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KINESTHETIC AND HANDS ON ACTIVITIES
IN SECOND GRADE GENERAL MUSIC

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RESEARCHER STANCE

I never meant to be a music teacher. Growing up in the frigid, rural upstate New York countryside, I learned to love music. I loved to sing, play the piano and play the trombone in our high school Jazz Band. I was the lead in every high school musical. I took both voice and piano lessons and competed in regional and state festivals. My music teachers were proud and supportive; my mother attended every concert and listened to endless hours of practicing. Everyone around proclaimed me a great talent. “You’re that girl!” one woman actually said to me at the gas station. “The one from the show!”

“Yes, I am,” I would answer proudly. I knew, in my heart, that I had great talent.

What I didn’t expect was that others would not always share my opinion. As my senior year of high school came around and I started auditioning for college voice performance programs, I soon realized that I was a big fish in a very small, but enthusiastic pond. No conservatory admission letters, no scholarship money. I was accepted, though, at Westminster Choir College as undecided, but I really should have been registered as deflated. In my first meeting with my college advisor, his words of wisdom were, “Register Music Ed. You’re going to do it sooner or later.” I shrugged. It sounded good to me. Thus, a career in music education was born.

By all accounts I was a terribly average student. I was no great shakes on the piano; my theory grades were middle of the road, and music history

was often one long nap to me. I was nothing great, but I wasn't awful either. And because I wasn't awful, I stayed. I stuck it out. In a school where a great many freshmen quit before the end of the first year, I couldn't rationalize the argument for quitting to myself, or to my parents. In time, my ego even recovered a bit, although thankfully never to rise again to the heights it had once achieved.

My Music Education professors never seemed to think me as mediocre as I had begun to see myself. They were tough, critical and firm in their convictions of how best to teach music. They seemed to have a vision of my success that I did not. They had high standards. When I was sent out into the schools for my first practicum assignment, their conviction that I would do well paid off. As I taught some of my first lessons, I remember thinking, "Okay, I get it! I know how to talk so that kids understand." Soon other lightbulbs started to turn on. I felt for the first time that I was going to be more than okay at this.

My professors continued to challenge me as I began my final semester. I read theory on teaching music, and for the first time encountered the ideas of David Elliott (1995), who is the first person I had ever noticed using the word 'music' as a verb. In his words, "Musicing reminds us that performing and improvising through singing and playing instruments lies at the heart of MUSIC as a diverse human practice" (p. 49). A tiny seed must have been planted then, because years later, I would find myself coming back to the same ideas that Elliott was voicing so well. In the fall of my senior year, deep thoughts had to be pushed aside, because I was in the fight or flight time known as student teaching.

My student teaching assignment was a fifth and sixth grade school on the outskirts of Philadelphia. This place was quite diverse with children from many backgrounds and cultures coming together to learn and grow. So many of these children were so different from me that I initially had no idea where to begin with them, but after the first week or so, I realized, "These are kids just like anybody else's kids. If I can teach anybody, I can teach them." Soon enough I was teaching, if not perfect, then at least respectable, solid, lessons and I was on my way to becoming a teacher.

I spent the first two and a half years of my career floating around as a long term substitute. I taught Kindergarten through sixth grade general music and directed fifth and sixth grade choirs. I prepared students for holiday concerts, spring concerts, grade level musicals, and graduation ceremonies. I took on one job where I was itinerant - four schools in five days. In three of these schools there was no music room, so I traveled from classroom to classroom. Most of the time I had no other music teachers to serve as mentors to me. Thankfully, I met many wonderful classroom teachers who eagerly served as pedagogical guides to me. These were some of the hardest years of my teaching career. They were also the years of my career where I really learned to teach. Often it felt as if I were learning everything the hard way, bumping into every corner and walking backwards much of the time. I think back my first years as "survival teaching". Although I often felt discouraged, I never once questioned that this was what I wanted to do with my life. I wasn't as sure of my abilities as I had been back in high school, but I knew I belonged in the music classroom.

At the end of my year as an itinerant teacher, I decided to cast my net wide for the next job. I conducted a five county job search, and I remember saying in many interviews, "I want a job where I can put down roots and become part of the school community." The school that hired me was a good fit from the beginning. I have been teaching vocal music and third and fourth grade chorus there for four years. My goal during the first year was simply to get a sense of my students and the school and to continue the fine work my predecessors had begun.

I started my master's degree program in the second year of my new job. The first class that I took, "Teacher as Inquirer" introduced me to the idea of teacher action research. I was immediately fascinated by the idea that my classroom could be a laboratory. I knew that I had always been a sort of scientist, learning through trial and error as I went, but here was a more systematic, and hopefully trustworthy way of improving my teaching. I wanted to know what would happen if I used additional regular education classroom techniques in the music classroom. I conducted a mini-study with my fourth graders, implementing a music journal into their curriculum. As they studied the subject of harmony, I asked them to answer open-ended questions in a journal we had constructed in class. Collecting this new data from students, I suddenly acquired a three dimensional picture of them that I had never had before. At the end of the mini study, I asked the students to write about this new tool; did the journals help them to learn? A majority agreed that the journals were helpful, and I have continued to use them as both reference and reflective journals.

The students had indicated that they primarily wanted to use the journals as references for their musical learning. To that end, we dedicated a page for each unit we covered in the curriculum, melody, rhythm, harmony, form, tone color, expression and style. When we study rhythm, the students construct a rhythm reference bank, much like a word bank, that categorizes the notes we are using into one, two, three or four beats. I also continue to use the journals reflectively, usually asking the students open-ended questions. An example of a reflective entry would start, "Rounds are challenging to sing because...". The journals have become a staple in my fourth grade music classes and I gain a great deal of insight from the work my students do in them.

PILOT STUDY

Encouraged and excited, the very next semester I took a course entitled, "Teacher as Researcher." Once again, I was to conduct a mini study. I spent a lot of time pondering what question I wanted most to ask. I had so many! Over all, I felt that my classroom teaching was competent and thorough, but many of my students were not as engaged as I wanted them to be. I worried over the amount of time I spent talking and my students sat listening. They were polite and usually well behaved, but there was very little spark and vitality in the classroom. I focused perhaps too much on classroom management, using a cumbersome system of rewards involving stickers, grab bags and special reward days. The students were increasingly unmotivated by the reward system, often grumbling and complaining

about prizes. I was tired and fed up. Music was supposed to be fun - but nobody was having a blast in my classroom, least of all me!

The very week that I was thinking about these issues in my classroom, a colleague and I attended a Saturday Seminar at my alma mater, Westminster Choir College. The seminar was an introduction to the Dalcroze method of teaching music. I learned that Dalcroze's work emphasized the connection between music and movement. A group of about twenty music teachers spent the day acting as children, moving, singing, making music. It was nothing short of a transcendental experience for me! Instead of talking about the concepts involved in the music, we simply did them. It was truly learning by doing. I realized that day that the connection between music and movement is deeply rooted in all human beings. I had never understood music as implicitly as I did when I was moving with my group to the rhythms of the songs we were singing. I left the seminar filled with a new purpose in my teaching. I wanted to make music into a 'doing' experience for my students, something that they knew in their body before they expressed it in words.

I decided to design my mini study to capture this 'aha' moment for my students. In two second grade classes, I incorporated kinesthetic activities into a unit on melody. Because the course I was taking was really about data collection methods, I had the opportunity to try out various approaches to data collection, which I will further define in the methodology section of this paper. In this mini study, I used participant observations, student work and interviews as the main sources of my data. My students were introduced to the pentatonic (or five note)

scale, and practiced it through various kinesthetic activities. They showed the relationship between the notes by becoming the notes as they stood at different levels to show their relative pitch. They plotted out melodies with their bodies on a music staff taped to the floor. They played rhythm instruments and barred instruments, such as the xylophone. Warmup and concluding activities and even transition times were all movement oriented.

At the end of the mini study, I was thrilled by my students' progress! Their comprehension of the subject matter was quite impressive. They were beginning to show a facility of movement, which was wonderful, considering the small amount of movement we had previously done. I observed an immediate decrease in off-task behaviors and a dramatic leap in engagement. The students themselves responded positively to the inclusion of kinesthetics. Many cited the movement activities we did as their "favorite activity" in our interviews. Personally, I felt like my teaching was beginning to take flight. I was ready to try out these ideas in a larger study, in an attempt to learn even more about children's response to engaging musical learning through movement.

The following spring, as I prepared for the larger study, I conducted a review of the literature on kinesthetic and hands - on learning. I read research studies on hands-on learning and articles about theories and theorists. I reread Elliott's thoughts on "musicing" and Gardner's work on multiple intelligences. I then compiled a synthesis of what I had read.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to a 1992 survey by the National Census Bureau, fifty-eight percent of American adults participate in the arts. Of these adults participating in the arts, only four percent play classical music. Only twelve percent of the general population attends classical music concerts (Peters & Cherbo, 1996). It seems that the adults of America are sending a clear message regarding classical music - it doesn't interest them. Yet elementary age children come to music class full of enthusiasm and excitement for learning new music. Somewhere along the way, students are getting turned off by their musical experience. It seems that music teachers have a responsibility to improve the quality of instruction in their classroom. What methods are most effective? Kay (2000) advises the use of a leveled instructional method such as the Kodaly, Orff, Dalcroze, or Gordon method to teach sequential skill development. While some studies suggest that there is no correlation between music teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Doane, Davidsen, & Hartman, 1990), common sense tells us that at the very least a quality musical experience should engender a love of music.

According to John Dewey (1938), the experiences a child has in a classroom are always personal. Whether the experience fosters a love of learning or turns a child against the topic forever often depends on the choices made by the educator. Dewey states that the duty of the educator is to "arrange the kind of experiences which, while they do not repel the student, but rather engage his activities are nevertheless, more than immediately enjoyable since they promote

having desirable future experiences” (p. 27). In music this is a delicate balance. Children can be easily dissuaded from a love of music by one experience that is unpleasant, or one teacher who humiliates them. As a music educator it is my challenge to provide experiences that will not only be educational, but also enjoyable and provide anticipation for the next experience.

The work of psychologist Lev Vygotsky compliments Dewey’s theory of experience. Vygotsky (1978) states that the Zone of Proximal Development “defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation” (p. 86). The educator’s task is to determine which stage of development the child is at and then to further his or her learning by providing experiences that will allow them to transition their learning. Children would then move knowledge from the Zone of Proximal Development to the category of material that is already mastered.

While it is my purpose to investigate what happens when I attempt to integrate kinesthetic and hands-on activities into my music curriculum, it is advisable to step back and consider the reasons for teaching the curriculum in the first place. Are we teaching merely for the sake of stuffing knowledge into our students? Paulo Freire (2002), argues that teaching can sometimes unfortunately be compared to banking. In the banking concept of education, “the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing and storing the deposits” (p. 72). He warns that it is “the people themselves who are filed away through the lack of creativity, transformation, and knowledge in this (at best) misguided system” (p. 72). I sincerely hope that teaching through movement and

hands-on activities will allow my students not only to catalog knowledge but also to allow this knowledge to transform them into more sophisticated learners.

What are the experiences that are fulfilling to children in the music classroom, that allow them to grow and develop and that nurture creativity? The work of Emile Jacques-Dalcroze and Carl Orff both point to the integration of hands-on, kinesthetic activities in the music lesson. Dalcroze taught his students eurhythmics, (in Greek, 'good flow'), encouraging them to move their bodies in rhythm as they performed music. This bodily-kinesthetic connection to music provided a basis for more expressive, rhythmically grounded musicianship (Mead, 1996). Schnebly-Black and Moore (1997) remind us that "when Dalcroze realized that the swing of the body in a normal walk creates a natural pulse, he established the source from which all the rest of his work grew" (p. 17). Orff's elemental approach to teaching music concentrated on developing a language using voice, movement, and instruments. Much like in language acquisition, music is first explored, then it is imitated. Imitation leads to improvisation and creation of original music (Calvin-Campbell, 1998). All of these thoughts led me back to Elliott and the idea of "musicing" as in music making through action. Juntunen and Westerlund (2001) synthesize the ideas of Elliott and Dalcroze, saying that "the development of musicianship happens in action, through action and within action" (p. 204).

The work of other educators can also support the idea of a kinesthetic education. Maria Montessori believed that children learn best through what we would now call kinesthetic and tactile learning styles. She taught children

through their hands and through movement (Calvin-Campbell, 1998). A four year study of at-risk children taught language arts through the Montessori method showed that they outperformed their classmates who were not classified as at-risk (Grant, 1985). In another study, kindergarten students who were taught language arts lessons that utilized a kinesthetic approach were found to have more engagement in their lessons than those who did not (Etemad, 1994). Thorpe and Borden (1985) found that engagement and on-task behaviors were higher in students who were taught lessons with visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile components, as opposed to the students who experienced instruction using only visual and auditory components. Even a study of children's museums showed that children preferred interactive hands-on exhibits, staying longer and participating more at those exhibits (McGrath-Speaker, 2001). All of these studies correlate the idea of hands-on learning with higher levels of achievement and engagement.

Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences can also support the use of kinesthetic activities in the music classroom. Gardner's theory proposes that there are eight human intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalistic, intrapersonal, and interpersonal intelligence. Gardner (1983) states a characteristic of kinesthetic intelligence as "The ability to use one's body in highly differentiated and skilled ways, for expressive as well as goal-directed purposes"(p. 206). Calvin-Campbell (1998) reminds us that expressing emotion through movement is much like expressing emotion through music. Students who express music through movement in music class will be developing both musical and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences.

It is important to remember that not all children will be strongly musical or bodily-kinesthetic learners. In an interview conducted by Lockwood (1993) for *Research and the Classroom*, Gardner says of his theory, “Appreciating that people are different from one another, that they learn differently, that they don’t have the same interests, is important at any age” (p. 5). The fact that some children are stronger in certain intelligences than others can work to the teacher’s benefit. In a study of middle school special-education students, students were paired so that both students’ strongest intelligence was the weakest intelligence of their partner. These students worked together better than the students who were grouped randomly (Elfers-Wygand, & Seitz, 2001). It should also be noted that a difference in teacher and student learning styles may affect instruction. A student who is highly kinesthetic may meet with failure and frustration if his or her teacher does not favor that learning style (Peacock, 2001).

Students’ learning styles may change as they get older. In a large-scale study of 25,000 students, many students who originally favored the tactile learning style in fifth grade no longer preferred it in twelfth grade (Gadt-Johnson, & Price, 2000). In light of these findings it would seem most equitable to try to give equal attention to all the intelligences and learning styles while engaging students in meaningful hands-on activities.

What sorts of hands-on, kinesthetic activities will engage students in the classroom? Moving, playing instruments, using manipulative materials, and interactive technology can all be effective activities. Manipulative materials, much like Montessori’s sandpaper letters, could translate easily into music notation

materials. Children are naturally inclined to movement and can be wonderfully expressive with their bodies. Movement can be a kind of physical language for expressing stories and ideas (Griss, 1994). Neill (1990) reminds us that movement in music class should be taught in stages, from nonlocomotor to locomotor movement. Teachers can implement curricular concepts such as form to the simple dances and movements students perform.

Classroom instruments can be an engaging hands-on activity for students. The Orff method encourages students to improvise on barred melodic instruments such as the xylophone or metallophone. Students practice the concepts they are learning and are given limits for their improvisations. Eventually, improvisation will lead to composition (Rudaitis, 1995). A nontraditional idea is that of a portable keyboard lab. Students can learn the rudiments of playing the piano while practicing the elements of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, form, and expression (Bissell, 1995).

I would be remiss if I were not to mention the importance of technology as a potentially hands-on, interactive activity. A study of students using interactive mathematics software versus regular classroom instruction found that when the students used computers they were more engaged and excited by their learning than when they were in the regular classroom. The students also felt more autonomy over their learning and worked together to learn more (Fitzpatrick, & Faux, 2002). One example of using technology in the music classroom is that of composition using a midi-keyboard, a computer and notation software. Students can begin the composition process through traditional Orff methodology, improvising

on barred instruments. Once they have gotten proficient improvising rhythms and melodies and know what form they would like to use, students can compose a short melody at the midi workstation (Vennemeyer, 1999). Clearly, this type of technology could prove very useful in the upper grades, after laying a solid foundation of movement and other kinesthetic activities.

If children are to become musically literate it is important to give them every opportunity to connect with music when they are young. Music should be a language with which every child is both familiar and fluent. In a society where language itself is a point of contention, and children who speak nonstandard English are regarded as less intelligent than those who speak Standard English (Dowdy, 2002), music is one form of communication that transcends social and cultural differences. This alone makes the experiences of children in elementary music classes of primary importance. Moving, singing, playing instruments, and using technological and manipulative materials all work together to provide those important experiences. Using hands-on activities provides a level of intimacy with music that can never be achieved through a textbook alone.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

After reviewing the literature on kinesthetic approaches to education, I knew that this was the direction in which I wanted my classroom to move. Letting children experience music by doing rather than just talking about it or through pencil and paper activities was going to be my focus. I started to wonder, 'What happens in a music classroom where kinesthetic and hands-on activities are incorporated?' It was important to me to acknowledge that not every activity was going to be kinesthetic, or movement oriented, but that each major activity within the lesson would have a hands-on component.

I prepared a proposal for the Human Subjects Internal Review Board at Moravian College, outlining my research topic and design. The board reviewed my plan to ensure the safety and best interests of the participants involved, my students. I requested and received approval from the board to begin my study.

With board approval, I was ready to begin data collection. My first task was to get consent for all of the students in the class I had chosen to participate in the study. I sent home a consent form describing my study and informing the parents of the students' rights as study participants. I also discussed the study with my students and repeatedly assured them that participation in my research study was not mandatory; nor would their non-participation in the study affect their music class grade. I requested and received consent from all eighteen students and their parents in my second grade class to participate in the study. My student consent

form can be found in Appendix A. I also requested and received permission from my principal to begin the study. The principal's consent form can be found in Appendix B.

During the next eight music classes I kept track of my students' experiences in a field log. The field log was a collection of data: participant observations, student work, surveys and interviews. While the students were in class, I maintained anecdotal records of what they said and did during each activity. Later, I would write out each of these participant observations in a descriptive narrative. Burnaford (2001) observes that, "field notes help the researcher reconstruct dialogue using language that is as close as possible to that which is heard in the classroom" (p. 57). By taking an active part in each music class activity, I was considered a participant and therefore my own experiences were documented as well. Any reflections of my own were put in brackets and called 'observer comments'. MacLean and Mohr (1999) state, "Reflections on observations and the new ideas that come from them become the first attempts at analysis. Teacher-researchers' log entries, as ongoing documents of classroom life, point in a gradual way toward the findings and interpretations that eventually result" (p. 33).

As soon as I the consent forms were returned, I administered a survey to the class that was designed to gauge the students' feelings about music class activities using a Likert-type scale. On the survey was a list of activities the students had experienced in music class and three faces next to each activity. One face was smiling; one was frowning; and the middle face looked neutral. The

students were to circle the face that best described their feelings about each music class activity. I collected the surveys and tabulated the results before the next class. The survey form I used can be found in Appendix C.

One of the challenges of collecting data was in documenting student work. Because the children were primarily moving, singing, playing games and instruments, their work was not something tangible that could be easily photocopied and put into the log. Instead, I tried to carefully record their actions and reactions in the participant observations. When we did our final activity in the study, a group movement project, the students wrote down their plan for movement, not only to provide a record of their choices, but also as a reminder of their plan when they returned to the activity the following week.

The final method I used to collect data was to interview all of the students. Following the advice of Eder and Fingerson (2002), I interviewed the students in small groups of three or four in order to “minimize the power differential between the researcher and those being studied” (p. 183). I wanted the children to feel comfortable answering my questions, and I hoped to accomplish that by putting them in small groups instead of questioning them individually. The questions I used were open ended, and I tried to follow up with each student and help them to explain their responses in greater detail. Following the advice of Arhar, Holly and Kasten (2001), I did not express my own opinion, but tried to be “attentive and show interest in responses that help the student to feel comfortable” (p. 153). My interview protocol can be found in Appendix D.

I tried to make certain that my research was trustworthy and that I could come to credible conclusions about my data. In order to do this, I worked to triangulate the data and present multiple perspectives. I captured the students' voices through their surveys, interviews and our interactions in the participant observations. I discussed my project with my research support group to gain their feedback and suggestions. I reviewed the data I was collecting and added my own observations and reflections. As I did this, a more complete, clear and detailed picture of my study came into view. Arhar and her colleagues remind us that this process of triangulation and crystallization "suggests that using multiple sources is not a search for truth, but rather a search for clarity on the perspective we each bring to the data and its analysis" (2001, p. 208).

THIS YEAR'S STORY

This fall marked the fourth year I've taught elementary vocal music in my district. My school is quite a large one, with approximately 750 students in grades K - 4. I teach my students their music lessons once a week for forty minutes, and I direct the third and fourth grade choruses. This was also a year of change. I moved to a different room because our school had expanded during a redistricting effort, and many rooms were shuffled around to allow grade levels to be together. Hence, I spent a great deal of time this summer preparing the new room for my students' arrival. I put up new bulletin boards, hung posters, and decorated every nook and cranny with bright, cheerful music notes. Another big change for the

music room was new seating. I had been able to order a product called “Flipforms” from the Wenger Corporation, a music furnishings company. The Flipforms I ordered are basically large plastic risers that flip open to form a flat platform or up to form two or three-tier seating. The bright red, green, yellow and blue of the Flipforms adds a pleasant, cheerful affect to the room. The Flipforms are a replacement for a set of tables I had, which I wanted to eliminate for a few reasons, including the fact that no matter how I arranged the tables, some students’ backs were still facing me, which in turn became a classroom management concern.

During the first week of school, I was excited and pleased to see all of my students again. As a music teacher, I have the distinct pleasure of watching these children grow up, and for many of them I am the only musical influence in their life. It is truly rewarding to watch them mature as people and musicians as they progress from grade to grade. In that first week, I noticed that we had quite a few students who were new to our school, due to redistricting or just having moved to our area. The class I was planning to include in my study came to me on Wednesday. These lively second graders have a homeroom teacher, who I’ll call “Mrs. S.” I chose this class mainly for logistical reasons. I teach on average six classes a day, and it is difficult to remember the details from one particular forty minute music class after five other classes of some twenty-odd children have also come and gone. “Mrs. S” and her class come to music directly before my planning period and I knew that I would have time following her class to more fully write down the details of the class activities. At our first music class my impression of

this group was that these students were energetic, eager to please, and well behaved without being overly polite.

Of course a few children immediately stood out as “big personalities” that I remembered from first grade. Vanessa can be, in turn, both bossy and helpful to others. She has an exuberant manner, but can also become suddenly pouty and irritable. Sidney is Vanessa’s “sidekick”, and the two of them seem joined at the hip. Sidney is cheerful and always ready to play a game. She is not as concerned with being the ‘top banana’ as Vanessa is, she just wants to have fun. Marcus is the puzzle to me this year. His behavior is often completely out of control, falling down on purpose, shouting out nonsense words, making sounds like a rooster crowing or a dog growling. But when Marcus smiles, his whole face lights up, and I can’t help but smile back at him. Nicholas often likes to clown around. He is almost always giggling at a joke or making the others laugh at his antics.

There are some other students whom I know from last year. Brianna, Kristen, Carsten, Travis and Thomas all tend to be highly engaged children. They tend to ‘get it’ right away when I am presenting a new concept. They seem open to all types of music class activities. Others whom I remember as somewhat less attuned to what I am teaching include; Andrea, Samuel, Joshua, Evelyn, Ryan and Robert. I recall them as good participants, but not necessarily mastering concepts with ease. Ainsley, Karly, and Letitia are new to me this year, I knew I would need more time to get to know these girls.

During the first two weeks, I taught the class as I usually do, reviewing first grade rhythms and melodies, teaching new songs and games, and

getting the second graders acquainted with using the music textbook. This is the first time that they have had to use a textbook in music class. Last year, in first grade, I would show them a “Big Book,” a large chart-like book that I could set on the floor or a table and have all the children look at once. The adjustment to the textbook takes a little while, and finding page numbers often requires several minutes of class time. Another important objective for me during those first few classes is talking about rules and routines. At the end of class, I always go over the classroom rules. The rules are to “be respectful, be a good listener, and be responsible.” The students then show me how they did by giving a thumbs-up, thumbs in-the-middle, or thumbs-down for each rule. I had changed my rules slightly from last year, and also did away with a reward system I had been using in favor of less extrinsic and more intrinsic rewards. Where to sit, how to transition from one activity to another, what to sing at the end of class, how to line up, all of these things had to be discussed and practiced in order to ensure that the rest of the year would go as smoothly as possible.

The day before our third class, I went to my students’ homeroom to talk about the research study I would be conducting in their class. “Boys and girls,” I told them, “I came to talk to you about a special project that I want to do, and I need your help. You see, I’m also in school. I take classes at Moravian College. I’m working on my master’s degree, and just like you, I have homework for my class. My homework is to write about the things that happen in my classroom when I’m teaching. I had to choose one class to write about, and I chose you!” They all looked excited, and many smiled at me expectantly. “I need your help, though. I’m

going to give you permission slips to take home, and have your parents sign. If your Mom and Dad don't want me to write about you, that's okay! If they don't want me to, I won't write about you in my homework, but you'll still do all of the same fun things in class. Do you think you can help me out?" I asked them. "Yeah!" they said, as quite a few nodded. I gave the consent forms to their teacher and went back to my classroom, excited for the next day's events.

Survey

The next day, half of the class returned their consent forms, which Mrs. S. handed to me as they came into the music room. Over the next few weeks, I eventually received consent forms from the entire class. I briefly discussed the study with them, assuring them that if “your Mom or Dad has questions they can call or e-mail me.” During this class, I gave the students a survey to complete regarding their attitudes towards music class activities. The survey was a Likert-type scale consisting of a happy face, sad face and medium face. “If you really like something, circle the happy face. If it’s just okay, circle the middle face. If you don’t like it at all, circle the sad face,” I told them. We passed out papers, pencils and clipboards, and I read the survey questions aloud to them as they circled. “Remember,” I continued, “I want to know what you think. If you don’t like something, circle the sad face so that I know what you like or don’t like.”

