

# LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

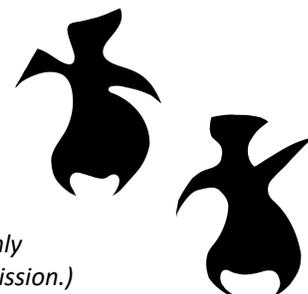
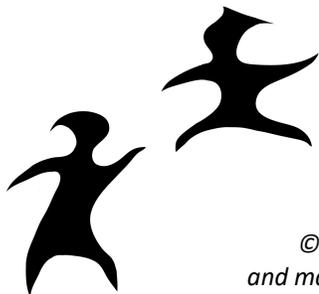
Greater Cincinnati Chapter, American Orff Schulwerk Association

October 26, 2019

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## *Spielbuch für Xylophon II, #5*

- Speak four-beat patterns of “walks” (quarter notes with one step per beat) and “joggings” (paired eighths with two steps per beat). Students echo the speech while moving the pattern through shared space in the classroom.
- Move from 4-beat patterns into a set movement scheme using the following text:

Jogging jogging jogging jogging,  
Always in the same place jogging!  
First I’m jogging in this circle,  
Then I’m jogging in that circle.  
(Phrases 1 & 2 are performed jogging in place,  
phrases 3 & 4 are performed jogging in a figure-eight pathway)
- Repeat text as written above twice, modifying on the second time through

Jogging jogging jogging jogging, always in the same place jogging!  
First I’m jogging in this circle, then I’m jogging in that circle.  
Jogging jogging jogging jogging, always in the same place jogging!  
First I’m jogging in this circle, **STOP!**  
(On the “Stop,” freeze after the first small circle instead of completing the figure-eight pathway.)
- Transfer from text to barred instruments, demonstrating on xylophone visual how the figure-eight pathway transfers to a pathway on the barred instruments.
- Add Alto Xylophone part using the following text:

I hate jogging! I hate jogging! Yuck! (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)  
I hate jogging! I hate jogging! Yuck! (2, 3, 4, 5) That’s too much jogging!
- Add intro of octave Gs using the following text:
  - Will the runners take their places? Everybody start the races!
- Use this much as the A section. As an alternate B section to what is printed in *Spielbuch II*, have the bass xylophones play a crossover bordun (C-G-C'-G) while students playing hand drums improvise using the following rhythmic building blocks (based on Presidential Fitness Testing activities):
  - ♩ ♯ Run
  - ♩ ♩ Pull-ups
  - ♩♩ Sit and reach
- Perform A B A

*Music education for children does not begin in the music class, but in the play time.*

*--Carl Orff*

## Approaching folk dances through playful exploration

### - Kolo (Yugoslavia)

As found in: Shenanigans: Folk Dances of Terra Australis, Volume 3, © 1994, Shenanigans Music; [www.shenanigansmusic.com.au](http://www.shenanigansmusic.com.au).

Formation: Standing circle.

Music: Recording of "Kolo" on CD accompanying Shenanigans: Volume 3 dance directions.

### DANCE DIRECTIONS

Beats	Directions
A1	
1-14	Walk 14 steps counterclockwise.
15-16	Take three quick steps to turn to face clockwise.
17-32	Repeat A1 1-16 traveling clockwise and turning to face counterclockwise.
A2	
1-6	Walk 6 steps counterclockwise.
7-8	Take three quick steps to turn to face clockwise.
9-16	Repeat A2 1-8 traveling clockwise and turning to face center of circle.
B	
1-4	Walk 4 steps in.
5-8	Bend knees to bounce in place twice.
9-12	Walk 4 steps out.
13-16	Repeat B 5-8.
17-32	Repeat B 1-16.

*Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.*  
--Fred Rogers

- Walk to steady beat when drum is playing. Stop when drum stops.
- Add finger cymbals as cue for feet to "turn around"
- Build to pattern of 5 drumbeats, finger cymbal on 6, "turn around" on 7&8
- Listen to music – notice triangle
- Add dance on A1 & A2 section, wait on B section
- After several repetitions, add dance on B section through simultaneous imitation (no explanation)

### - Mexican Mixer

As found in: Phyllis Weikert's Teaching Movement and Dance: A Sequential Approach to Rhythmic Movement, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., © 2006, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 600 North River Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48198; 734-485-2000; [press@highscope.org](mailto:press@highscope.org), [www.highscope.org](http://www.highscope.org).

Formation: Partners in a double circle facing counterclockwise, skaters hold (promenade position). Directions given are for inside person.

Music: Recording of "Mexican Mixer" on Rhythmically Moving 3.

