**Creative Approaches to Movement in the Orff Classroom**

**Singing for the Classroom Teacher**

**Early Childhood Performing Arts Conference**

**August 19-20, 2017**

**Hosted by Victorian Orff Schulwerk Association, VOCA**

**Presenter: Victoria Redfearn Cave**

**\*\*See website for electronic notes and song recordings\*\***

[**www.orffteacher.com**](http://www.orffteacher.com)

**Saturday Workshop**

**March 22, 2014**

**Central Carolina Chapter**

**Victoria Redfearn Cave**

[**www.orffteacher.org**](http://www.orffteacher.org)

“In the world singing affects active listening,

receptive tuning,

and demands the most intense vivacity in dancing,

free-winging encounters with all living beings.

Thus singing can at the same time move us in our inner being,

may even cause a gentle pacifying revolution

and perhaps increasingly help to release us human beings

from hostile personal and social situations.”

From Lord Menuhin’s “Legacy on the Meaning of Singing”

**Vocal Exploration—The key to early voice training**

Mary Goetze once told me in a graduate class on young singers that English is a

difficult language for singing. Its chest register makes it hard for singers to explore

their higher register. Often, removing text and exploring higher ranges through

play is the best way to open up unexplored vocal territory. Any activity that promotes

vocalizing through play can help. Train whistles, books with sounds, soft sirens.

HINT: it will help adults as well as young children.

**Which Way Does the North Wind Blow?**

Game: Which Way Does the Wind Blow? A kindergarten teacher recently shared

this opening game with me. It is a good way for children to discover their

shared single story. What do they have in common with others?

Chant: “Which, way, does the north wind blow? Will I, find friends like me,

please make it so!” Rhythm from Volume 1 of *Music for Children*, p. 62, #1

\*\*Try to have questions not center on “what did I do for summer vacation,” or

“things” based questions. Could cause stress in some students.

Ideas for Common Themes: Colors, pets, siblings, shared interests

**Johnny Whoops!**

Traditional Rhyme (source unknown)

Game: Touch each finger and say the poem. You can alter where the whoops occur by joining fingers or starting on different fingers.

“Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, whoops, Johnny, whoops Johnny, Johnny Johnny.

**Snail Massage**

From a traditional Spanish poem

Game: Say poem and then keep changing the places of the snail massage. When you switch places for the massage, make a high sound “boop.”

“Snail, snail put out your horns and I’ll feed you some barley corn.”

**Susie is a Carpenter**

From James’ Harding’s book *From Wibbleton to Wobbleton*

Focus: Exploring the higher register when using the word “noon.”

**Hey Diddle Diddle**

Traditional Nursery Rhyme from Mother Goose

“Hey diddle, diddle, the cat and the fiddle,

The cow jumped over the moon (sigh)

The little dog laughed to see such a sport,

And the dish ran away with the spoon (sigh).”

**Engine, Engine Number Nine**

Traditional Jump Rope Rhyme

Found in The Magic Circle by Isabel McNeill Carley

“Engine, engine number nine,

Going down Chicago line,

If the train goes off the track,

Will I get my money back?”

Game: Have children choose how many beats to count after the rhyme. After the counting, they whistle like a train for two beats.

**Books for Vocal Inspirations**

Red Sled by Lita Judge

Owl Babies by Martine Waddell, illustrated by Patrick Benson

Owl Moon: From I’m Growing Up by New England Dancing Masters

**First Ranges and First Intervals: The Falling Third Etc..**

In most approaches of music education, you will find reference to early voice training

through the use of the falling third, s-m. Often early games and songs will

gradually add s-m-l. Usually a good pitch set is from d (step above middle c) to a, or

middle c to g. The solfege in those keys are: a-f#-b (s-m-l) in D or g-e-a (s-m-l) in C.

It is helpful for all beginning singers, even adults to have as much practice singing alone

but safely. Tubaloos (often used for early readers) can help make this experience more

anonymous and can help with hearing. Early childhood friends usually just enjoy games.

It is also helpful to have something that can help you get a starting pitch: barred

instrument, tuning fork, small chime, recorder, piano or guitar.

**Cuckoo, Where Are You?**

Game: A friend chooses a safe place to hide. The group will sing the call and the friend

(while in hiding), will sing the response.

Cuckoo, where are you?

s-m s s m

Yoo-hoo!

s m

**Apple Peach, Pear Plum, When Does Your Birthday Come?**

Game: Go around the circle and see when a birthday comes: date, season, month,

whatever friends can remember.

Apple peach, pear plum,

s s m s m

When does your birthday come?

s m m s s m

**Instruments that Help**

Recorder: It is portable, and you can usually self-learn from beginning books

such as Sweet Pipes series. It travels well in the classroom and keeps you

close to children. If you decide to do this, purchase a good instrument.

Recommended: three part Yamaha recorder, soprano, usually about $25 US

dollars.

Xylophone: This is more expensive, but can really be effective for

providing some basic accompaniment. It is accessible to play. When playing

games for s-m-l in D, use d and a as a drone accompaniment. When playing

games for s-m-l in C, use c and g as a drone accompaniment.

Guitar or Ukelele: Five chords can really get you far on these instruments.

My two favorite keys for playing are either D major (require d-g and a chords), or

G major (my favorite key for a sing-a-long situation) (require g-c and d chords).

**Just Sing Familiar Songs and Nursery Rhymes**

When in doubt, it is wonderful to use your own folk repertoire as a starting point for

singing with children.

Favorite songs for sing-a-longs for me: She’ll Be Coming Round the Mountain, Skip to   
 My Lou, Twinkle, Itsy Bitsy Spider, Wheels on the Bus, Muffin Man.

\*\*Most of these pieces can be found in resources by John Feierabend

**Final Tips**

Singing is a skill that can be developed.

Vocal exploration is a wonderful first step.

Get a friend who is safe that you can practice with and support each other.

Warming-up your voice and vocal conservation/care is important to early childhood

educators. When in doubt, rest and hydrate! Little friends love non-verbal lessons.

Learning a few basics on instruments can help add some spice to your work with

children. Youtube and older children can really be a great starting point. You could

even visit a strong elementary Orff program and have some older students help you.

Reward yourself for going beyond your comfort zone. Music and movement can be a

constant source of joy for your children. Give it a try!