When they had finished, I heard them chatting about what they’d written down. “I circled all smiley faces!” said Sidney to Ainsley. “No, wait, just one medium face.”

“Me too!” Ainsley replied. As I collected the papers, I saw that not everyone was as positive as these two girls. The survey follows, with tallies for each response next to the appropriate face.

Student's feelings regarding music class activities

Activity			
Singing songs	14	4	0
Listening to music	13	5	0
Reading notes	6	9	2
Playing instruments	17	0	1
Moving to music	7	9	2
Worksheets	6	8	4
Playing games	17	0	1

Although the class was mostly positive about all activities, the big winners were ‘playing instruments’ and ‘playing games.’ ‘Reading notes’ and ‘worksheets’ tied for least favorite activity. This was as I expected, and I was thrilled to see that my students were of the same mindset as I was regarding these stationary activities. ‘Let’s get up and start making music, not just talk about it!’ cried my inner voice. My victory was unfortunately short-lived. ‘Moving to music’ ranked only fifth out of seven. Obviously, my students weren’t as excited about moving to music as I had thought they’d be. Why didn’t they enjoy this activity as much as I thought they would?

One explanation could be that they hadn’t had much exposure to movement activities in music class. In first grade, we had played a lot of circle games, but very few

games or activities had included free movement or rhythmic movement. I had taught them a game called 'Freeze,' where they walked to the steady beat while I played it on a hand drum and froze when I stopped playing. However, I wasn't sure if the students regarded that activity as a game or as moving to music. I decided that whatever their previous exposure to movement had been that it would definitely be beneficial for these students to experience more movement in music class.

I decided to start out easily, by only incorporating stationary kinesthetic activities. Once the students had some of these hands-on experiences, we would work on more movement activities.

The Chair Game

At the next music class, I introduced a new activity that I called "the Chair Game." I asked four students to get chairs from the back of the room. Nicholas brought his chair up front, making race car noises.

"Vroom vroom vrrrooom!" he said with a smile.

"Hey," I teased him, "this isn't the Indy 500!"

Nicholas giggled and returned to his seat. Once we had all four chairs, I explained the "Chair Game" to them. "Each chair is a beat. We are going to show music notes with people on the chairs."

Vanessa interrupted. "Will we all get a turn?"

"Yes, we will all get a turn," I reassured her.

I started by demonstrating quarter note, or “ta” and quarter rest, which we often call simply, “rest”. “How many sounds are in a ta?” I asked the class. I clapped my hands as I said, “ta”.

“One!” they answered.

“That’s right,” I told them, “and we’ll show ta by putting one person on a chair. One person on a chair, or beat, is a ta. Can I have four volunteers to come up and be ta’s?” I chose four students to show ta on each chair.

“Ta - ta - ta - ta”, we said the pattern together.

“Now let’s turn our first ta into a rest. How many sounds are in a rest?” Some students put their hand up in a fist or made a circle with their fingers to show zero. “That’s right, zero sounds. So to turn ta into a rest I send that person back to her seat.” I turned each student sitting in the chairs into a rest until there was no one left. “Now say this pattern,” I told my students, and they held one finger to their mouths as they showed four beats of silence.

Using the same process, I showed them how eighth notes, or “titi” are demonstrated on the chairs. This time two students shared one chair, just as eighth notes are two sounds on one beat. We experimented with different combinations of quarter notes, eighth note and quarter rest patterns until the class was familiar with the concept.

The last note to include in this activity was the half note, or “ta-a”, which they had just learned. “How many chairs must I use?” I asked them. They showed me their answer by holding up fingers. Most had two fingers up, although a few children looked confused or didn’t hold up their fingers at all. “How many people should I use? Should I use two people or just one?” One person was their answer. “That’s right, because ta - a is one

long sound stretched over two beats.” They showed the half note as one person sitting on one chair and putting their feet up on the next.

“Here is your next job,” I told them. “You are going to work with your groups to make a pattern to show on the chairs. But, you have to use all the people in your group and you must use a half note.” We discussed a variety of possibilities for differently sized groups, since in our seating arrangement we had two groups of three students and three group of four students. “You have two minutes to figure it out. Go ahead and talk with your group.” As they started their group work, I saw some groups struggling to come up with a pattern that satisfied everyone. More than one person wanted to be the half note and some students began to argue.

“I’m not sharing with anyone!” Vanessa retorted to her team when they told her to be half of a set of eighth notes. I interceded and helped them decide who would be the half note. Vanessa’s group eventually figured out a way to present their idea. Vanessa ended up being a quarter note instead of an eighth note, a compromise both she and her group could live with.

Each group came up to present its pattern and the other groups told us what the pattern was. I wrote the musical notation on the board as we went. The patterns looked like this:

Group #1:	η	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	γ
Group #2:	θ	η	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$
Group #3:	η	θ	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$
Group #4:	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	θ	η
Group #5:	θ	θ	η

After all five groups presented, I had them clap and say the rhythms they composed. Every now and then some people would clap in the rests. In one such instance, Ainsley called out “Ta!!” in a loud voice and the rest of the class giggled. Fortunately she laughed at her mistake, and I caught her eye and smiled at her. Finally, I told them that we would be playing the rhythms on tambourines. I showed them the best way to hold a tambourine. “Look for the spot with no jingles on it, and hold it there.” Since we only had enough tambourines for half the class to play at once, we took turns playing.

Sidney asked me, “Can the people who aren’t playing clap the rhythms as we go?”

“Yes!!” I told her. “Great idea!” As we performed the rhythm patterns, all the students were either playing the tambourine or clapping their hands to the rhythms.

As I reflected on this lesson, I was pleased by the children’s ready response to the hands-on activity. They seemed very comfortable and engaged during the “Chair Game.” The students’ responses indicated that they could make a connection between a music note and a visual representation of the note, even if the note was represented by students’ bodies rather than written on the board. They were also able to compose four beat rhythm patterns with ease. However, I was troubled by the inability of some students to work in a group. Vanessa’s behavior during this lesson showed her unwillingness to allow other students to make decisions during group-work. In the future, I decided that I would be more observant of group work attitudes and not allow one child to dominate the decision

making process. For our next lesson, we would use group work as well, and I reviewed my plan to make sure that the group activity would not cause power struggles.

Sarasponda

Sarasponda

Dutch folk song

The image shows a musical score for the Dutch folk song "Sarasponda". It consists of three staves of music in treble clef, 2/4 time. The first staff is labeled "Voice" and contains the lyrics: "Sa - ra - spon - da sa - ra - spon - da sa - ra - spon - da ret set set Sa - ra". The second staff starts at measure 6 and contains the lyrics: "spon - da sa - ra - spon - da sa - ra - spon - da ret set set A - dor - a - yo, a". The third staff starts at measure 12 and contains the lyrics: "dor - ay boom - day - o! A - dor - ay boom - day ret set set, ah - say pah - ay - o!".

At the next music class, I taught the class the song, “Sarasponda” by rote. My goal was to have the students walk quarter, eighth, and half note beats while I played the song on the piano. “Pretend your hands are feet, and walk them on your laps,” I told them. They alternated hands as they sang and patted the beat. “Stand up and march your feet to the beat while you sing,” I told them next. They were marching quite well in their spots. I directed them to the standing circle and reviewed the rules of “Freeze” with them. They had not played “Freeze” since last year, when we worked on slow and fast in first grade.

“Move your feet to the beat. If it’s a fast beat, use fast feet, a slow beat, use slow feet, a medium beat use medium feet. You can travel anywhere in the room except not...”

“Behind the desk or the piano!” some called out.

“Yes, and I don’t want you traveling on or in between the Flipforms, either. You have to go around, not in between.” I played medium, slow and fast beats on a hand drum and they made their feet match the beat while they sang “Sarasponda.” I noticed that Vanessa did not move her feet correctly to the slow, or half note beat. I told all the students to freeze except for Brianna and Kristen, who I asked to demonstrate because they had been doing it properly. After the demonstration, Vanessa and the others all were showing lovely half note steps, moving as if in slow motion with their whole bodies.

“Okay,” I told them, “go back to your seats.” I divided them into three groups, quarter note beat, half note beat, and eighth note beat. “When you hear your beat being played on the piano, your group gets up and steps to the beat.” I played and sang “Sarasponda” using quarter note accompaniment in the left hand on the piano. As soon as I started to play this first version of “Sarasponda” I knew they were having trouble. Nobody got up to show the beat because they couldn’t hear the difference. They looked at me quizzically, and I nodded to the group that was supposed to go first. I realized that what I’d asked them to do was too hard for them. They needed a lot more exposure to half, quarter and eighth note beats before they would be able to aurally identify them.

Once they were up, it wasn’t a problem. They stepped to the beat and giggled as they slid around on the floor. Several students started to get silly, especially when they demonstrated the eighth note beat, which is quite fast, like a jog. They started sliding around on the floor, and many students erupted into laughter when their classmates slid

into the Flipforms as if they were home base. “Careful,” I warned them and switched the parts so that each group got a turn to demonstrate all three parts. By now everyone was sliding around, and I quickly finished up the game.

As we reviewed our rules, I asked them if they thought their behavior had been responsible. “Did you follow the directions, or were you fooling around?” Most thumbs turned down to indicate that they needed more work on that rule. “I agree,” I said and took one of the green stars off the board next to the rule “be responsible”. “Even though we’re having a good time moving around, we still have to control our behavior, and not get too silly.”

Later, when I asked the students in their interviews for suggestions on making movement more fun, I thought they came up with some very interesting ideas for improvement. In typical second grade style, some gave me sensible suggestions, and others had more imaginative suggestions. I combined their ideas into a pastiche.

Pastiche – What would make moving more fun?

Umm... Doing Freeze?

Taking off our shoes and moving on top of the steps?

If we could go on the floor.

Doing more marching.

Doing more fast and medium in Freeze.

Doing Sarasponda again.

You could make it louder and more exciting!

It's fun the way it is.

Although we were now moving with ease, I felt that we should not forget our hands-on activities. The next two lessons I planned incorporated playing instruments with our regular class activities, now including movement.

Rocky Mountain

Rocky Mountain

American folk song

Voice



Rocky mountain, rocky mountain, rocky mountain high! When you're on that rocky mountain, hang your head and cry. Do, do, do, do

6



do remember me! Do, do, do, do, do remember me!

My goal for this lesson was to help students practice their aural and visual identification of rhythm patterns, and to use rhythm instruments to play the patterns. I also hoped to encourage some rhythmic independence by asking the students to play only one type of music note and wait their turn for their note to come around in the pattern. I sang the folk song “Rocky Mountain” for them, and they applauded after I was done. I quickly taught them the song by rote. “Sing the song and pat the beat on your lap.” When they were done with singing and keeping the beat, I asked them, “Did you notice any notes that got stretched out? Notes that were longer than one beat? Sing just the Rocky Mountain part again and let’s see if we can find any.” They sang just the first verse and patted the beat. Hands shot up in the air. I called on Robert to give me the answer.

“Umm, ‘Mountain’?” he said.

“No, listen to ‘mountain’ – is it all stretched out for more than one beat?” I sang the phrase again, “Rocky mountain, rocky mountain, rocky mountain hi – igh.”

“Rocky?” he asked me. He was clearly not grasping the concept of the half note lasting more than one beat, and he stumbled over his answers. Vanessa wildly waved her hand along with a few others. They were shooting impatient looks Robert’s way and stretching their hands up in the air as far as they could go.

“Okay,” I gave in, “Vanessa’s hand will fall off if I don’t call on her! What do you think, Vanessa?”

“Hi – igh!” she exclaimed.

“Yes!” I responded. “Where else do we see a note get stretched out for more than one beat?”

Karly answered, “Hang your head and cry – y.”

“Good!” I told them. “Now where is there a sound that gets stretched out in the ‘do remember me’ part, the refrain?” We sang the refrain and patted the beat and once again, hands shot up in the air.

“Me – e!” Ryan answered proudly.

“So,” I asked them, which note do we know that is worth two beats?”

“Ta-a!” they answered.

“Or, what else do we call it?”

“The half note!”

“Take a look at the music notes on the board,” I instructed them and pointed out the rhythm notation for ‘Rocky Mountain’ that I had put up before they came in. “Sound out the rhythms – ready, go!” They sounded out the rhythms on Kodaly syllables as I

pointed to them. I divided the class into three groups and explained how I wanted them to play the rhythms. One group would play only the half notes on the tambourine; another group only the quarter notes on the rhythm sticks; and a third group would play the eighth notes on the egg shakers. After each group practiced their individual notes, I had the whole ensemble play each line, and then we switched instruments.

The rhythms with instrumentation looked like this, (e.s. stands for egg shakers, r.s. stands for rhythm sticks, tam. stands for tambourine) :

εε	εε	εε	εε	εε	εε	η
e.s.	-	-	-	-	-	tam.
εε	εε	εε	εε	εε	εε	η
e.s.	-	-	-	-	-	tam.
θ	θ	θ	θ	εε	εε	η
r.s.	-	-	-	e.s	-	tam.
θ	θ	θ	θ	εε	εε	η
r.s.	-	-	-	e.s.	-	tam.

