

Simply Speaking

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Even before birth, sounds come to our ears. Whether actual words or simple sounds, the voice communicates and expresses joy, sadness, concerns, questions, or needs. Speech is one of the key elements in the Orff Schulwerk approach, not only because speech is an inherently rhythmic action, but because Carl Orff was the only major educational philosopher to use speech in such a rhythmic and harmonic way. In the Schulwerk approach, teachers often make the transition from speech to rhythmic activities through body percussion - clap, patschen, stomp and snap - to melody and song and finally to instrument playing. This process is natural for a child. Many music concepts are best experienced first through speech and movement.

Orff, in his speech at the opening of the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Germany, says,

“Elementary music, word and movement, play, everything that awakens and develops the powers of the spirit, that is the “humus” of the spirit, the humus without which we face the dangers of a spiritual erosion.”

The spirit inside each musician can be developed through speech. Speech and movement, without any instrument, can provide material to teach music concepts. The role of language is paramount in the expression of self. Proverbs, rhymes, poems, limerick, haiku, and prose teach not only rhythmic lessons, but also motivate movement, suggest melody, show texture, and create form. The name games, word chains, ostinatos, limericks, proverbs, and repetitive phrases explored in this book provide ideas and activities for teaching a multitude of children at varying grade levels.

Expressive speech is referred to often in this book. Like an exquisitely sung aria, phrases of speech should be executed with the same attention to tension and relaxation, varied voice timbre and dynamics, facial and body gesture with vowels and consonants clearly articulated. Often, I ask students to speak a rhyme or poem to express moods (happy, frightened, excited, or bored), like popcorn (staccato high and low sounds), or as if going to a destination that affects their mood (to the dentist, an amusement park, or a favorite vacation spot). This activity allows students a chance to practice the poem or rhyme more than once, while maintaining interest. Sometimes a non-verbal cue, such as a facial expression or a hand signal, reminds students to speak more expressively without stopping the activity. Some poems, rhymes, or proverbs invite the use of expressive speech more than others.

The imagination of the teacher and student to create colorful voice timbres and interesting face and body expressions, with a playful attitude, make all speech activities successful. So, explore and play, change and create using the models in this book - you've got the last word.

Sue Mueller

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Simply Speaking

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Clap $\frac{2}{4}$ Let's be-gin sim - ply speak-ing, speak-ing just the word. Put the words to -

Patsch $\frac{2}{4}$

Stomp $\frac{2}{4}$ just a word. Sim - ply speak-ing. just a

ge-ther, e - xact - ly how they're heard. Link the words to - ge - ther, un -

word. Sim - ply speak-ing. just a word.

til you form a phrase. Clap it, patsch it, stomp it, snap it, in your mind it stays.

Sim-ply speak-ing. Sim-ply speak-ing.

just a word.

Aim: Use speech and body percussion ostinatos to build rhythmic independence.

Process:

- ◆ Teach poem using echo process until secure.
- ◆ Teach the snap and stomp parts as one complete, four-measure ostinato before dividing into two parts.
- ◆ Split the ostinato and teach it to two groups. Group One speaks “Just a word” and Group Two speaks “Simply speaking.”
- ◆ Assign a third group to speak the poem while the other two groups speak the split ostinato.
- ◆ Transfer all parts to body percussion and perform again.
- ◆ Teach the following introduction using echo process and dynamics.

Let's begin, simply speaking, speaking just the word.
 Put the words together, exactly how they're heard.
 Link the words together until you form a phrase.
 Clap it, patsch it, stomp it, snap it, in your mind it stays!

Ostinato

Group One (stomp) Group Two (patsch)

Performance Suggestion:

- Introduction** Speak introduction in unison.
- A** Speak poem in unison.
- B** Groups One and Two speak complete ostinato twice, then as a split ostinato twice.
- A'** Group Three speaks poem with split ostinato.
- C** Groups One and Two perform split ostinato on body percussion four-times.

A'' Groups One, Two and Three perform poem and split ostinato on body percussion.

Extensions:

- ◆ Transfer all parts to unpitched percussion.
- ◆ Create more ostinatos to accompany poem.

Glossary

Barred Instruments are a unique set of Xylophones, Metallophones, and Glockenspiels with ranges of 13 - 15 pitches, arranged in three pitch groupings, Bass, Alto and Soprano. With Orff-style barred instruments, bars are removable.

Body Percussion utilizes the body as a percussion instrument. Typical body instruments in Orff Schulwerk include, but aren't limited to, Snap (fingers), Clap (hands), Patschen (pat knees), and Stomp (feet).

Teaching Suggestions

Teaching Expressive Speech

- Speak a rhyme or poem with different moods (happy, frightened, excited, bored).
- Speak text in different voice timbres (scratchy, smooth, staccato high and low sounds like popcorn).
- Speak as if students were going somewhere and the destination affected their mood, (to the dentist, an amusement park, a favorite vacation spot). This activity allows the students a chance to practice the poem or rhyme more than once, still maintaining interest.

National Standards and Lesson Objectives

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National Standard

- Perform on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

Lesson Objectives

- Split ostinato to accompany rhyme.
- Perform rhythms accurately and independently in small ensembles.
- Perform a three-part score accurately with others in an ensemble.
- Perform ostinatos using speech and body percussion.

What's in a Name? page 8

National Standards

- Improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
- Compose and arrange music within specified guidelines.

Lesson Objectives:

- Improvise and create complementary rhythmic speech ensemble using rhythms of names.
- Perform a speech rondo with body percussion and gestures.