*The main characteristic of play – whether of child or adult – is not its content but its mode. Play is an approach to action, not a form of activity.*

--Jerome Bruner

## DANCE DIRECTIONS (Mexican Mixer continued)

Beats	Directions
<b>Part I</b>	
1-4	Walk 4 steps forward counterclockwise. On fourth step, turn 180° to face clockwise.
5-8	Walk 4 steps backward counterclockwise.
9-16	Repeat Part I, beats 1-8, moving clockwise. Keep R handhold with partner, release L hand wither partner and take neighbor's hand; one partner is facing out of circle, one partner is facing into circle. This position is also known as the Alamo Position.
<b>Part II</b>	
1-2	Step R foot into the space and touch L foot next to R foot.
3-4	Step L foot out of the space and touch R foot next to L foot.
5-8	Turn ½ using 4 steps, keeping R handhold with partner (you are now facing the opposite direction).
9-12	Repeat Part II, beats 17-20
13-16	Keep holding neighbor's L hand and release partner's R hand; move in four steps to a position side by side with neighbor; start dance from beginning with new partner.

- Connect two hands with a partner, find a way to travel together and change body facings without letting go of hands
- Explore ways to remain connected but change body facings in the middle of the 8 beat walk in a single direction
- Highlight pair that finds promenade position and can flip easily; have others imitate
- Add "together, apart, around 2 3 4, together, apart, around 2 3 4"
- Move to circle formation, add requirement of going same direction
- Add mixer, add music

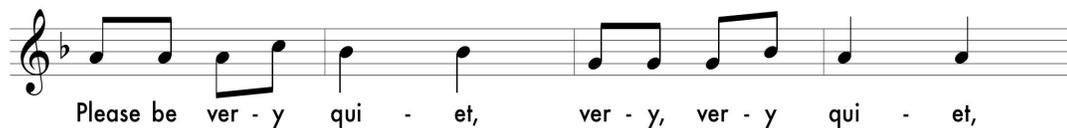
*"Play is the highest form of research."  
--Albert Einstein*

### Playing with singing games

- Grizzly Bear



Griz - zly bear, oh griz - zly bear is sleep - ing in a cave.



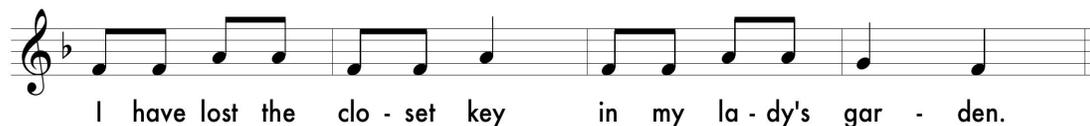
Please be ver - y qui - et, ver - y, ver - y qui - et,



If you wake him, if you shake him, he'll get ver - y MAD!

- Game directions in original source:
  - Children sing and dance around.
  - Child who is "it" wakes up on final "MAD!" and chases others, trying to catch them.
- Game directions in my classroom:
  - Students sing quietly while skipping/dancing around the classroom
  - When final word is shouted, students freeze "as still as statues" and teacher ("grizzly bear") walks through room, growling and sniffing room.
  - If a student moves or makes a sound, "Crunch!" - they become lunch for the grizzly bear.
- Student video of recess

- Closet Key



vs. 2: Help me find the closet key in my lady's garden...

vs. 3: I have found the closet key...

- Game instructions in original source:
  - "Drop the handkerchief" style game in which children stand in circle and sing first two verses.
  - At the end of the second verse, key is placed into one child's hand. That child then sings verse three alone before proceeding to walk around the circle with the key during the next round.
- Game instructions as created by my second grade students:
  - Verse 1: One child is in center of circle with eyes covered. Another student hides keys somewhere in room. Keys must be visible (not in a drawer, completely hidden under the rug, etc.)
  - Verse 2: Child from center begins to walk around classroom looking for the keys. Class plays "hot/cold" with dynamics, singing louder when student is close to the keys and soft when student is far from the keys. Repeat verse until keys are found.
  - Verse 3: Student who found the keys sings as a solo.

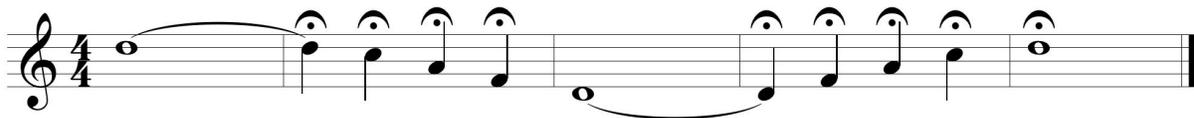
*The act of playing is an important tool that influences a child's life. The primary goals of childhood are to grow, learn, and play. It is often through play that children learn to make sense of the world around them. It is a child's "job" or "occupation" to play to develop physical coordination, emotional maturity, social skills to interact with other children, and self-confidence to try new experiences and explore new environments.*