I noticed that a few were having trouble playing the right notes once we switched instruments. Vanessa and Brianna both played eighth notes instead of half notes on their tambourines, after having previously played eighth notes on the egg shakers. “Watch out that you’re not playing the wrong note. I heard some people playing Titis instead of Ta-as on their tambourines.”

I saw Brianna mouth the word, ‘oops’, but Vanessa didn’t react at all. When we played the line again, though, both girls played the rhythms correctly. We switched instruments a third time and by this turn, the group was starting to make almost no mistakes as they played through the rhythms. I praised their good work and gave directions for putting away the instruments.

After this lesson, I was interested in the difference between reading a rhythm pattern and hearing a rhythm pattern. Robert was having real difficulty in hearing a two beat note, while many of the others were not. The thought processes that go into listening to a chanted phrase, and decoding it into note values, compared with seeing the same phrase written out and decoding it are completely different. This is the same problem that many students experienced during the lesson on “Sarasponda,” when they couldn’t hear the difference between quarter, eighth and half note beats. This lesson really zeroed in on the different abilities needed to be a musician. I began questioning how much time I really spent on auditory skills. I decided that another way to stretch the students’ auditory abilities was to give them an opportunity to improvise on an instrument and see where their ears took them.

Rhythm Improvisations

“Bottom step people, scoot down and sit on the floor in front of your step,” I told the group at their next music lesson. They quickly sat right down, so I told the rest, “top step people, come fill in the sides of our sitting circle.” The rest of the students filled in the sides as I moved my big chair to the bottom of the circle.

Some students started to say to each other, “Ooh! We’re going to play a game!”

I didn’t say a word but instead got up and took the metallophone from its shelf, and bringing it back, set it on the floor inside the circle. I had previously set up the metallophone to the C pentatonic scale, so that they could play Do, Re, Mi, Sol and La, or the melodic content that we would be working with throughout the remainder of the

school year. I was preparing their ears by singing lots of pentatonic, or five note, songs with them.

“Yay!” some said, and “We get to play that?” asked others. Ripples of excitement went through the group. I got up again and came back with a small glockenspiel inside a blue plastic case.

“We’re going to play a ‘conversation’ between these two instruments,” I told them. I opened up the case and showed them the glockenspiel inside. “I’ll play a question on my glockenspiel and you’ll play an answer on your metallophone. For example, I might play something like this,” I modeled a brief melody on the glockenspiel,



“and you might play an answer like this,” I played a response on the metallophone.



“Or, I might play something like this,” again I played the glockenspiel,



“and you might play this,” I played a sample response on the metallophone.



I have found this to be an effective way to introduce improvisation. I hope that by playing questions and answers, students will begin to loosen up and realize that they can't make a mistake. In the past some have gone wild with it and played particularly interesting things. Others, however, seemed to find it too open and played only a perfunctory scale.

We passed the metallophone around the circle, and I played my melodies as they passed, trying to make as smooth a shift as possible. Karly, Carsten, Kristen and Brianna all played especially well. They answered, picking up where my melody left off and many of them make a convincing ending, landing on Do.

When Marcus got the metallophone, I braced myself for the banging I suspected would come next. Instead he surprised me by playing softly and sensitively and made up a thoughtful answer to my improvisation, as notated below.



I was absolutely shocked. I realized that I had always assumed that he was low in intelligence, because his behavior was often so out of control, and he seldom gave me articulate answers, but in this class he showed me another side of himself. What could be lurking beneath his surface? I wanted to find out – had I failed to notice Marcus's inherent musical abilities because I was so focused on him fitting in with my preconceived expectations of behavior? Had I really only looked at his surface? In the

course of about thirty seconds, I felt surprise, elation at his success, and then a lingering feeling of disappointment in myself.

“Great job,” I told Marcus and beamed at him.

“Yeah, great job, Marcus!” the kids said and applauded. Marcus grinned at me and at the class. It was a wonderful moment. As we finished up the circle, Joshua also impressed me with his excellent response. The rest of the students gave me very brief, perfunctory answers. Vanessa, whom I expected to be ready to play anything, played each note of the C pentatonic scale in order and stopped, looking confused.

“That’s fine,” I assured her. “Next we’re going to play it a little differently,” I told them. “I’ll play you a rhythm pattern, and you play the same pattern back to me.” I demonstrated, playing a quarter, quarter, eighth - eighth, quarter pattern on my glockenspiel and then a different melody using the same rhythm pattern on the metallophone. We passed the metallophone around the circle and I gave them a few different rhythms to work from, increasing the level of difficulty as we went around the circle. Eventually we used the half note in the pattern. The rhythm progressed in this way:

θ	θ	εε	θ
εε	θ	εε	θ
εε	εε	θ	θ
η		εε	θ
εε	θ	η	

“Hit the bar once for a half note and let it ring. After two beats move on to the next note.” The students who did well on the open improvisation also did well on this activity, and the students who seemed less sure when improvising, now appeared more confident when given a concrete pattern to play. There was less giggling and silliness and more concentration when they were playing the answers.

I am, of course, reminded of my own early attempts at improvisation. I wasn't really aware that you couldn't give a wrong answer! So, I worried that the teacher would think my improvisation was dumb or that my peers would laugh at me, and I froze, feeling resentful of my teacher and fearful of the other students' reaction. For these reasons I always make sure to stress that there is no wrong answer – anything they play back to me will be right. Once they get accustomed to improvising, I leave the melodic content up to them, but give them a rhythm pattern to work with. Focusing on one musical characteristic at a time may be less stressful for the students and result in stronger improvisations. If I were working on melody instead of rhythm, I would give them melodic parameters to work with and leave the rhythm up to them.

After we finished the whole circle I asked the last student to put away the xylophone for me. When they were all seated, I asked the class, "Which way was harder for you to play? When you just had to do the answer to my question or when you had to play the rhythm pattern? How many think that playing an answer to my question was harder? Raise your hands." Three or four people did so. "Okay, now how many thought playing the rhythm pattern was harder?" The rest of the class raised their hands. "Why is that?"

Carsten answered, "Cause you have to copy the pattern."

Brianna added to his statement, "Yeah, you might forget the pattern."

"Okay," I summarized, "so, we think it's harder to play rhythm patterns because you have to copy the exact pattern and while you're playing that pattern you might forget it. Very good. Thanks for your answers everybody."

I was intrigued by their responses to the question about improvising because it ran contrary to what I had anticipated. I thought for sure that they would say that improvising without parameters was harder than following the pattern, but they clearly felt that having to stick to a rhythm pattern was more difficult than creating their own. I realized that their intense concentration in the second round of improvisatory exercises was due to the fact that they were more challenged by the task I had given them. The lack of giggling and silly behavior made it clear that the “fun” nature of the first activity had disappeared once I had raised the level of difficulty.

This lesson also opened my eyes to a problem that I had not previously recognized. In many ways, Marcus was the one student from whom I felt the most removed. His abilities in music class seemed to move up and down according to his mood. He had difficulty communicating verbally and although he received speech therapy at our school, he often seemed frustrated when speaking. However, the sure thing about Marcus was that he connected with music and that movement was very natural for him. This lesson revealed to me that I didn't really know Marcus. I hadn't gotten a handle on him, as I felt I had with some of the other students. I was ashamed and disappointed in myself as his teacher when I realized that I had been one hundred percent in the wrong in my assessment of his musical abilities. I wrote this vignette to try to capture Marcus' experiences in music class, to this point in my study. To create it, I used data from participant observations, as well as the survey data. Later, I read the vignette to Marcus and asked him if I had gotten it right. “Yes,” he grinned and answered shyly.

Vignette – Marcus

I'm a mover and a shaker, all right. When I sit down in a seat it's never for long! I love to dance and move, and play instruments in music class. I wish I could jam on the drums just like the guys from Africa did on the video we watched in class. I was drumming right along with them! In fact, I love to play any kind of instrument. Mrs. Ruhf was really pleased with my playing the xylophone, and the other kids all applauded when I finished. But we don't play instruments very often in music.

Usually it's all the boring notes on the board. I hate them! Mrs. Ruhf makes us do them every week! All she cares about is reading notes and finding the page in the book. Oh boy! We spend way too much time doing that book. Sometimes I just can't take it anymore and I yell out, "I'm bored!"

If I could do anything in music class, I would play the drums. I would play them and dance across the room. I would run and jump out the door and down the hall and all the kids would follow me. We'd never have to read those notes again!

To continue reaching Marcus, I realized that I would need to allow more time for playing instruments and moving and focus less on music reading skills. Since his strength was in performing music rather than reading music, I wanted to include activities in each lesson that would let him shine. However, I couldn't cut music reading activities entirely out of the curriculum. There had to be a way to make music reading more enjoyable for Marcus, and other students like him.

Listening to the information that the students provided in our casual class interview, I felt that many of my students were challenged by the activities that called for

them to apply their rhythmic knowledge in less concrete ways. Perhaps more experience with the rhythm patterns themselves would give the class a solid base from which to work. In order to give them more concrete rhythmic experiences and provide a more engaging music reading experience, I decided to add a hands-on activity using manipulative materials to our next lesson.

Manipulatives and Manipulation

“I need four helpers to bring me the chairs from the back,” I explained.

I reviewed the rules of the ‘Chair Game’ with them, and asked some students to come up front and demonstrate the notes. “Four people to be ta’s,” I said and called on four people, including Travis.

“Travis’s been up!” Ainsley complained.

“He wasn’t up today,” I reminded her. I sent the people on the chairs back to their seats and asked for eight people to come up and be eighth notes, or ti-tis.

“Andrea brought a chair already!” another little voice piped up.

I gave them a firm look. “We will all get a turn.”

This is the moment that Marcus fell off his seat onto the floor behind him. I suddenly got very irritated. The goofy behavior, whining about turns, and tattling all made my blood boil. I took it out on Marcus. “Are you okay?” I asked him, none too warmly. He grinned and nodded. “Well that’s enough of this behavior!” I said in a very loud stern voice. “Now sit up the right way and act like a second grader. You’re keeping the rest of the class from getting their music lesson, and I’m tired of having to take time away from them to watch over you!!”

Marcus looked down and sat in his seat as I instructed. The rest of the class straightened up in their seats. I continued on and gave them instructions for the next activity, a combination of the “Chair Game” and rhythmic notation using manipulatives. I showed them the large-scale notes I had made out of construction paper in the shape of quarter, eighth and half notes. They had magnet tape on the back to affix them to the chalkboard. “In your groups you’re going to come up with a pattern to put on the chairs. It must use all the people in your group. When you come up to show it, someone will put the pattern on the board using the magnet notes.” I gave them two minutes to figure out a pattern to show on the chairs. Twenty seconds later, one group was up and out of their seats.

“We have ours!” Carsten, Joshua and Sidney told me.

“Okay, have a seat till everyone is ready to show their pattern,” I smiled and told them. The groups quickly made decisions about who would be which part in the pattern and soon they were ready to show their work.

The first group, comprised of Samuel, Marcus, Andrea and Vanessa presented their pattern on the chairs:

θ εε η

I asked two people from another group, Carsten and Sidney, to come up and put the magnet notes on the board in the order that they were seated on the chairs. The two began successfully plotting the notation, but I quickly rethought this approach when I saw that the only remaining member of Carsten’s group, Joshua, wasn’t going to get a turn with the magnet notes.

“Come on up, Josh, and put up a note,” I told him.

I asked Carsten, Sidney and Joshua to present their pattern on the chairs next. While they were showing their pattern, I invited the next group, Kristen and Evelyn, to put the pattern on the board with the magnet notes. Carsten's group displayed their pattern.

$\theta \gamma \quad \theta \quad \theta$

Kristen and Evelyn put up the quarter notes and Kristen drew a quarter rest on the board to signify the empty seat in the pattern. We continued on in this fashion, with Robert, Travis, Nicholas and Thomas putting up the notation for the pattern that Kristen and Evelyn showed on the chairs.

$\eta \quad \eta$

Brianna, Karly, and Ainsley notated the pattern that Robert's group displayed.

$\varepsilon\varepsilon \quad \theta \quad \eta$

Each group that came up to show the patterns on the chairs did so with ease and the group showing it on the board worked fairly harmoniously together. There was giggling accompanied by some moments of intense concentration, but for most of them, this was a piece of cake.

The last group to present their pattern on the chairs was Brianna, Karly and Ainsley. Vanessa, Andrea, Samuel and Marcus came to the chalkboard to notate the pattern with the magnet notes.

$\gamma \quad \eta \quad \varepsilon\varepsilon$

Immediately, Vanessa took over. She put up the whole pattern herself.

"I didn't get to!" Marcus grumbled. He was standing with a half note at the ready in his hand, but Vanessa had beaten him to the punch.

Samuel was equally offended. "Me neither," he said.

“Here,” I told Marcus, “replace this ta-a with yours,” pointing to the note he was holding. I told Samuel to replace the eighth notes. Both boys were instantly gratified and went smiling back to their seats.

As we reviewed the rules, I noted that most students gave themselves a thumbs up for, “be respectful,” “be a good listener,” and “be responsible”. A few gave themselves thumbs down. I told them that I was concerned about their behavior. Some got a worried look on their faces. “We’ve got a lot of bosses in here. A lot of people like to tell others what to do, instead of working on their own behavior. I’m going to keep up your three stars, but I’m concerned about certain people’s behavior, especially staying in your seats and bossing people around.” They looked relieved.

