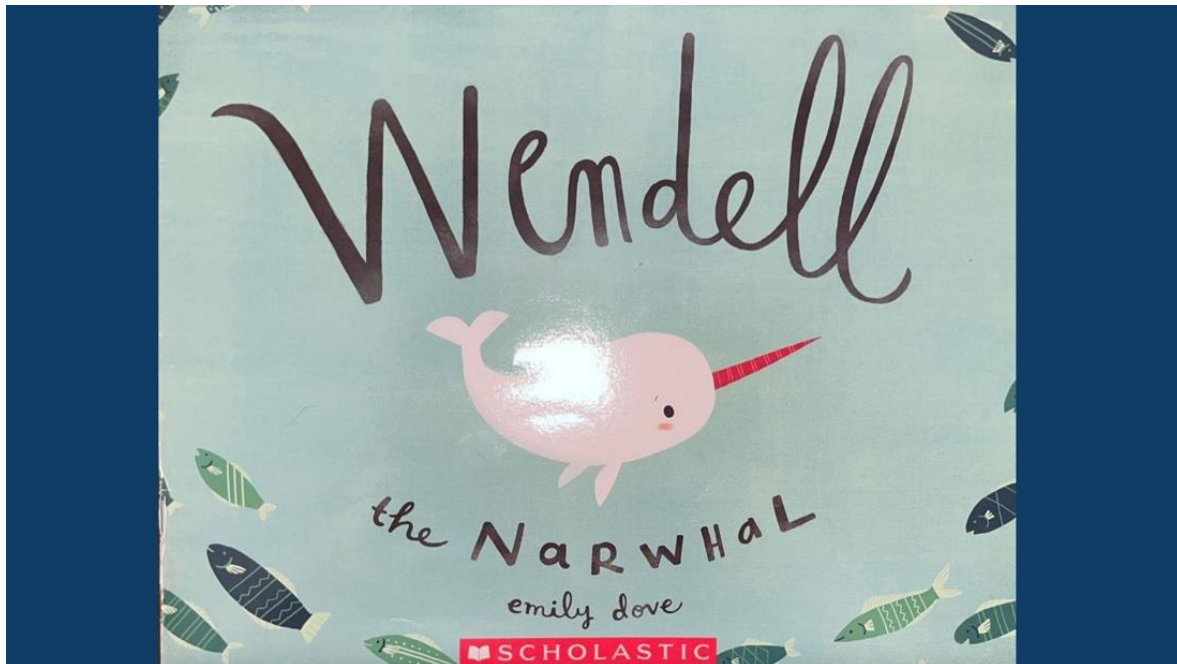
The group will go back and read the story again. This time they will improvise playing their instruments each time the coinciding character appears. Utilizing Gunild Keetman’s “rhythmic building blocks,” two-beat rhythmic patterns will be performed using small handheld percussion instruments. These patterns connect with the characters and phrases used in the story to maintain connection and to use simple rhyme to perform the rhythmic values. Using the building blocks, or as shown in this figure, building bubbles, the group will perform eight-beat patterns using handheld percussion instruments or body percussion. In smaller groups of 3, the participants will create their own rhythmic compositions using two of the rhythmic building blocks to create a pattern. (This arrangement was created using piece #32 from pg. 113 of *Music for Children Volume I* (Orff-Keetman, 1976). Text was altered to fit the theme of the story and lesson.)

Next, the group will discuss the relationship of Do and Sol, and where they live on barred instruments such as the xylophone. Do is always the home tone. Whereas Sol is the tone that we like to go to for a little while, before going back home to Do. We will review solfege using sol, mi, re and do. These specific patterns make up the simple “Narwhal Song.” The group will discuss and review the solfege placements to the pitches on the barred instruments. This will lead

to learning the melody on barred instruments. Once the group has the melody accurate, they will add the bordun. When ready put the melody with the bordun to perform the piece. Toward the end of the lesson, I provide other pieces of children's literature that could be utilized with this lesson.

