

I. “We’ve Come Together to Sing”

By Avon Gillespie

Adapted by Julie Scott

- A. Perform the entire piece as the students observe.
- B. Learn and sing the melody without the body percussion.

We've Come Together to Sing

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The image shows two systems of musical notation for the song "We've Come Together to Sing". Each system includes a voice line and five body percussion lines: Snap, Clap, Shoulder, Pat, and Stamp. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system covers the first two phrases: "We've come to - ge - ther to sing_" and "We've come to - ge - ther to dance_". The second system covers the next two phrases: "We've come to - ge - ther to cre - ate, and play, and ce - le - brate the day, to spir - it and mind_ en hance_". The body percussion parts use various rhythmic symbols: vertical lines for claps, slanted lines for shoulder pats, horizontal lines for leg pats, and vertical lines with a small triangle for stamps. The voice line is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp.

- C. Model and have the students imitate a clap, pats on the shoulders, pats on legs, and stamps. (Note: Model this in a “static,” way, rather than using the rhythm for now. This allows the students to practice the sequence of the body percussion slowly.)
- D. Perform the body percussion for phrases 1, 2, and 4 in rhythm with a slower tempo.
- E. Sing phrases 1 and 2 with the body percussion.
- F. Work on the body percussion for phrase 3—It’s different!
- G. Sing phrase 3 with the body percussion, then phrase 4 with the first pattern.
- H. Perform the entire piece.
- I. Transfer the stamp, leg pat, shoulder pat, and clap to drums of 4 different sizes (smallest to largest.) Have 4 students hold the drums, while another plays them with mallets.

- J. Transfer the snaps to triangles.
- K. Perform the song with instruments.
- L. Trade partners, and perform the piece again.
- M. On another day, you can add an improvisation section. The students who play the drums can take turns playing improvisations. There might even be choreography that allows the players to switch from drum holder to player with mallets while another person is improvising. How will we include the triangle players?
- N. Decide on a final form, and perform the entire piece.

II. Excerpt from *The Orff Echo*, Spring, 2011 President's Column by Julie Scott

By its very nature, Orff Schulwerk encourages students to try out their ideas and to examine and question many possibilities before settling on an answer. It encourages human contact and cooperative learning. In addition, Orff Schulwerk allows teachers opportunities to guide their students as they arrive at solutions that even the teacher never dreamed were possible.

Working together to solve problems creatively is of great value, but so is individual expression. Sometimes we solve problems collectively, and other times we solve them on our own. If we teach Orff Schulwerk in its purest form, we must provide opportunities for both styles of problem solving. Which means that, in addition to facilitating group work, we provide opportunities for a lot of individual improvisation. We talk about it, we learn to do it in levels courses, but in reality, many of us don't take the time to improvise; and without improvisation, we really aren't teaching Orff Schulwerk. Carl Orff made the point very clearly:

Unfortunately, the "Rhythmische-melodische Übung" [the first publication of Orff Schulwerk], offering sample material as it did, was widely misunderstood, since it is possible to practice and perform each piece as it stands. To do this would mean a total failure to recognize the purpose of this book. It is not the playing from notation but the free making of music in improvisation that is meant and demanded, for which the printed examples give information and stimulus. (1978, p. 131)

I know, I know! There is so much to do that sometimes there just isn't enough time to improvise. Consider this. Each time you teach a piece (a model for improvisation) by Orff, Keetman, or someone else, spend the next lesson on a quick review of the piece, followed by a lengthy improvisation session. This might mean that we present fewer models, so that the students have more time to create. But then, isn't it supposed to be their show, rather our show, anyway?

If we are true to its ideals, Orff Schulwerk can be the music education approach that leads the way to facilitating students' creativity and their "high concept" aptitude. Improvise and create more this week than you did last. And, in the words of Daniel Pink, "Good luck in the age of art and heart" (Pink, 2006, p. 247). It's our time!