It’s not until later that I realized that Andrea hadn’t had the opportunity to put up a note, nor did she complain! That suggested a few scenarios to me. Either, Andrea didn’t care if she got a turn, or she felt fine that Vanessa put them all up herself, or she was slightly afraid of Vanessa, who sought to be in power at all times. Perhaps if Andrea complained about Vanessa’s pushy behavior, she would be ostracized from the girls’ social circle.

This scene also emphasized the fact that I paid attention to Marcus and Samuel before I gave any thought to Andrea. If I were Andrea, I wouldn’t feel very good about that. I would feel as if the teacher didn’t know I existed or cared about me. While I do care about Andrea and all the students in my class, I saw here evidence of a somewhat uncaring pattern in my behavior as teacher. I tend to quickly judge situations and try to deal with them so that I can move on with the lesson. I have realized I am not willing to really stop and observe what is happening if I am on a tight schedule. This attitude

effectively puts blinders on me and distances me from the experiences of my students. I am teaching my students that the proverbial “squeaky wheel” gets the oil, and that in order to get my attention, you have to complain loudly.

I was feeling wary going into the next lesson. I had planned to have more group work, but how was Vanessa going to participate without taking over her group? Now that I was aware of my tendency to overlook the quieter students’ problems, I planned to pay closer attention to the children instead of watching the clock. I wasn’t going to let one student overrun the others in his or her group, and I wasn’t going to simply assess situations at face value.

In the Hall of the Mountain King

The next two music classes were a culminating activity for our unit on rhythm. At the first class the students found the page in their book for Grieg’s, “In the Hall of the Mountain King” from his “Peer Gynt Suite.” There is a fanciful illustration on the page of an elf-like character crossing a spindly bridge into a Tudor castle complete with turrets. I told the class, “I like this page a lot. One reason is because the picture is really interesting and it makes me start to imagine a story. But another reason is because there is a piece of music that goes along with this page.” I asked them to pat the beat as they listened. At first the music is very quiet, and several students started to talk to each other.

“I can’t hear anything!” one boy complained.

“Shh - listen!” I told them. They quieted down and soon the music became slightly louder, and the tempo increased. Their eyes sparkled and several began to bounce up and down in their seats as the music increased in volume and speed. Soon, the music

had gotten so loud and so fast that some got a wild look on their faces. Nicholas cackled with laughter.

Marcus exclaimed, “Raa-ah!” and jumped up and down in place.

The final moments of the piece are accented by a long roll on the timpani. As soon as the music was finished, students started calling out, “Ooh! Can we do it again!! I like that!”

“Yes, we’ll do it again,” I answered, with a smile. It pleased me to know that these students found a piece of classical music so exciting. “Before we listen again, take a look at the rhythms on the page. Read the rhythm pattern there for me.”

They sounded out the rhythms on Kodaly syllables. “Ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti ta, ti-ti, ta, ti-ti, ta. Ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ta-a!” Their “ta-a” was almost a shout.

“Now as we listen I want you to say the rhythms along with the recording. But you have to match your voice to the music; if it’s quiet, make your voice quiet, too; if it speeds up, you do the same.” As we listened, the class chanted along with the recording. Some managed to stay with it all the way to the end, especially Carsten, Kristen and Brianna, while others like Nicholas and Marcus tried to keep up, but when it got too fast, started laughing and wildly drummed on their laps, arms flailing.

Marcus roared, “Raa-ah!” again as the music reached maximum speed.

“Now watch my hands. See how I move them? I’m putting the rhythm into my hands,” I told them. The class watched me as I alternated patting my hands on my lap to the rhythm. Vanessa and Sidney started patting along with me, as did several others.

“Okay, everybody try it with me,” I instructed the class. As they chanted the rhythm and patted their laps, I noticed that not everyone was pausing for the quarter and half notes;

instead they continued to pat eighth notes while they said the Kodaly syllables for quarter and half notes.

“Wait,” I paused the class, “Make sure you’re stopping your hands when you get to the ta and ta-a, like this.” I demonstrated for them. We resumed, but Andrea and Ryan continued to pat eighth notes instead of quarter and half notes. They didn’t seem to notice that what their hands were doing did not match what their mouths were saying.

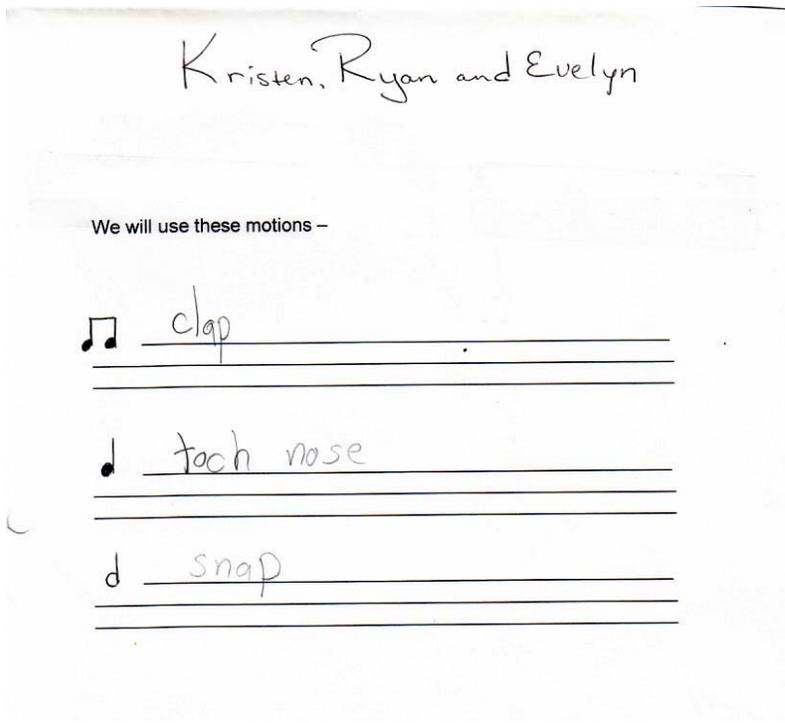
“Now put the rhythms in your feet, while you’re sitting down.” They all stepped their feet in place, chanting the rhythms loudly. A few began stomping. “Careful, we’re stepping, not stomping,” I reminded them. All the students alternated their feet as we had done with our hands, but with more success. Andrea and Ryan were able to step the rhythms perfectly, although they had not been able to move their hands to the rhythm. Perhaps they were so used to alternating their feet when walking that it came more naturally to them than using their hands. “Okay, now bottom step people stand up in your spot. Top step people fill in the sides of our standing circle.” Chattering and giggling, they made the standing circle quickly. “Everyone face in the same direction,” I told the class and they mostly turned to their right. “Turn the other way,” I corrected the ones who were facing left. “Now let’s put that rhythm in our feet and move our circle.” We stepped to the rhythm, and it was almost comical to see our little circle doing some sort of strange conga line:

step step step step step step pause,
step step pause, step step pause,
step step step step step step step step
step step step step pa - ause!

“Turn around and go the other direction!” They all did a 180 degree jump, faced the other way and repeated the whole thing. When we went back to our seats, I asked them to brainstorm a list of motions that we could make with our bodies, especially our hands and feet. They came up with a list of nearly ten suggestions - pat lap, clap, snap, pat partner hands, touch head, touch nose, march, stomp, and spin. I then asked them to pick one motion for every set of eighth notes, one for every quarter note, and one for every half note. We did a sample movement sequence with the whole class, and then I assigned them to work in their groups and come up with a group movement sequence. We ended the lesson by having them write down what their plan was for the movement sequence. An example of one group’s plan follows. See Appendix E for all student movement plans.

Figure 1

Student movement plan



A week later I had the rhythm for “In the Hall of the Mountain King” on the board when the students arrived for class. “I’m going to put on the CD of ‘In the Hall of the Mountain King’, and I’d like you to pat the rhythms on your lap like this.” I modeled alternating hands as I tapped out the rhythm of the music on my lap. They were already whispering and giggling, and excitement seemed to be building, even before I put on the CD. They tried to keep up with the CD, but it does go very fast. Nicholas, Marcus, Samuel, Ryan and Robert were just wildly drumming on their laps. There was no discernible beat or rhythm to what they were doing. Carsten, Karly, Kristen, and Brianna were performing the rhythms perfectly. They seemed to have no problem connecting the hand motions to the rhythms on the board. A third group, Joshua, Evelyn, Thomas, Travis, and Ainsley tried to do the rhythms and gave up once it got too fast. Evelyn began

conducting in a rough U-shaped pattern, one finger pointing out on each hand, once the rhythm got more intense.

When the music was over, I told them that, “Some people are doing a great job, but others just are acting goofy and drumming on their laps instead of doing the rhythm.” I showed them again what it should look like. “Let’s try it one more time,” I told them. I put the music back on. This time more got it right.

Nicholas was still drumming violently on his lap, and Thomas told him, “Don’t go so fast! Try to do the notes on the board!” Nicholas slowed down momentarily, but he was racing off again soon thereafter.

As the music stopped, Marcus called out, “My hands hurt!”

“Mine don’t,” I told him. “But I didn’t drum like crazy on my lap, either! Boys and girls, we are going to go back to those movement sequences that you wrote down for me last week.” We reviewed the idea behind the movement sequence and even did another sample sequence together as a class. “Okay,” I told them. “Now let’s try the sequences that some of our groups made up for us.” I got out each group’s paper and read their patterns for them. The whole class acted out each group’s movement sequence. Finally, the individual group was called on to perform their pattern for the rest of the class.

Marcus, Andrea, Samuel and Vanessa’s pattern was to clap on every set of eighth notes, clap a partner’s hands on every quarter note, and pat their lap back and forth on every half note. With notation, their pattern looked like this:

$\varepsilon \varepsilon$	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	θ
Clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap	clap partner
$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	θ	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	θ
Clap-clap	clap partner	clap-clap	clap partner
$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$	$\varepsilon\varepsilon$

Clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap
εε	εε	η	
Clap-clap	clap-clap	pat lap back and forth	

We practiced this one sitting down. I had to shift some students around so that they all had a partner. Ryan was my partner. After we practiced it as a class, I asked the group to show their pattern. Marcus and Samuel were partners and Vanessa and Andrea were partners. The boys did fairly well, only missing a couple of moves, while the girls were spot on and got everything in perfect order.

The next group was Carsten, Sidney and Joshua. They had decided on ‘spiral’ for eighth notes, which was shown as spinning, hands out to the side on quarter notes, and clapping on the half note. With eleven sets of eighth notes in the sequence, we were all feeling a little dizzy, and the class was getting rambunctious, giggling and falling down for comedic effect. I asked Carsten, Sidney and Joshua to stay up front and show us their pattern. They were so dizzy from spinning around that they were barely able to stand up straight. The class howled with laughter, but the group didn’t get the pattern right. Their pattern follows:

ε ε	εε	εε	θ
Spiral	spiral	spiral	hands out
εε	θ	εε	θ
Spiral	hands out	spiral	hands out
εε	εε	εε	εε
Spiral	spiral	spiral	spiral
εε	εε	η	
Spiral	spiral	clap	

Next up was Kristen, Ryan and Evelyn’s group. Their pattern was clapping on the eighth notes, touching their nose on the quarter notes, and snapping on the half note. After the class demonstrated, I asked them to show us the pattern themselves. Kristen and Ryan were doing very well, but Evelyn seemed confused. She touched her nose for the

half note instead of the quarter note, and seemed to be forgetting where to go on the quarter note.

Marcus, who was making loud noises and hopping up and down in his seat, was annoying Sidney. “DON’T!!” she yelled at him.

“Let us concentrate on this group now, Marcus,” I told him. “Let’s start over,” I told the presenting students. “Some of you seem to be having trouble.” Evelyn and Kristen laughed, but the second time we did the pattern, Evelyn was no better at it than before. Their pattern:

ε ε	εε	εε	θ
Clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap	touch nose
εε	θ	εε	θ
Clap-clap	touch nose	clap-clap	touch nose
εε	εε	εε	εε
Clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap
εε	εε	η	
Clap-clap	clap-clap	snap	

The next group to present their pattern was Thomas, Travis, Robert and Nicholas. They chose to pat their laps for the eighth notes, snap on the quarter notes and clap on the half note. All of the boys in this group performed the sequence well, with no mistakes:

ε ε	εε	εε	θ
Pat-pat	pat-pat	pat-pat	snap
εε	θ	εε	θ
Pat-pat	snap	pat-pat	snap
εε	εε	εε	εε
Pat-pat	pat-pat	pat-pat	pat-pat
εε	εε	η	
Pat-pat	pat-pat	clap	

The last group to come up to perform was Ainsley, Karly, Letitia and Brianna, but Letitia was absent. Their pattern was clapping a partner’s hands on the eighth notes, patting their lap on the quarter notes, and snapping on the half note. Although this could

be considered an easier movement pattern than some of the others, primarily because there was no locomotor motion in it, the girls still had difficulty, especially Karly. She was not paying attention at the beginning of the pattern, and I had to stop them and start over. The second time through all the girls had the pattern down. As indicated above, each time the girls clapped, it was to their partner's hands:

εε	εε	εε	θ
Clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap	pat lap
εε	θ	εε	θ
Clap-clap	pat lap	clap-clap	pat lap
εε	εε	εε	εε
Clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap	clap-clap
εε	εε	η	
	Clap-clap	clap-clap	snap

At the end of these two lessons, I had a very good feeling about most students' abilities. The hand jive activity was similar to the activity in "Rocky Mountain," because the students had to deconstruct a rhythmic pattern and assign a different movement for each note value. The majority of students were able to perform the patterns they composed, but a few were not able to complete the patterns accurately. Evelyn in particular had difficulty with the movements. I wondered if this activity was confusing to her or just beyond her coordination skills. Carsten's group's trouble seemed to stem more from the fact that they were dizzy from spinning around than an inability to perform the patterns.