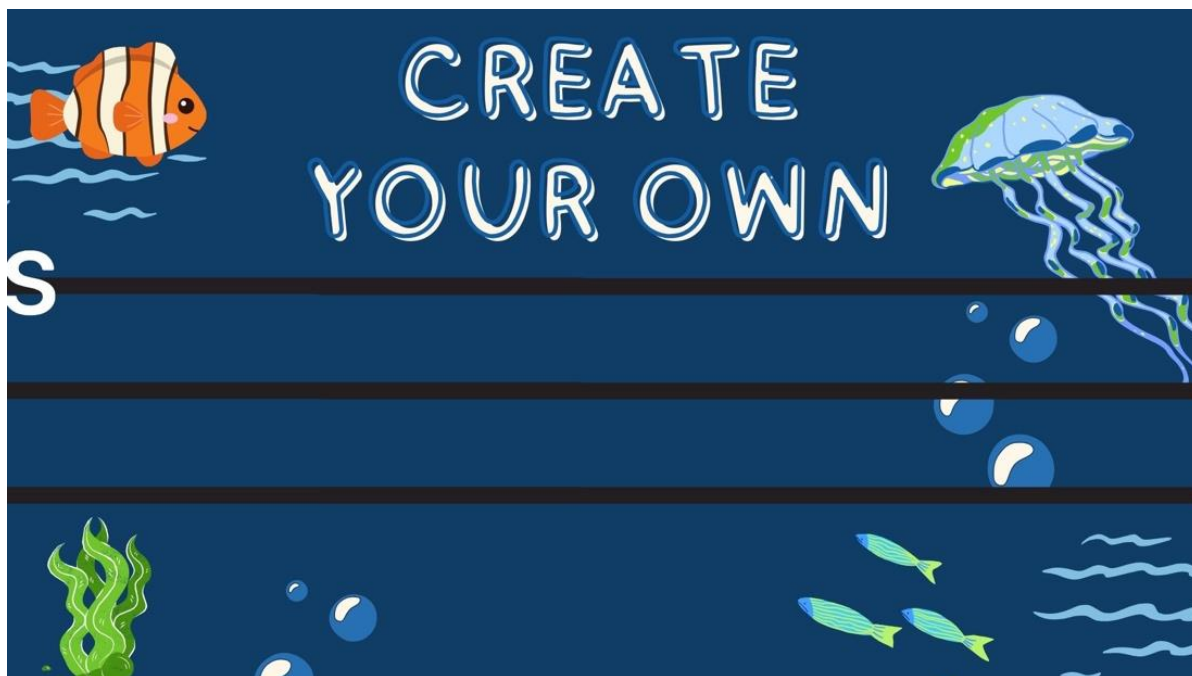
Figure 3.

