Orff Schulwerk Without Barred Instruments

“The speech exercise comes at the beginning of all musical practice, both rhythmic and melodic”

Carl Orff *Music For Children Volume I.*

Orff’s emphasis on the importance of expressive speech to encourage exploration of sound to bring words to life, because how you say it, is how you play it! The schulwerk media and processes will be explored in this session, and also an opportunity for the participants to create.

**Come to the Fair!**

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**Using Layered Speech Ostinato to Create Ensemble**

**Orff Schulwerk Process: Exploration, Imitation, Creation**

**Media: Movement, Speech, Play**

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**PATHWAY TO Rhythm: Prepare and label ♩♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩**

- Students sit crisscrossed on the floor facing a partner.
- Each person puts their right palm up and their partner places their left hand on top.
- One person taps the steady beat on their partner’s hand. Play 4-beat echo patterns. The other partner echo-taps on the beat-keeping partners upward facing hand.
- Begin with four beat rhythms containing ♩♩ and ♩
- Partners trade jobs.
- Help the students’ notice that the rhythm person is always tapping on the beat, but sometimes there are sounds in between the beats. For example, show the following patterns enclosed in heart beats. One student taps the beat and one taps the rhythm. Trade parts.

- Now show the same rhythm with eighth notes written as single eighth notes. Partners echo.
Partners perform all eighth notes:

- Partners echo \( \text{quarter note} \)

- Repeat the rhythm and ask the steady beat partner if the rhythm partner tapped precisely on every beat? (No. There was no tap at the beginning of beat 2.)

- Explain the syncopation by tying the eighth notes together:

- Show the rhythm again with quarter note:

- Each child keeps a steady beat as you speak the poem. With text on the whiteboard, ask them to identify which words match \( \text{quarter note} \)

  \begin{align*}
  \text{Come to the fair!} & \quad \text{Come to the fair!} \\
  \text{Come to the fair} & \quad \text{this sunny day. (You’ll like it!)} \\
  \text{Come to the fair!} & \quad \text{Come to the fair!} \\
  \text{Come to the fair} & \quad \text{and play!}
  \end{align*}

- Each child keeps a steady beat as you speak the poem. Ask them to find the syncopated rhythm.

- Students read the rhythm, with syllables, once they have decoded the notation.
Students speak the text as they read the rhythmic notation.

PATHWAY TO Partwork:

- Play an improvised traveling rhythm on a drum. Students step on the beat as they travel and explore the space.
- Ask the students to travel as if they are going to go to the fair. As they travel, prompt them to think of things they may see at a fair, such as a cotton candy stand or the game where you throw a ping pong ball into a tiny fish bowl to win a goldfish.
- On the given rhythmic signal (\( \frac{8}{4} \frac{8}{4} \)) the students stop traveling and perform a non-locomotor miming gesture of something people do at a fair while you play 16 beats on the rim of the drum. Give a clear signal at the end of the 16 beats to help guide the students feel the phrase.
- Return to a traveling rhythm on the head of the drum; students travel throughout the room until the return of the signal. (\( \frac{8}{4} \frac{8}{4} \))
- Students mime a new activity seen at the fair for 16 beats each time you play the signal. (\( \frac{8}{4} \frac{8}{4} \))
- Repeat this process several times to allow students the opportunity to explore many gestures, aurally reinforcing \( \frac{8}{4} \frac{8}{4} \).
- Speak the rhyme. Students listen for repeated patterns and form.
- Discuss the repeated patterns (\( \frac{8}{4} \frac{8}{4} \)) and the form of this rhyme. (\( a \ b \ a \ c \))
- Students speak the rhyme with text, and then with rhythm syllables.
- Model the speech ostinato accompaniment.
- Students join you on the speech ostinato.
- Divide the class in half. Half speaks the rhyme. Half speaks the ostinato. Trade parts.

PATHWAY TO Partwork: Layered ostinati

- Talk about barkers at the fair, whose job it is to use their voices and bodies in interesting, expressive ways to entice people into spending money at their booth, ride, or attraction.
- Model the Ferris wheel ostinato with appropriate gestures and bellowing, expressive long tones. Encourage the students to join you when they are ready. (simultaneous imitation)
- Students speak the Ferris wheel ostinato. Model layering the Whack a Mole ostinato in on top of the students’ Ferris wheel ostinato with appropriate gestures.
- Students learn the Whack a Mole **ostinato** through **simultaneous imitation**.
- Divide the class in half and perform the two **ostinati** together. Begin with the Ferris wheel **ostinato** and layer in the Whack a Mole **ostinato** on top of it. Trade parts.
- Perform the tasty treats **ostinato** with appropriate gestures. Ask the students to join you when they are ready. **(simultaneous imitation)**
- Divide the class into three groups and layer in the three **ostinati**, beginning with the Ferris wheel **ostinato**. Trade parts.
- Consider transferring each **ostinato** to UTP, to create a layered **UTP ostinati** piece.