It was time to find out what my students thought of all this moving around. I decided to conduct interviews to gauge their feelings about our music class activities.

Interviews

At the next music class, I conducted small group interviews. The outline of the interview protocol I used can be found in Appendix D. Here I have written the interviews in narrative form. While the rest of the class was working quietly, I summoned each group to the back of the room for a short interview session. Right away I noticed that the students were focused on my pad and pencil and what I was about to write down.

“Don’t worry,” I reassured them. “I’m just writing down what you say so that I can remember it.”

The first group to come up was Samuel, Marcus, Andrea and Vanessa.

“What is different this year in second grade music class?” I asked them.

Samuel answered, “The seats.”

Marcus pointed to the Charlie Brown picture on the bulletin board.

“Charlie Brown,” he said.

“Is there something we do differently in music class, Marcus?” I asked him. He shrugged his shoulders.

Andrea interjected, “We sing patriotic songs.”

“Yeah,” Vanessa agreed, “the songs.”

“What way helped you to learn the most about rhythm?” I asked them.

“When we do the Chair Game or when we use the magnet notes to show the rhythms?” They all agreed that they thought the Chair Game helped them learn more. “Why is that?” I asked them.

“Because you get to do your own pattern,” answered Andrea. When I asked the group what they thought about moving around in music class, they all agreed that they liked it.

“What would make it more fun for you?” I followed up.

“Well, maybe we could take off our shoes and play Freeze?” suggested Andrea. “Maybe we could walk on top of the steps,” she added. At the beginning of the year, I had told the class how students in Dalcroze lessons take off their shoes and move around the room. I suspected that she remembered this as something that sounded like fun.

“If you could pick one activity to have in every music class, what would it be?” I asked the group.

“Umm... melodies,” answered Samuel. Marcus looked around the room. I asked him the same question again. He doesn’t give me an answer.

Andrea exclaims, “Instruments!”

“More games and Freeze,” Vanessa answers.

“How about one activity you’d like to get rid of?” I asked them.

“Melodies,” they all respond.

“Samuel, I thought you said that you’d like to have melodies in every class. Now you want to get rid of them. Do you really want to keep the melodies or get rid of them?” I asked him.

“Get rid of them,” Samuel responded with a giggle. I thanked the students and sent them back to their seats.

The next group to come to the interview table was Carsten, Joshua and Sidney.

“What is different about our music classes in second grade?” I asked them.

Carsten replied, “We played more instruments last year.”

Joshua added, “We played different games last year – like Doggy Doggy.”

Sidney said, “This year we’ve watched more movies.”

“Like the video on rhythm that I showed you?” I asked her.

“Yes,” she replied.

This group was divided on the issue of magnet notes versus the Chair Game. Here the boys liked the notes better, but Sidney preferred the Chair Game. I asked them to explain their preference.

“The notes are more fun,” said Carsten.

“You can see which ones go where,” added Joshua.

Sidney defended the Chair Game. “You don’t have to know which one to put up,” she explained, meaning the magnet notes. I wondered if Sidney worried about putting up the wrong answer.

Once again, this group agreed that they liked moving in music class. I asked them what would make it more fun for them. “If we could go on the floor,” Sidney replied.

“You mean down on the floor, crawl around?” I asked her.

“Yeah!” Sidney enthused.

“If you could pick one activity to have in every music class, what would it be?” I asked the group.

Carsten answered, “Button You Must Wander.”

“The handsigns,” said Joshua.

“I don’t know,” said Sidney with a shrug.

“How about an activity you’d like to get rid of?” I asked them.

“Doggy Doggy,” said Carsten.

Joshua added, “The ‘Rocky Mountain’ song.”

Sidney agreed with Carsten, “Doggy Doggy.”

“Okay, thank you,” I told them and let them return to their seats.

The next group to come to the table was Kristen, Evelyn and Ryan. I asked them to list the things we did differently in second grade music class.

“We do different Mystery Melodies,” said Kristen.

“We play more games this year,” said Evelyn.

“Last year we played Doggy Doggy,” elaborated Ryan.

They all agreed that the Chair Game helped them to learn more than the magnet notes, because it was more fun.

“It doesn’t make us silly,” Evelyn added. I wondered how much of the frustration I felt during the lesson on manipulatives the children also internalized. It seemed that Evelyn now equated the manipulatives with ‘silly’ behavior. I started thinking that my reactions in that lesson may have inadvertently worried some of the students.

I asked the students about moving in music class. They all answered that they liked it. “How could it be more fun for you?” I asked them.

“Doing more marching,” Kristen answered

“Like in our game Freeze?” I asked.

“Yeah,” she answered.

“Yeah, we could do more fast and medium in Freeze,” Evelyn added.

“Less slow beats -showing half notes?” I asked, to clarify.

“Umm - hmm. More fast and medium,” she responded.

Ryan agreed with the two girls. “More Freeze,” he said.

“Which activities would you like to have in every music class?” I asked the group.

“Sarasponda,” said Kristen.

“Playing games!” added Evelyn.

“Mystery Melodies,” concluded Ryan.

“Which activity would you like to get rid of?” I asked them.

“Doggy Doggy,” said Kristen.

“The singing hurts my throat,” explained Evelyn.

“When we sing songs?” I asked her.

“Yeah,” she replied.

Ryan couldn’t think of an activity to get rid of. “I don’t know,” he said.

The fourth group to come to the back of the room was Robert, Travis, Nicholas and Thomas. “What do we do differently in second grade music class that we didn’t do in first grade?” I asked them.

Nicholas had a long list of answers. “We watch movies. We sing some of the same songs. We use those,” indicating the magnet notes on the chalkboard, “to make notes.”

“We do different Mystery Melodies,” offered Robert.

On the subject of the Chair Game versus the magnet notes, only Travis landed on the side of the Chair Game. All the rest liked the magnet notes better.

“Why do the magnet notes help you to learn better?” I asked Robert, Nicholas and Thomas.

“Because you can put them up on the board,” said Robert.

“Because you can use more notes,” said Nicholas.

“Because they’re more fun,” concluded Thomas.

When I asked Travis about his preference for the Chair Game, he responded, “The chairs are more fun.”

All four boys agreed that they enjoyed moving in music class. I asked them for suggestions about how to make movement activities more enjoyable.

“It’s fine the way it is, but you could make it louder and more exciting!” Nicholas suggested.

“Like ‘In the Hall of the Mountain King’?” I asked.

“Yeah!” Nicholas responded.

I asked the group which activities they would like to see in every music class.

“Freeze!” exclaimed Travis.

“Sarasponda,” said Nicholas.

Robert said, “Patting the beat fast.”

“Like when we did ‘In the Hall of the Mountain King’?” I asked him. He nodded.

Thomas agreed with Travis, "Playing Freeze," he said.

"Which activity would you like to get rid of?" I asked them. They all agreed that they would like to get rid of the Mystery Melody.

I thanked the group and sent them back to their seats. The last group to come up was Brianna, Karly, Ainsley and Letitia. I asked them what we did differently in second grade music class.

Brianna answered quickly, "The games."

"I don't know," said Karly. "I didn't go here last year."

"Is there anything that we do differently here than at your old school?" I asked her.

"I don't remember," she said.

Ainsley also was new to our school this year. "We do different hand motions here," she observed.

"You mean, for Sol La and Mi?" I asked her. She nodded.

Letitia replied that she didn't know what was different. She also didn't go to our school last year.

Ainsley was the only one who liked the Chair Game this time. The other three girls all preferred the magnet notes.

"Why do you think the magnet notes help you to learn better?" I asked them.

"You can just put them up," responded Brianna.

"Instead of having all the people come up and sit on a chair?" I asked.

"Yeah, it's easier," Brianna replied.

“What about the chair game, Ainsley? Why is that better to learn rhythms?”

Ainsley giggled. “I like sitting,” she explained. The other girls giggled as well.

This group all agreed that they liked moving in music class, and none of them could think of a way to improve movement activities. “It’s fun the way it is,” Brianna said conclusively.

Finally I asked them which activity they wanted to have in every class, and which we should get rid of. Ainsley wanted to have “Freeze” in every class, and get rid of the Mystery Melody. Letitia wanted to get rid of the handsigns. Karly would keep the games and get rid of using body levels for showing pitches. Brianna wanted to have instruments in every class and get rid of the handsigns.

I initially felt a sense of dissatisfaction with the interview data, but as I wrote up my transcript of the interviews I began to realize that there was actually much more information there than I had realized. The answers to the first question regarding the differences between first and second grade music class was the most dissatisfying to me. In hindsight, I think that the scope of my first question was too broad. Many students took the idea of ‘things that are different in second grade music’ literally. I had some answers about the physical things that were different in the room. Three students noted the new seating as something that was different. Most of the other answers were about activities that were different this year. While I had hoped that some students would answer that we had engaged in hands-on and kinesthetic activities much more so than in first grade, my second graders were

thinking in a more concrete manner. Their answers showed me that they perceived differences in the types of activities we engaged in, more and different games, different Mystery Melodies, different songs, and more instruments. Although showing videos is not something that I routinely do, two students recalled that we watched more videos in second than in first grade music.

The questions I asked the class about the Chair Game versus the magnet notes revealed that it was almost an even split in the class. Ten students preferred the Chair Game and eight preferred the magnet notes. The reasons for preferring the Chair Game mostly centered around the game as a 'fun' activity. The magnet notes, while considered 'fun' by many, were also admired for the hands-on element; putting them up on the board was a reason cited by two students. The visual component was also considered helpful. "You can see which ones go where," remarked Joshua. The students' positive response to both activities encouraged me to continue using them, either separately or combined.

The students unanimously agreed that movement activities were enjoyable. Suggestions for improvement primarily were that we play more "Freeze," the quarter, half and eighth note movement game I used in the lesson on "Sarasponda." Some students wanted to intensify the experience, asking for faster or louder rhythms in "Freeze."

My final question to the groups was about which activities they would like to have in every music class and which they would like to get rid of. Kinesthetic activities were well represented in their answers. Four students indicated that they would like to see "Freeze" in every class, and two listed "Sarasponda", which is a

version of “Freeze.” Two students also listed playing instruments as an activity they would like to keep. Games, including the circle game “Button You Must Wander” were listed positively by four students. On the other side, nine students listed the Mystery Melody as an activity they would like to get rid of. The Mystery Melody is a short melodic passage I put on the board each week for the students to decode. It seems that the act of deciphering a melody holds little enjoyment for most of my students in this class. It should be noted that this is also a stationary activity with little kinesthetic involvement.

The interview data support what the students are learning musically. Kinesthetic and hands-on activities like “Freeze,” the Chair Game, and the magnet notes all encourage rhythmic competence. The enjoyable aspect of each activity makes it an “educative experience” according to Dewey (1938) and promotes further interest in music. The students’ obvious enjoyment of music class and the kinesthetic and hands-on activities created an environment of excitement and anticipation of future ‘fun’ activities.

Reviewing the interview data made me ponder what makes an activity fun. How could I make slow, quiet rhythms as exciting as fast, loud ones? How could the ideas of ‘fun’ and ‘play’ intermingle with the curriculum peaceably? And, if I were to introduce these playful, exciting musical experiences, what kind of classroom management strategies would I need to investigate? It felt as though I had more questions than answers!

ANALYSIS

Throughout the research process I had been conducting an ongoing analysis of my data. Arhar, Holly and Kasten (2001) state that “interpretation (making sense of the data) is not a separate part of action research that comes at the end of a cycle” (p. 186). Rather, analysis must be an integral part of the day-to-day teacher action research. When I began my study I knew that I was going to be analyzing the data as I went. One of the reasons to analyze sooner rather than later is the idea of ‘emergent design,’ that I would be changing my lesson plans along the way in response to the data I collected. Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Gardner, and McCormack-Steinmetz (1991) state that “a key characteristic of naturalistic research is that questions for study evolve as one is studying” (p. 30). As I looked at my data, I was able to reflect and make changes in my practice as needed. My research focus shifted as I watched my students engage in each lesson.

For example, I began to notice a divide between my students’ abilities regarding concrete and abstract musical knowledge. Observing some students’ frustrations with the abstract nature of activities like the rhythm improvisations, I pulled back and tried to give them a more concrete experience in the next lesson using rhythm manipulatives. At another juncture, I came to realize that my biases were causing me to overlook some students and treat other students deferentially. I had to reexamine my preconceived notions about students and their behavior and change the way that I reacted to classroom management situations.