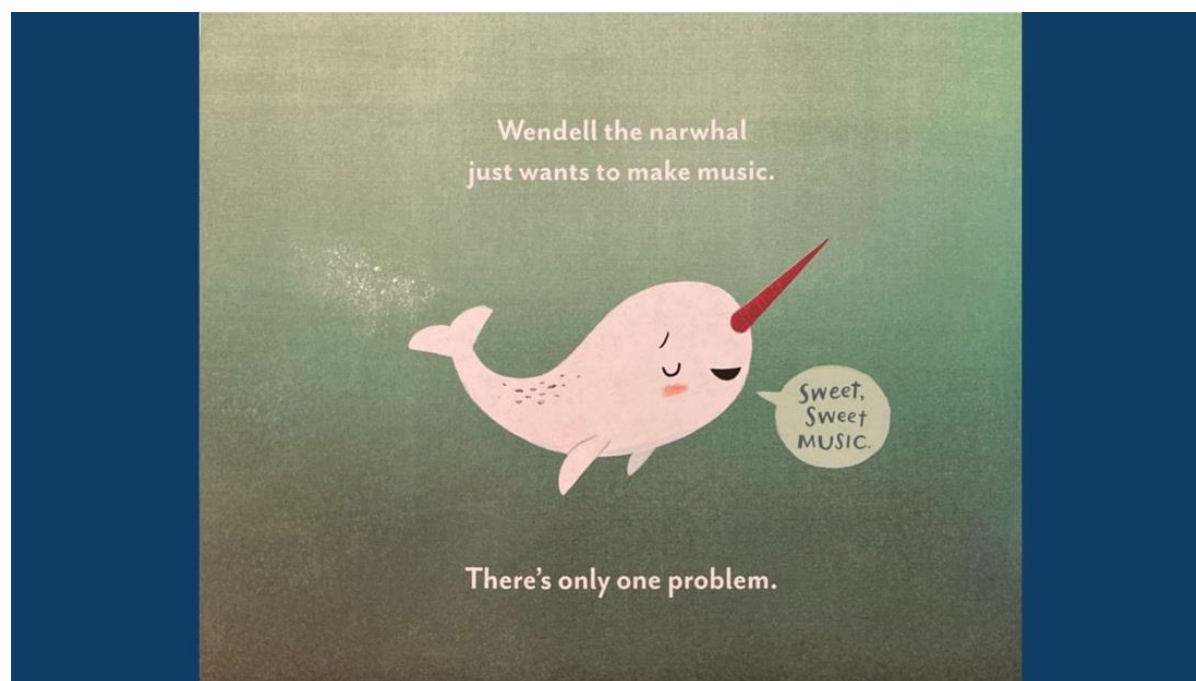
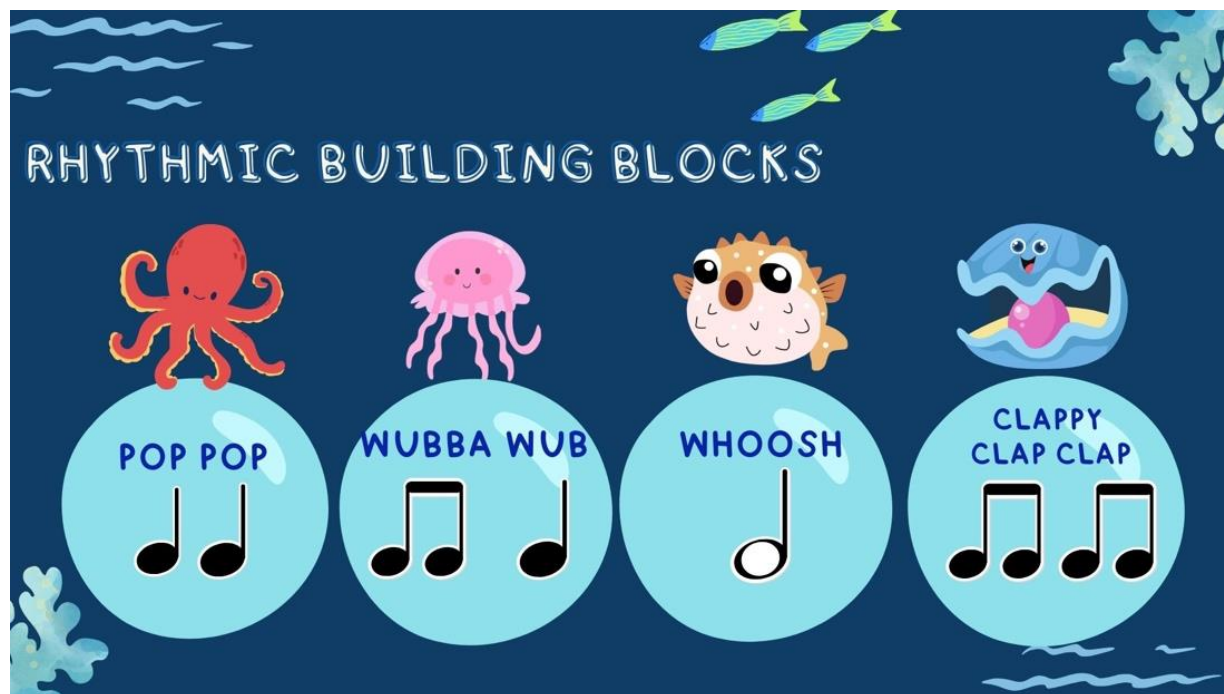
The Story and the Song