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**PATHWAY TO Composition: Layered ostinati**

*Extension for your classroom, not part of today’s session*

- Divide the students into small groups.
- Remind them of the attributes of the example’s layered **ostinati**. (content, pace, length)
• Each group will pick one criteria from each category and compose their own speech ostinato with gestures.
  - Content: rides, games, foods
  - Pace: slow, medium, fast
  - Length: 16 beats, 8 beats, or 4 beats
• Small groups share their ostinati with the class. Class responds with observations. “Which criterion does this ostinato demonstrate?”
• Layer combinations of student created ostinati. This is where your teaching must become improvisatory. Respond to what the students have created and help them explore the possibilities for working with their diverse ostinati.
• Put the layered ostinati together with “Come to the Fair!” to create a final form.

The Kilkenny Cats

PATHWAY TO Poetry: Rote teaching and form analysis
• Speak the poem for the students, with the text on the whiteboard for them to follow along. Analyze the five 4-beat motives: a a b b a
• Teach the poem by rote, through echo imitation
• Students speak the poem with you.
• Students speak the poem without support.

PATHWAY TO Ensemble: Speech ostinati
• Students read the rhythm for the bottom ostinato.
• Students add text to the bottom ostinato.
  \[ \begin{array}{c}
  \text{Scratch, bite, what a nasty fight!}
  \end{array} \]
• Students perform the bottom ostinato. Once the ostinato is established, speak the poem on top of it.
• Divide the class in half. Half speaks the bottom ostinato. Once it is established, the other half speaks the poem on top of it. Trade parts.
• Students read the rhythm of the top ostinato.
  \[ \begin{array}{c}
  \text{Scratch, bite, what a nasty fight!}
  \end{array} \]
• Students add text to the top ostinato.
- Divide the class in half. Half speaks the bottom **ostinato**. When this **ostinato** is secure, have the other half add the top **ostinato**. When these two **ostinati** are established, speak the poem over the **ostinati**.

- Divide the class into three groups and perform in three parts. Rotate through the parts so that everyone has a chance to perform each part.
The Kilkenny Cats

Traditional

There once were two cats of Kilkenny. Each

Cat fight. They had a

Scratch, bite,

thought there was one cat too many. So they

cat fight. They had a

what a nasty fight!

fought and they fit and they scratched and they bit, Till ex-

cat fight. They had a

Scratch, bite,
PATHWAY TO Movement: Choreographing a dance to illustrate the form – a a b b a

- Lead the students in exploring cat shapes that are in high, middle, and low levels.
- Have the students create a pattern consisting of three shapes.

- Students perform their three-shape movement motive on the a motives and travel like a cat (preferably on two legs) during the b motives.
- When the students demonstrate understanding of this basic form, encourage them to make a change for the second b motive. It might be a change of body facing, direction or movement quality.
- Give them time to create a cat dance that pleases them.
- Put the students in pairs. Based on the previous movement exploration, have them choreography a cat fight consisting of a three-shape a motive, a locomotor b motive, with a change for the repeated b motive.
Students share their dance duets with the class.
Accompany these dances with the spoken poem or with the UTP ensembles created in the previous pathway.

I Let Her Go-Go  Jamaican Folk Song

With Rhythmic Question & Answer Improvisation

- Students begin in one class circle facing inward
- Students simultaneously imitate the teacher, outward like patting on “go-go”
- On the last “go go go” students clap their own hands
- Next, students face a partner around the circle
- Add clapping partners’ hands
- Switch spots with partner on the long “go”
- Clap own hands & turn half way around on the last phrase, to face a new partner
- Set up the phrase structure for question & answer improvisation
- Questions move in, answers move out while saying the text & switch after.

The Question, the question, fills this space
And then the answer, the answer takes it’s place!

Add percussion accompaniment
“See you later, see you later, see you later! GO GO GO!”
Then Question & Answer Improvisation  Mix up which instruments play on different words!

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