I used several techniques to analyze my data. After I wrote each log entry, I read and reread it, looking for repeating patterns, events that seemed to be out of the ordinary as well as events that happened time and again. In the margin of my field log, I jotted down codes, or categories for each of these important issues. Arhar, Holly and Kasten (2001) describe categorizing as “ideas, issues, themes or dilemmas” (p. 194). Later in the analysis process, I was able to make overarching categories, or bins, in which to group similar ideas in the data. From these bins, I began to draw conclusions about what was happening in my classroom and write theme statements.

While I was collecting data, I was also reading and reflecting on the work of four educational thinkers. John Dewey (1938), Lisa Delpit (2002), Paulo Freire (2002) and Lev Vygotsky (1978) provided food for thought and changed my thinking about my study. In response to this reading I wrote reflective memos relating my data to the writing of Dewey, Freire, Delpit and Vygotsky. My reflective memos allowed me to think about what each author’s work meant to me and to my study. Another type of memo I wrote were analytic memos. Arhar, Holly and Kasten (2001) say that analytic memos are “what you see emerging as patterns of behavior” and are “a way to record methodological dilemmas” (p. 187). Analytic memos help to sort out the process of conducting a research study and make sense of your analysis thus far. Some analytic memos I wrote were on the topic of my research question; some were on the codes I found in my log.

To further analyze my data, I created a few pieces in narrative form. The narrative forms I used were pastiche and vignette. A pastiche is a piece that puts

together quotations from different speakers on the same subject. Ely, Vinz, Downing, and Anzul (1997) state that, “pastiche directs the readers’ attention to multiple realities by combining various representations to emphasize the relation between form and meaning” (p. 97) A vignette, is the narrative viewpoint of one person. Ely, Vinz, Downing, and Anzul (1997) reflect that vignettes are “narrative investigations that carry with them an interpretation of the person, experience, or situation that the writer describes” (p. 70).

Each step I took in the analytic process gave me deeper, more meaningful understanding of my study. As I coded my log, I began to see broad themes. I could then reflect on what ‘big thinkers’ like Dewey, Freire, Delpit and Vygotsky had to say about the themes I was observing. As a result, I could then turn my focus to the new questions that were emerging from my study.

FINDINGS

My findings fell into three categories; Musical and Kinesthetic Development, Student Engagement, and Behavior and Attitudes. I constructed a table to chart my theme statements, which appears on the next page.

I found that when identifying rhythmic patterns, most students' visual identification skills were stronger than their aural identification skills. The abilities needed to listen to a rhythm pattern and decode it are entirely different from those required to decode a pattern when seeing musical notation. During the lesson on Rocky Mountain, Robert struggled with identifying which word in the song was the half note, lasting for two beats. He couldn't tell the difference between the half note on the word "high" and the eighth notes on the word "mountain". Another example of this aural versus visual confusion was in the "Sarasponda" lesson, when I assigned each group of students a different note value to represent through movement.

Table 2

<i>Findings</i>		
Musical and Kinesthetic Development	Student Engagement	Behavior and Attitudes
1. Students' visual identification skills may be stronger than their aural identification skills when identifying rhythmic patterns.	1. Students who achieved highly in most music class activities continued to achieve when engaged in hands-on, kinesthetic activities.	1. Student behavior may become off-task while participating in hands-on, kinesthetic activities.
2. Students may regard improvisatory activities without parameters as more engaging and less musically challenging than a structured improvisation.	2. Students who are generally less engaged in regular class activities tend to engage more in hands-on, kinesthetic activities.	1a. Group-work activities can become a classroom management concern unless the teacher provides clear expectations for cooperative learning behavior.
3. The coordination required for some kinesthetic activities may be less developed in some second graders than in others.	3. Students who are more physically active tend to engage more in hands-on, kinesthetic activities.	1b. Teachers' preconceptions of appropriate behavior can negatively affect classroom experiences.
3a. Students completed locomotor tasks with a great deal of facility, as compared to the relative degree of difficulty in performing the nonlocomotor tasks.		2. Race, language and culture affect teacher perceptions and student experiences.
		3. Fun, play-like experiences are of paramount importance to students, but may not be the teacher's primary goal.

As I played each type of note value in the accompaniment to the song, the group whose note was played was supposed to get up and demonstrate it through movement. However, I hadn't anticipated that the students would not be able to distinguish between eighth, quarter and half note beats. In contrast to this aural confusion, almost every instance where the students were required to read rhythmic notation was highly successful. I am not alone in this experience. Schnebly-Black and Moore (1997) remind us that "Dalcroze found the implementation of his philosophy was difficult because of his students' problems connecting their movements to the stimulus of musical sounds" (p. 10).

Elliott (1995) states that music literacy, "or the ability to decode and encode a system of musical notation, is not equivalent to musicianship" (p. 61). He adds that music literacy should be "taught and learned parenthetically and contextually – as a coding problem to be gradually reduced within the larger process of *musical* problem solving through active music making" (p. 61). Elliott seems to feel the act of making music should lead to music literacy, not music literacy leading to music making.

The emphasis in my lessons throughout the study was decidedly on making the students musically literate, and then using that knowledge in a musical experience. I had never considered that music literacy doesn't necessarily equal musicianship. My constant focus on reading notes had neglected other much-needed skills, especially auditory skill. My students couldn't aurally decode rhythmic patterns because their experiences had been primarily visual. By only providing one

type of musical experience, I was potentially giving my students what Dewey (1938) calls “miseducative experiences.” These are experiences that have “the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience”(p. 25). While it is disappointing to realize that I may have miseducated my students, it is exciting to imagine what I can learn from this epiphany. If I am teaching musicianship, then I need to focus on more than just music literacy as the key to developing good musicians. My lessons can now focus on music making while allowing the formal knowledge of music reading to develop in tandem. Allowing myself to remove music literacy from its status as primary goal gives me the opportunity to explore other aspects of musicianship. It may come as a relief to my students as well. In the interviews, half of the class listed the Mystery Melody, a visual identification activity, as one that they would like to get rid of. The students in this class are clearly stating that they do not want to spend as much time on visual identification strategies.

Another aspect of musicianship I investigated in this study is that of improvisation. I found that students may regard improvisatory activities without parameters as more engaging and less musically challenging than a structured improvisation. In the lesson on rhythm improvisation, I first asked students to freely improvise an ‘answer’ to my melodic ‘question.’ In a second turn, I asked the students to improvise a response with a specific rhythmic pattern. An informal class interview immediately following the lesson revealed that the students thought the first activity was easier and more enjoyable than the second. I observed while the improvisations during the second round produced a more uniform result and were

of a generally higher quality than the first activity, the sense of play and creativity had been replaced with more intense focus and concentration.

Elliott (1995) states that “what distinguishes an improvisation from a performance is the human effort to compose in real time” (p. 169). He adds that this composing aspect of improvising “can include everything from spontaneously varying or embellishing given rhythms and melodies while performing, to developing complex and extended variations on musical themes to creating entirely new works” (p.169). Elliott (1995) notes the emotional risk of improvising, stating that an improviser, “is in a more precarious position than a composer or performer because improvisations unfold without second chances to correct, edit or polish musical ideas” (p. 169).

Improvising can make many students nervous. I related my own fears and worries about improvising earlier in this year’s story. The increased challenge in the second activity also increased the emotional risk for my students. They immediately told me that they were more comfortable performing the first round of improvisations, because in Brianna’s words, “you might forget the pattern.” The unspoken conclusion is that the student who forgets the pattern will feel embarrassed.

How can I increase my students’ comfort level and skill at improvising? One solution I see is to make improvisation activities less complicated. Including both rhythm and melody in an improvisation is probably too complex for beginning improvisers. Another strategy could entail breaking up the process of improvisation into the components of composition and performance and giving students

opportunities to practice these independently before combining them into an improvisatory activity.

While participating in hands-on, kinesthetic activities, I observed the students' capabilities in using their bodies in expressive ways. This could include movements of a locomotor nature, such as running, skipping, walking and hopping or a nonlocomotor nature, such as playing instruments, patting the beat, clapping hands, and snapping the fingers. I found that the coordination required for some kinesthetic activities may be less developed in some second graders than in others. A related finding was that the students completed locomotor tasks with a great deal of facility, as compared to the relative degree of difficulty in performing the nonlocomotor tasks.

Vanessa initially had difficulty moving to the half note beat in our lesson on "Sarasponda." After watching two students demonstrate it correctly, she was able to accomplish moving to the half note beat. She and Brianna both had trouble playing the correct rhythms once they switched instruments in the "Rocky Mountain" lesson. They played eighth notes instead of half notes on the tambourines after having previously played eighth notes on the egg shakers. After I drew their attention to the difference between the two notes, they were able to play the rhythms correctly. The whole class was challenged by alternating their hands on their laps when patting the rhythm for "In the Hall of the Mountain King." However, the task of then alternating their feet was easier than using their hands. Andrea and Ryan especially needed help to remember to pat twice for eighth notes and then once for a quarter note. In the final activity for "In the Hall of the

Mountain King,” where the students created and performed a handjive pattern to illustrate the rhythms of the piece, both Evelyn and Karly’s handjive patterns proved too much for their coordination skills. Given a second chance, Karly was able to improve her performance, but Evelyn continued to have difficulty coordinating her movements.

According to Berger and Thompson (1995), children’s motor skills may develop more during ages seven to eleven “because they grow more slowly during middle childhood,” (p. 417) and the skills that children acquire during this time depend “in part, on opportunity and encouragement” (p. 418). Berger and Thompson (1995) add that, “reaction time, the length of time it takes a person to respond to a particular stimulus, is tied to aspects of brain maturation that continue into adolescence” (p. 418).

None of my students in this study have unusually poor motor coordination; nor do any of them require special services, such as adaptive physical education, to improve their motor development. However, some seem to have more difficulty with fine motor coordination than others, as evidenced above. These differences in ability could be attributed to their different backgrounds and the coordination or movement activities they may have already experienced. Students may have difficulty with activities that involve quick reaction time because their brain function in that area may not be quite mature. Seven year olds may not all be capable of activities that require students to change movements quickly in time to music.

The opportunities I have provided the students in music class to move, play instruments, and participate in fine motor activities like the hand jive have, up to now, been relatively infrequent. I should not be surprised if the students are not as adept at hands-on, kinesthetic activities as I might like them to be. The way to improve this is obvious – provide more movement and fine motor activities in music class! Giving the students simpler tasks, which do not require quick reaction time, should improve their fine motor performance. Adding more movement activities should also please my students, since the activity “Freeze” numbered among the activities in the interviews as one they would like to play during every music class.

I found that the students’ engagement during the study differed depending on the students themselves. At the beginning of the study, I had recorded my initial impressions of the students as I remembered them from first grade. I had, at that time, grouped Kristen, Carsten, Brianna, Travis and Thomas as highly engaged children who were quick to understand new concepts. I found that this group continued to achieve highly when engaged in hands-on, kinesthetic activities. They were all good participants who synthesized new material well and responded thoughtfully in our discussions. Not every member of this group was equally inclined to movement activities; in one lesson documented in the log, Brianna, Thomas and Carsten sat out a dance activity when given the option of nonparticipation. However, they all participated in the regular class activities without reserve.

I also found that the students who were generally less engaged at the beginning of the study became more engaged when participating in kinesthetic and hands-on activities. Samuel, Ryan, Ainsley, Karly, Robert and Letitia all tended to hang back from class discussion and rarely volunteered answers during non-kinesthetic activities. Their participation in class activities increased when kinesthetic activities were included in the lesson.

I feel that it was the 'doing' nature of the kinesthetic activities that encouraged more participation from such usually reserved children. Elliott (1995) offers that "optimal experiences frequently include a loss of self-consciousness," and that the doer, "has a sense of 'moving out' and becoming one with his or her chosen pursuit" (p. 117). This kind of forgetfulness of one's self allows participants who are 'musicing' to enjoy what they are doing as a part of the group, without feeling self-conscious of their personal performance.

It came as no surprise to me that certain children, and especially those who were already physically active, tended to engage more in kinesthetic and hands-on activities. Nicholas, Marcus, Andrea, Evelyn, Vanessa, Sidney and Joshua were all predisposed to movement activities, full of physical energy and enthusiasm before I began the study. As we progressed through the study lessons, these were also the students who were the most enthusiastically engaged during kinesthetic and hands-on activities. They were the ones who asked for more movement activities in the interviews. "It's okay the way it is," remarked Nicholas on our movement activities, "but you could make it faster and more exciting."

Although these students unreservedly participated in the kinesthetic and hands-on activities, they were not always successful in completing the physical tasks required of them. In the lesson on “Sarasponda,” Vanessa couldn’t move to the half note beat without seeing it modeled by Brianna and Kristen. Nicholas’ wild drumming on his lap prevented him from performing the rhythms correctly during the lesson on “In the Hall of the Mountain King.” Engagement, in these situations, did not necessarily correlate with achievement.

The erosion of some students’ behavior during the study worried me. I found that student behavior could become off-task while participating in hands-on, kinesthetic activities. In the lesson on “Sarasponda,” for example, the students began sliding around on the floor when they were moving to the beat, which soon became the focus of the activity, rather than the movement that I’d planned. In a passage in the log, the handling of instruments became a problem and I told Sidney to hold on to her egg shaker, “or you’ll lose it!”