USING 2 CHARACTERS MAKE A PATTERN IN THE 4 BUBBLES

CREATE YOUR OWN

USING 2 CHARACTERS MAKE A PATTERN IN THE 4 BUBBLES

CREATE YOUR OWN

USING TWO CHARACTERS MAKE A PATTERN IN THE 4 BUBBLES

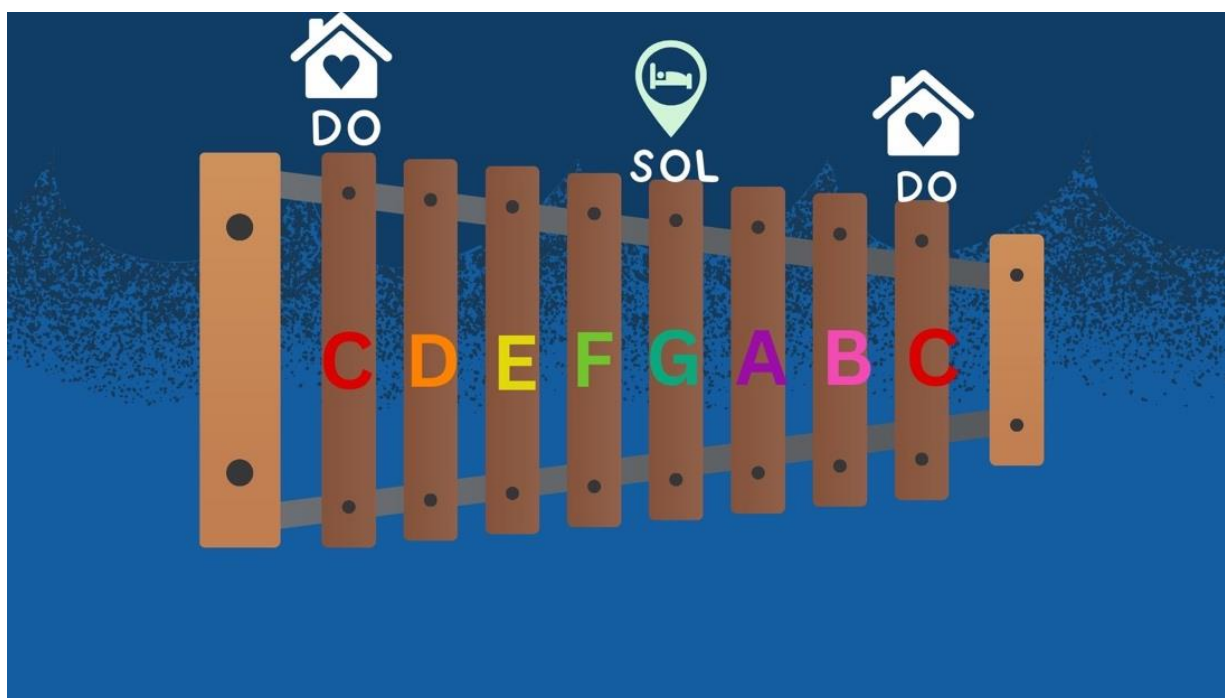
CREATE YOUR OWN

OS, M.F.C. VOL. 1, P. 113 #32

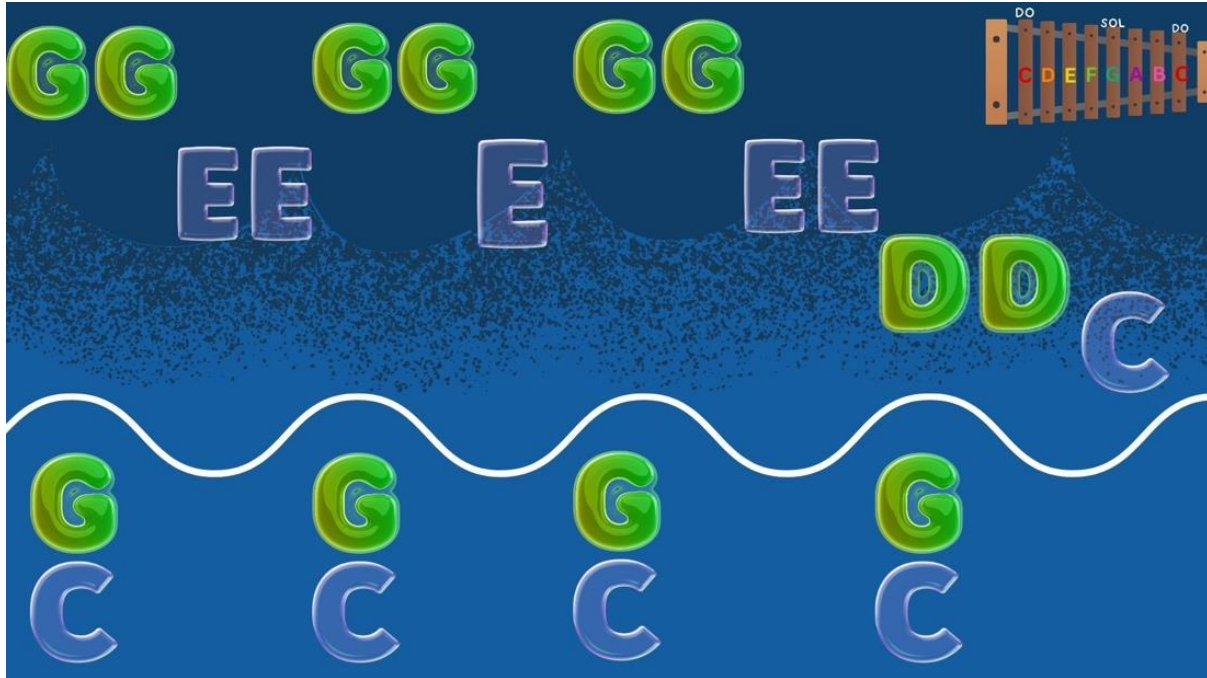
SX
Wen - dell will you play with us, You can lead us with your tusk!

