Appendix E

Movement

Movement and the Music Program

Introduction

Howard Gardner (1989) points out that "All humans are born with a combination of several ways of viewing the world". One of those multiple intelligences is music. According to Montgomery (2002), all people have the capability to think musically. It is a form of intelligence through which individuals communicate within their culture (Hodges and Haack, 1998).

If one examines historical literature, one realizes that music and dance have always been with us. In the Illiad-XVIII, Homer wrote:

And they followed, singing and dancing with fervor and stamped the ground in unison. And now they danced fast in a circle like a wheel .... And now they separated into two ranks advancing towards each other. And the crowd pressed around them charmed.

Plato (as cited by Jaques-Dalcroze, 1917, page 7) ascertains that "The whole of a man's life stands in need of a right rhythm...." The philosophical teachings of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel stress the importance of teaching through the use of rhythm. Twentieth century educators such as Rudolf Steiner, Emile-Jaques Dalcroze, Carl Orff, and Zoltan Kodály recommend teaching music through the medium of the whole body, in short, through movement. Rhythm is the basic foundation of that concept. In music, metre is based on the ability to follow stressed and unstressed beats. Movement is necessary for the development of rhythm and rhythm requires coordination and smoothness to be effective in music.

According to Lois Choksy (1999) a program of instruction in music should include singing and moving as its core. The ten basic concepts for early childhood classes (Choksy, page 20) may be taught through singing and moving.

Anyone who has ever attended a primary school concert inevitably has observed the back and forth motion that takes place when children sing. The movement is a natural accompaniment to the singing. "Youngsters of four or five like singing songs", says Kuzmich (1974, page 10), "particularly if they can be marched, clapped, or danced to. Listen to the songs they enjoy at play." Many of the game songs children sing prompt formations that are often used in circle and square dances. Weikart (1982, page 20) points out that "Infants and very young children who have been patted or bounced on a parent's knee to the beat of external music or spoken rhythms, or have been sung to, (or) rocked ... usually develop a kinesthetic feel for beat and subsequently achieve a basic level of rhythmic competency early in life." Rhythm appears to be a spontaneous body activity which contributes to the acquisition of

other learning skills such as singing. Kinesthetically, movement is another way of knowing and understanding music. These findings validate the relevancy of singing games and movement as part of school programming, and to music in particular (as cited by Barter (1991) in "The Relevance of Dance in Music Education", in the *Bulletin of the International Kodály Society*, Vol. 16, no. 2.).

What Movement Does

Movement is an integral part of music for students. Rhythmic movement, performed through the human voice, is one of the most unifying experiences that teachers can provide to students. Expression through movement reinforces what a child is hearing and feeling. Body and voice, internalizing and externalizing music experience, come together holistically.

Movement is another strategy for

- developing and internalizing beat and rhythm
- reinforcing other music skills such as form and phrasing
- developing sequencing and memory
- understanding our own culture as well as the cultures of others
- developing aural discrimination and body coordination
- developing creativity and problem solving
- enhancing self expression, social skills, and subject integration

Progression

According to Birkenshaw (1982) "repetition is the key to success in teaching children." She advises that teachers use progressive steps and an active music program that involves the whole child and includes melody, rhythm, movement and speech. One suggested progression for movement is as follows

- basic movement songs
- action songs
- singing games and dances in a circle
- semi-structured and structured dances - line dances (sashay, peel the orange, swing your partner, change partners) and folk dance
- free expression

Basic movement songs, action songs and singing games can take place in scatter, circle or line formation depending on the song, the type of movement and the age level, as well as the skill and readiness of the children.

Teachers also need to think about the age appropriateness of the songs. If students are late beginners, they may not be able to keep a beat or clap a rhythm. Therefore, teachers have to begin at the skill level of the child while being cognizant of the age level. *Billy, Billy* (**120 Singing Games and Dances**) is a line game liked by students of all ages. The actions can be made as simple or as complex as the age of the child. *London Bridges*, on the other hand, is a line game that may be limited to children in the primary grades.

Primary

Being able to keep the beat is the underlying foundation upon which the remainder of the music program rests. Basic movement songs should mainly be for primary students who need to do large muscle development activities such as walking, running, skipping, galloping, and hopping. Other activities which help to establish rhythm and keep a beat are chanting words and word patterns, saying nonsense rhymes and poetry, singing little songs, clapping or walking to the beat of the music. It is important to remember that children often do not naturally keep a beat (at any age). Clapping the beat as well as stepping, running, holding (for a rest or longer sounding note), keeping the beat while moving and adjusting space for line dances or moving from one partner to another while in circle or partner formation, are skills which many children need to learn and develop.

Elementary

Elementary students can do basic movement activities such as keeping the beat, using age appropriate music and activities. They like tapping the desk with a pencil or drumming, and have better hand coordination than primary children. Action songs are appropriate for all ages as long as the lyrics suit the age of the learner. Singing games such as *Billy, Billy* or *Turn the Glasses Over* can be used as a warm-up or readiness for the more structured activities where students have to use specific dance formations such as line confrontations, swing-your-partner, swing-some-one-else's-partner, peel the orange, or sashay.

Singing Games

It is recommended that teachers explore the comfort zone and readiness of children for movement/dance activity. Open-formation hand games or body actions, where students are not required to have partners or face-to-face confrontation, are more readily accepted. Teachers can begin with action songs like *Long-legged Sailor*, and circle games like *Lucy Locket, Cut the Cake, Stella Ella*, or *Weevily Wheat* before moving to line games such as *Billy, Billy* or line dances such as *Amasee*.