*--American Occupational Therapy Association*

## Playing with body design as an entry point to choreography

- Individually explore body shapes
  - o High, medium, low
    - Suspended Shapes (Megan Tietz)
      - Walking through shared space, freeze in a shape that matches the level of the instrument you hear playing.
      - Low sound = low shape
      - High sound = high shape
      - Medium sound = medium shape
  - o Angular, twisting, straight, curved
  - o Symmetrical, asymmetrical
- Explore shapes with a partner
  - o Matching shapes (take turns as leader)
    - Can you match without facing your partner? Try other body facings
  - o Contrasting shapes
    - Try doing a chain of shapes instead of having a leader and a follower
  - o Complementary shapes
- Museum Game
  - o Some players are statues, others are museum-goers
  - o Museum-goers walk through room, look at statues, and pick one to make a matching, contrasting, or complementary shape
  - o When a statue notices that it has been joined, it becomes a museum-goer and begins to walk through the space examining other statues
  - o Music: "Det Lisle BÅnet," Trio Mediaeval
- Choreography using Shapes and Pathways
  - o Individuals explore body shapes, choosing two that can be remembered and repeated
  - o Explore transitioning between the two shapes by using three distinct "pausing points" in the transition
    - Shape 1 - - - Shape 2 - - - Shape 1
  - o Share dances with others, accompany with following melody

*Almost all creativity involves purposeful play.*  
--Abraham Maslow



- o Work in small group to create a dance following the same form: Shape 1 - - - Shape 2 - - - Shape 1
  - At least two group members must have matching shapes, other group members may work into the group shape by choosing complementary or contrasting shapes
  - Add a B section consisting of group-chosen pathway (tiptoeing along a curving pathway, sliding in a straight line, etc.)
  - Share B section with another small group. Your small group will use barred instruments to create a B section of the music to reflect the movement quality of the B section that the other group shared with you; they will create the B section for your group.



*Play is by its very nature educational. And it should be pleasurable.*

*When the fun goes out of play, most often so does the learning.*

*--Joanne E. Oppenheim*

## Playing with composition:

- Explore Simon online: <http://www.kidsmathgamesonline.com/memory/simon.html>

### One Seed

*to the tune of For Thy Gracious Blessings*

lyrics by Joan Walsh Anglund

One seed can start a gar - den, One drop can start a sea, One  
doubt can start a hat - ing, One dream can set us free.

- Learn canon through simultaneous imitation.
- Play "Xylophone Simon" as a whole group:
  - o Teacher plays a single note, class echoes.
  - o Teacher plays same note again and adds a second note, class echoes.
  - o Teacher repeats two-note melody and adds a third note, class echoes.
  - o Continue cumulative addition until melody is too long to be played successfully; when this happens, begin a new melody.
- Play "Xylophone Simon" with a partner.
- Extend to "Next Level Simon"
  - o Player 1 plays one note.
  - o Player 2 echoes that note and adds a second note.
  - o Player 1 echoes the new two-note melody and adds a third note.
  - o Continue cumulative addition until melody is too long to be played successfully.
- Use cumulative addition melody building to collaboratively compose a melody/melodic fragment to be shared with the class.
- Combine melodies into a new xylophone piece that can be played with the class.
- Perform in ABA form:
  - o A section - canon
  - o B section - newly composed xylophone piece

*Children need the freedom and time to play.*

*Play is not a luxury.*

*Play is a necessity.*

*--Kay Redfield Jamison*

## Bringing non-musical games into the music classroom

- Everybody Go \_\_\_\_\_
  - Leader says "Everybody go \_\_\_\_\_," inserting a different nonsense vocable and body gesture each time. Class answers, "Yes! Let's \_\_\_\_\_," imitating the sound and gesture.
  - After awhile of having one leader, go around the circle having each person take a turn as the leader.
  - Go around a second time, increasing the speed. The goal is to go fast enough that the sound/gesture are truly improvised, not planned.
  - On third time around circle, replace nonsense vocables with own name while maintaining the vocal inflections explored before.
  - Explore other ways to extend the game into the music room.
- Pass the Clap
  - Pass a clap around the circle from person to person. First, pass all the way around the circle, increasing speed while maintaining connection through eye contact.
  - Eye contact is crucial - make eye contact with the person passing the clap to you, and then make eye contact with the person to whom you are passing it before clapping.
  - After several times passing the clap around the circle, add the variation that it can be passed back to the person who gave it to you. (With kids, add the reminder that it's important that everyone gets to play!)
  - Replace clap with own name.
  - Replace clap with name of person to whom you are passing.
  - Explore other ways to extend the game into the music room.
- Group Clap
  - Stand in a circle with hands by sides. Without a leader, try to lift hands and clap in unison.

*The most effective kind of education is that a child should play amongst lovely things.*

*--Plato*