BX
Tap Tap Tap Tap











Chapter 5: Conclusion

Once aspiring music educators graduate, they are left to fend for themselves. Many new teachers find themselves isolated and overwhelmed in the field (McCallum, 2018). Often, the elementary music curricula that music educators are provided act as an outline rather than a step-by-step guide. There is no set map to follow, the teacher creates the lessons and activities for the year by themselves. One teaching approach to help provide structure in the creating process is Orff Schulwerk. During my undergraduate experience I was fortunate enough to be placed in an Orff educator's classroom during my time as a student teacher. Through observing his teaching and the effect that it had on the students, it became clear to me that this was the approach to guide me in being a successful music educator. That experience was six years ago. Technically my “novice teacher” days are behind me, yet I still have moments of uncertainty in my teaching. My purpose for creating a lesson to help aid new educators in utilizing the Orff Schulwerk approach stemmed from my challenges in utilizing the approach when I first began teaching it by myself.

There is an abundance of resources out there for an elementary music educator, so many that it can be quite overwhelming to choose what to teach. When I first began my teaching career, my mind was filled with so many amazing lessons and ideas that had been presented to me. At the time it seemed like every amazing idea needed to be used in my classroom to be an effective music educator. By the end of the year, my students had little to no retention of most of the pieces that they had been taught. They had been overwhelmed with the amount that was presented to them.

One of the most common challenges for teachers when first using the Orff approach is remembering to be patient not only with the students, but with themselves. As Lemberg and

Loon (2018) noted: You have to know the foundations before you can implement new activities, and it is vital to be patient while taking on a new adventure. In my classroom, being patient with myself and the children resulted in sequencing the lessons more effectively.

Pacing in this context means taking an overall idea or lesson and dividing it into sections to last the span of multiple class times, like a unit. This presentation demonstrated a lesson that is easily grouped into chunks that allow for pacing yourself and your students. When I taught this lesson to my second-grade students, it spanned a full months' worth of music classes over the course of 4 to 5 meetings. Incorporating various musical concepts under one umbrella over time helps the students to learn the objectives while retaining the piece of music as well as the concepts used throughout. For instance, in my underwater lesson the concepts utilized included imitation, exploration, improvisation, composition, movement, and analysis. Spreading this lesson out and repeating various aspects with the students allowed for them to not only remember what they were previously taught, but to grow and expand upon what they originally explored and created.

Many teachers using the Schulwerk will enter a classroom filled with students that have never experienced independence in their creativity, and as a result some of the students will not know what to do. This is why it is important to assign activities by the students' level of understanding rather than by grade level. You also need to assess the condition of the classroom so you know where to begin. In my presentation, active reminders and guided questions were given throughout to help assist children in the creative process.

When entering a new school district with students that had never experienced Orff Schulwerk before, I very much experienced the hesitation of the students suddenly being left to freely create and explore for themselves. There were times where it ended in chaos, and times

when the students would just do nothing – too scared and unsure where to begin. Through this experience, I learned that being the teacher means guiding the students in whatever way they need in that stage of learning. Having been in my school for four years now, I do not have the same hesitancy from the students, as they are comfortable with my teaching and know no other approach. When this was not the case, frequent reminders and guiding questions were necessary. This led to higher level thinking through questioning and deeper exploration through discussion before putting anything to music. During my presentation similar questions were incorporated throughout, such as reminders during the movement activity to the piece “Aquarium” by Saent Sans. As the group moved around the room my guiding encompassed periodic check ins with questions. For example, “how does your character move in the water? High or low? Is your character locomotor or nonlocomotor? Have you noticed any other creatures in the sea around you that you would like to explore?.” There are many more higher-level explorative questions that could be given throughout.