A related theme was that of behavior problems during group work. I found that group-work activities can become a classroom management concern unless the teacher provides clear expectations for cooperative learning behavior.

Unfortunately, I did not give very clear expectation for group activities and the result was discord among some groups. Vanessa, in particular, did not work well with her groups. She was argumentative during the lesson on the Chair Game and took over her group’s assignment during the lesson on manipulatives.

My own preconceptions of what was appropriate behavior and what was not affected the study. I struggled with what the students ‘should’ be doing. I often

equated good behavior with being quiet and sitting still. At one point, during the manipulatives lesson, I chastised Marcus for falling off of his seat. During the “Sarasponda” lesson, I encouraged the students to move freely around the room, but then felt that sliding on the floor was not appropriate for that activity. My reactions to situations tended to favor those students who complained the loudest and overlooked those who didn’t object, as in the manipulatives lesson, when I placated Marcus and Samuel, but forgot about Andrea.

Weinstein and Mignano (2003) remind us that “well-defined norms for behavior can help to dispel the ‘what ifs’ and enhance feelings of safety and security” (p. 59). Weinstein and Mignano (2003) advise having “clear, specific class-running routines,” which save time and allow children to perform many tasks without the direct instruction of the teacher (p. 65). It became clear to me that I needed to establish a routine for movement activities to avoid the disruptive behavior that was occurring during movement activities. The routine would include an exact way for coming to the standing circle, and for going back to the Flipforms when done with movement activities. Also, a movement routine would include norms for appropriate behavior when moving to music. Moving without speaking at all, stopping without falling over and being careful with their bodies so as not to crash into someone should all be a part of the routine. Implementing this new routine would give my students the opportunity to improve their behavior during movement activities and engage in higher quality musical experiences.

Weinstein and Mignano (2003) also state that in group work “one way to encourage the participation of all group members is to make sure that everyone is

held responsible for his or her contribution to the goal and that each student's learning is assessed individually" (p.255). If Vanessa had been given a specific task for which to be responsible, she probably would not have needed to take over her group's activity. Likewise, the other group members would have had something specific to contribute, from which I could have assessed their learning and no one would be left out of an activity.

My 'laid back' attitude towards classroom management hurt, rather than helped me during this study. Giving the students clearer expectations and holding them accountable for their learning could have prevented many discipline issues. I seemed to be under the impression that because I was conducting movement activities, the classroom atmosphere would be more relaxed and easygoing. It turned out to be quite the opposite. The more I abdicated my position as Teacher with a capital 'T', the more guidance the students needed from me. As we finished up the study, I started to find more middle ground, and have seen an improvement in student behavior since I began making clearer distinctions of what was expected behavior in class activities and group work.

As I wrestled with issues of behavior, I became aware that several factors were influencing my reactions to students. I found that race, language and culture affected my perceptions as teacher and therefore also the students' experiences. I realized that my preconception of Marcus' abilities were predicated almost solely on his speech and behavior. I had mentally dismissed him as not having much musical ability, until I heard him improvise on the xylophone. From that point on, I

questioned my reactions to Marcus and tried to gain some insight into his true capabilities.

Dowdy (2002) relates that, “in the public life, the value given the patriarch’s tongue, the master discourse, always supersedes that given to the matriarch” (p. 12). When Marcus speaks to me in his ‘mother tongue,’ or I give instruction in Standard English, we are both at a crossroads, linguistically. His speech is made difficult to understand by a speech issue, for which he receives speech services. As a result of our linguistic differences, Marcus and I had never truly communicated until recently.

Dowdy (2002) continues, “The war will be won when she who is marginalized comes to speak in her language, and people accept her communication as valid and representative” (p. 13). The victory for Marcus came after I realized that I had been marginalizing him, through my own preconceptions. Once I accepted Marcus’ contributions to class as valid offerings that were representative of his culture and background, he became a valuable member of our music class and I became a better teacher.

The students and I had differing opinions on a few subjects. In particular, fun, play-like experiences were of paramount importance to my students, but were not necessarily my primary goal in each lesson. Many students commented on the fun qualities of activities in our interviews. An activity such as “Freeze” and “Sarasponda” was ‘fun’ and therefore, good. The reason cited for liking most activities was that they were ‘fun.’ Sidney was recorded almost every week in the log asking if we could play a game, or repeat a ‘fun’ activity, such as “Sarasponda.”

In my view, 'fun' was a byproduct of an engaging activity. If the students had fun, it was nice, as long as it didn't interfere with learning. I often associated fun with playing a game. When Sidney asked me if we were going to play a game during the lesson on Rocky Mountain, my response was that we were about to do "something very fun, if I can only get these rhythms on the board." As the adult, it seemed to me that my job was to get in as much learning as possible and then have fun.

Vygotsky (1978) states that through play the child, "achieves a functional definition of concepts or objects, and words become parts of a thing" (p. 99). The children had an innate understanding that the learning atmosphere should be play-like. They knew that music was supposed to be fun and that the best activities were going to be fun activities. When asked in their interviews which activities they would like to experience in every music class, close to half of the class listed games as their preferred activity.

Freire (2002) warns against the banking concept of education, "in which the scope of action allowed the students extends only as far as receiving, filing and storing the deposits" (p. 72). My preoccupation with getting enough knowledge stuffed into my students prevented me from seeing the dreary experience this could be. Freire (2002) adds, "it is the people themselves who are filed away in this (at best) misguided system" (p. 72). Heeding Freire's warning, I realized that it would be in my students' best interests to try to imbue each activity with a play-like quality. I hoped to give them more than just information, but experience as well.

Every week that my students came in the door during this research study was a new and interesting experience. Often I found that things were not going as I had predicted or even as I had hoped! But each week as we tried something new, I felt that the class was teaching me the best way to teach them. I learned as they learned. The biggest reward for me was that our activities provided an experience that was exhilarating for both the students and teacher.

THE NEXT QUESTION...

Where to go from here? Some of the questions that I have are really refinements of my original question. Others have come to me through the experiences of my students.

I very much would like to continue using kinesthetic and hands-on activities with all of my grade levels. Knowing what I do now, it would be unreasonable not to share this learning with all of my students. I feel that right now, my third and fourth graders do not get as many hands-on activities as the younger students on a consistent basis. One idea I am going to try to flesh out in the coming school year is adding instrumentation and movement to every lesson. I would like each music lesson to center around a piece of music that the students can orchestrate and perform. Making each lesson into an active, instead of passive experience is the most important thing for my work. As we engage in these active lessons, I will implement specific routines for movement and instruments to allow

the students to focus on music making. I also hope to eventually become certified in both the Orff and Dalcroze methods of teaching music.

Elliott's work (1995) is a source of inspiration for me, and I hope to continue to apply his concepts to my classroom. In particular, I have come to realize that I have put the skill of music literacy in a place of primary importance.

However, now I feel that I need to look at the musician as a whole. What qualities make a student into a musician and how can I encourage musicianship? Further, while I'm creating these musicians, how can I integrate music literacy and the formal elements of music in a non-intrusive way? Although I am still going to teach my students to read music, I am not going to expend as much effort on note reading for its own sake. I feel this is boring exercise for the students that turns them off of musical literacy. I hope to make reading music a piece of the whole puzzle, and increase its relevancy to my students.

Reading the work of Delpit (2002) causes me to ponder the role of culture and language in the music classroom. It seems to me that the music classroom should be a place to celebrate our differences and come together as a community. What are effective methods of using music to bridge diversity and teach cultural appreciation? One idea I have is to highlight different regions of the world and explore the elements of music that are present in every culture. Certainly I could use these songs for the basis of the lessons I will be planning to integrate movement and instrumentation.

I continue to wonder about adding in more regular education techniques to my teaching of music. While I am removing music literacy from first place on my

list of goals, I am not abandoning it altogether. One area that I would like to explore is the connection between early literacy and beginning music reading. Could I utilize early reading strategies in the teaching of music notation? As I finish this thesis, I am already registered for a course on language acquisition. Hopefully, the connections I can make to the acquisition of musical language will prove helpful in my next research question.

Just as the school year winds to a close, it is bittersweet to leave this work behind me. However, I am already envisioning its continuation in next year's teaching. I see a music classroom where the students learn through movement, literature and drama, engaging in songs and games from around the world. These students sing, play and improvise on instruments, read and compose their own music. They are learning, as Juntunen and Westerlund (2001) state, "in action, through action and within action" (p. 204).

Ten years ago, as a freshman in college, I shrugged my shoulders and accepted what seemed the inevitable decision to be a Music Education major. Now I find myself waking up each morning and looking forward to a day filled with teaching children music. The process of teacher action research has been challenging and at times frustrating, but ultimately rewarding. It has shown me, sometimes all too clearly, the strengths and weaknesses of my teaching. It is the path I have now chosen to take, to help me realize my dream of that joyful classroom.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
Student Consent Form

September 30, 2003

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am completing a Master of Education degree at Moravian College. My courses have enabled me to learn about the most effective teaching methods. One of the requirements of the program is that I conduct a systematic study of my own teaching practices. This semester I am focusing my research on hands-on activities in the music classroom. The title of my research is "Observed and reported experiences of kinesthetic and hands-on activities in second grade general music." My students will benefit from participating in this study by gaining hands-on experiences with reading, writing and performing rhythms. I believe that interacting with music in a hands-on manner engages children and makes them better musicians.

In accordance with the second grade music curriculum, students will be asked to use manipulative materials to compose rhythm patterns and to take rhythmic dictation from patterns played by the teacher. They will be asked to represent music notes with their bodies, step to rhythms in music and compose movement patterns. Students will use classroom instruments to perform and improvise rhythm patterns. For the study, notes on the students' activities will be taken during class in an observation journal. Students will be asked to complete a survey and may be asked to participate in a focus group interview. The study will take place from October 1 through December 3, 2003.

The data will be collected, coded and held in the strictest confidence. No one except me will have access to the data. My research results will be presented using pseudonyms – no one's identity will be used. I will store the data in a locked cabinet in my home. At the conclusion of the study the data will be destroyed by shredding.

A student may choose at any time not to participate in the study. However, students must participate in all aspects of the second grade music curriculum. Students who choose not to participate in the study will not be included in the observation journal, survey and interviews. In no way will participation, non-participation or withdrawal during the study have any influence on any aspect of the class.

I welcome questions about this research at any time. Your child's participation in this study is voluntary; refusal to participate will involve no penalty or consequence. Any question you have about this research can be directed to me, Mrs. Amy Ruhf, or my advisor, Dr. Joseph Shosh.

Sincerely,
Amy Ruhf,
Vocal Music Teacher

Please sign and return to Mrs. Ruhf as soon as possible. Thank you!

I agree to allow _____ to take part in this project. I understand that my son/ daughter can choose not to participate at any time.

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Student signature

Date

Appendix B Principal's Consent Form

May 5, 2003

To whom it may concern,

I give my consent for Amy Ruhf to conduct a research study in her classroom. It is my understanding that the research is supported by educational literature and is a requirement for the completion of her Master's Degree program through Moravian College. Further, I understand that consent for the study will be obtained from all participants and that participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Pseudonyms will be used in discussion of the data collected to protect the students' identities. The data from this research study will be held in the strictest confidence, kept in a locked cabinet in Mrs. Ruhf's home, and destroyed by shredding at the completion of the study.

Students in Mrs. Ruhf's second grade music class will engage in hands-on, kinesthetic activities to read, write and perform music in accordance with the second grade music curriculum. Study participants' experiences will be documented in an observation journal, and they will complete surveys and focus group interviews in addition to the regular curricular activities. Students are required to participate in all regular music class activities regardless of their participation in the study. Students who do not participate in the study will not be required to participate in the surveys and focus group interviews and they will not be documented in the observation journal.

Finally I am aware that question regarding this research should be directed to Mrs. Ruhf or her advisor, Dr. Joseph Shosh.

Sincerely,

Principal's signature

Appendix C
Copy of Student Survey / Attitude Scale

Directions – Circle the face that shows how you feel about each music class activity.

Singing songs



Listening to music



Playing instruments



Moving to music



Worksheets



Playing games



Appendix D

Interview Protocol

Students will be asked the following questions in their focus group interviews:

1. Think about the music lessons we had last year when you were in first grade. What is different about our music lessons this year?

If you didn't go to school here last year, what is different about music class at this school?

2. Now think about when we use the rhythm manipulatives to make rhythm patterns with our groups and when we show the patterns using our bodies. Which way helps you to learn more about rhythms? Why?

3. Moving with the rhythm of music and making up our own movement patterns have been two ways that we showed the rhythms that we are learning. How do you feel about moving around in music class?

What would make moving in music class more fun for you?

4. If you could pick one music class activity to have in every class, what would it be? Why?

If you could get rid of one music class activity, what would it be? Why?

Appendix E

Student Movement Plans

Ainsley, Karly, Letitia and Brianna

We will use these motions -

♪ Partner hands

♩ Pat lap

Carsten, Sidney and Joshua

We will use these motions -

♪ spiral

♩ hands out

♩ clap

Andrea, Vanessa, Marcus and Samuel

+ and Nicholas

We will use these motions -

♪ For tete clap.

♪ parter hands

♪ lap back and forth