Circle and hand games allow children to focus on keeping a beat while performing a rhythm. Line games introduce a more advanced skill of being able to keep a beat while moving down the line and adjusting space at the same time. The face-to-face confrontation of line formation is another element which needs to be developed over time.

Not all movement will be done to the student's own singing. Although, traditionally, there are singing quadrilles, party games, and what is known in Newfoundland and Labrador as "chin music", there are also traditional folk dances which use instrumental accompaniments. As previously mentioned, circle

and hand games or un-partnered activity allow children to move from the less structured, to the structured, and on to the more creative and free expression formations.

Semi-structured and Structured Dance

Folk dances and semi-modern social dances involve activities of higher organization which call for specific formations and movements. These require high levels of coordination that are more appropriate for elementary level students who have acquired the foundational skills of beat and rhythm as well as having developed their listening skills and can distinguish melodic and rhythmic changes.

Considerations

• Begin with dances which require no partners - circle dances such as *The Hora* or a line, running dance such as the Yugoslavian *Savilla se Bella Loza,* are good starters

• Ask students to identify the metre and the tempo and perform the beat

• Be able to show students how to do all steps

• Count the beats in each phrase to match with the movement

• Ensure foot stamps and music accents match

• Isolate a section and teach the footwork without music

• Practise the steps with the music

• Ask students to identify patterns and repeated sections in the music and in the dance

• Ask students if the dance and the music finish together

• Extend the learning process by asking a group of students to teach a dance

• Make connections by identifying the country and learning about its culture - the people and their history, their geography, their language, their flag, their dress, the purpose/ function of the dance, the instruments used, how they are played and their timbre

Creative Movement

Creative movement extends beyond the semi-structured and structured movement progression outlined above. As Montgomery (2002) ascertains, as a mode of performance, creative movement can be used to gain "kinesthetic awareness of musical structure" (page 172) and accompany "music in order to dramatize the mood, expression, or story of the music" (page 176).

In other words, it provides another way to develop understanding and meet the music program outcomes in all organizers.

Children who have come through the primary music program have already experienced singing games, action songs, and dances. They have moved to music by stepping the beat, sliding, running, hopping, skipping, and moving in lines and circles with and without partners. This repertoire of movement activities can be used to expand children's ability to experiment with and create new compositions through free, interpretive movement.

The Creative Process

The creative process consists of four independent stages

- **perception** - hearing and interpreting the music

- **exploration** - using body shapes, levels of body placement (e.g., high as in arm extension and low as in sinking, rolling and kneeling), direction (moving forward, backward, left, right, up, down), speed (fast/slow), and contrasting movements

- **creation** - using their explorations to create movement/dance for self (personal) as well as shared movement/dance through mirroring and leading/following

- **appreciation** - reflecting on/responding to the expressiveness of the music and their own movement creations and the creations of others

These interdependent stages need to be guided. Consider the following

- Choose the music carefully

- Establish a warm and accepting atmosphere

- **Be involved with the activity, MOVE TOO** - teachers must model and demonstrate his or her belief in the activity

- Assist students by observing, modeling, commenting, encouraging, and suggesting

- Remember the importance of repetition

- Move from the known to the unknown - for example, students listen to the music, keep the beat, discuss what they hear (where it changes, how they should move before and after the change)

- Leave activities open-ended to allow for choice making, role playing, problem solving, and application of the intellectual process

Sample Strategies

Introducing creative movement in small steps allows the opportunity for students to build confidence. Some students are intimidated by the creative process and may need a more directed approach.

Strategy 1

Use bamboo sticks (about 36 inches long). Students will work in pairs. Partners balance two bamboo sticks between their index fingers and experiment with moving to the music without dropping the sticks. Use a variety of musical examples (fast/slow, loud/soft, marching/running) with the activity. Expand the exercise by asking pairs of students (or larger groups) to create a dance using the sticks in other ways.

Strategy 2

Students lie on their backs on the floor. Play the musical example. Students respond to the music by moving their hands in the air. Extend the movement to the feet so that both arms and feet are raised and moving to the music. Next, students sit up and respond to the music with their upper body. Students then stand and respond, using their whole body while remaining in place. Finally, students move around the room, responding with their whole body.

Strategy 3

Create movement for listening selections such as *Carnival of the Animals* (**Listening Kit I**), *Autumn* (**Musicplay 2**) and *Nutcracker* (**Musicplay 3**). Students use a scarf or ribbon and respond to the music, moving (waving) the scarf in various patterns in time to the music. Teachers can guide the process by having students: (a) listen to the music, (b) discuss how the music sounds, (c) discuss possible movements, and (d) why. Expand the activity to create a dance for the piece, using the scarf as an extension of the whole body.

Some ideas for beginning movement experiences can be found in **An Orff Mosaic from Canada**, Chapter 12, and T**eaching Towards Musical Understanding**, pages 155-156. Creative dance ideas and musical selections can be found on the **Music for Creative Dance** CD.

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Authorized Resources Related to Movement

The Kodály Method I

An Orff Mosaic from Canada

Teaching Towards Musical Understanding

120 Singing Games and Dances

Roots and Branches

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Music for Creative Dance

Dance Music for Children

Multicultural Folk Dance Treasure Chest