Through completing this lecture recital, I learned a lot about my own teaching, and how to share and assist others in their teaching. During my time in the Orff Schulwerk levels courses, compositions and arrangements of pieces were frequent assignments. This is when I began to realize how to utilize the teaching resources Carl Orff created correctly. In my ambition to create my own lesson and workshop presentation, I had misled myself into thinking that everything created and presented had to be completely original content.

During the creating process I attended a professional development workshop at William Paterson University. This workshop was geared towards music educators but was not an Orff Schulwerk workshop. The presenter showed a conducting lesson using the book *Wendell the Narwhal*. As the story was read, I saw endless possibilities for movement activities, connections

to vocal explorations, and wording that would fulfill an ostinato easily. Once speaking to my colleagues and advisor, it dawned on me – why create a new abstract lesson if I did not know it would be effective? Looking back into my toolbox of resources, I realized I could utilize them in the lesson but still make them my own. At first, this made me feel as though the ideas in the lesson were stolen and imposter syndrome began to set in. Once I began my presentation, it was clear that all those thoughts were far from the truth. In using my resources from my undergraduate learning, my other certifications in various elemental music methodologies, and my experience teaching, I was able to create a lesson that incorporated some strategies that were very familiar to me, but completely new to those it was being presented to. With each activity that was inspired by my previous knowledge, I was able to add my own touch to it to make it feel fitting to the Orff Schulwerk process.

The attendees of the lecture recital presentation varied in teaching experience from novice educator to experienced educator. The group in attendance were fantastic participants throughout each activity. They provided constant reminders as to why professional development with fellow music educators can be so valuable. Many thoughts and ideas were shared throughout, with ideas coming from every background and experience. During the movement exploration, one teacher pulled out a bag of movement scarves, incorporating props into the exploration. This allowed for so much more creativity that I had not thought to incorporate. Throughout the following week, I went back to my students and redid the movement activity including props. Using the props in the workshop tied in the use and integration of color. Participants utilized varying colors to signify what they were. Some chose green to be seaweed, pink to show they were a starfish, and even orange and yellow to represent the sea anemones.

Throughout my time as a member of the Northern New Jersey Orff Schulwerk Association, I have come to look forward to workshop days. Because of its spirit of collaboration, the Orff Schulwerk community is one of the best resources to guide fellow educators through their challenges. Workshops within the Orff community provide tremendous resources, lesson ideas and inspiration for all who attend. Most resources and lesson examples that new teachers will find useful can be found through the American Orff Schulwerk Association website, as well as their Facebook group, on top of attending their local AOSA Chapter's workshops. These lessons are created by Orff educators using their own creativity with pieces found in the *Music for Children* volumes written by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman. In my experience as a new teacher, I obtained many of my lessons and activities through workshops. The workshops helped me to understand the feeling behind the approach as well as how to go about executing activities. Even deeper, the workshops provided me with a community of educators who understand the varying challenges an educator faces daily and offers solutions and amusement. At the end of the presentation, one attendee stated, "I came in late, and I just want to point out that as I was walking down the hallway all I could hear was laughter." As a person, and an educator, sometimes you just need to be surrounded by people who understand your world and can bring joy to it.

When choosing a thesis format, the choice of a lecture recital made the most sense to me. Being able to use my creativity to make something that could be shared and utilized in the classroom is exactly what I wanted to do. In comparison to a more "academic" thesis approach, my strengths were able to show in my creating and teaching process. As an Orff educator, being able to give back to my community and provide a resource to anyone in need of it has been a rewarding pursuit. All in all, my presentation was a way for me to share the core pedagogies

behind the Orff Schulwerk utilizing a creative scaffolded lesson that will engage young learners that are new or familiar with the Schulwerk. I felt as though my presentation was successful, and it has inspired me to continue creating and possibly to even present more in my future.

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