

Notes from the Music Room

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MUSIC APPRECIATION



Within the safe environment of the music room, a modified Kodaly Methodology: <http://www.musicstaff.com/lounge/article3.asp> is used at the Gillen Brewer School. It is a developmental approach where a teaching concept begins with the total experience, then moves to the symbolization of that experience. For example, the whole song is sung and then broken down and seen in musical terms. Music appreciation is fostered through carefully chosen folk and traditional songs from various cultures. These activities support learning opportunities that can lead to an understanding of basic musical terms and concepts. Nursery rhymes, fingerplays, composed music, improvisation, singing, instrumen-

tal, movement activities, and dramatic music plays are the primary sources used to enjoy music intelligently and also support the Gillen Brewer curriculum. The voice and body are used as the main instruments, with singing as the focused musical activity. Songs and activities used within the music room typically contain various visual, audio, and physical elements meant to stimulate, serve, and confirm each child's strength. Children are encouraged to participate in their own way. They may be given the option to sing, play instruments or show hand signs that represent the words, or can choose to simply hum the melody or move their bodies to represent the musical elements. Children are thanked for their participation rather than required to participate.

"Mistakes" are deemed as part of an accepted and integral musical learning process in order to build self-confidence and increase the likelihood of participation.

A child's motivation to participate can come from within the activity, whether it is a desire to play in an upcoming "musical game" or get a turn on an instrument. Through group activities such as structured instrumental pieces or musical games, the individual becomes invested in the quality of his/her contribution to a musical piece and also the quality of the group's musical effort and accomplishment. The overall goal is to have a self-motivated child, rather than developing a child that is adult oriented or teacher dependent.

Each of Us is a Flower

By Charlotte Diamond

Chorus:
Each of us is a flower
Growing in life's garden
Each of us is a flower
We need the sun and rain.

Verse:
Sun, shine your warmth on me
Moon, cool me with your night
Wind, bring the gentle rain
Earth, take my roots down deep.

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Supporting the Curriculum

Songs in the music room are provided to help the children connect to their outside world in a meaningful way.

Since most of the younger classes are working with the spring-time theme, I have been singing such songs as: "Each of us is a Flower," "Rainbow 'Round Me," "Here Comes a Bluebird" (to encourage 1:1 interaction through dance, asking, and thanking,) and "Let's sing a song of Springtime" (to foster sound duplication, matching pitches and intervals). Song books that show the notated music on the last page are also used: "Down by the Bay" (to reinforce rhyming, long notes) and "Over in the Meadow" (to practice animal names, counting, rhyming); and the old stand by - "Inch by Inch" (to explore gardening).

With the older children, songs are often chosen to support the curriculum in the classroom. The Dollars and Dragons are listening to and analyzing the music of the national anthems of the different countries they are studying. The Praying Mantises are studying the Revolutionary War and are learning about "Singing Newspapers" and "Ballads." For example, "Yankee Doodle" - which was meant to mock the colonists - was modified by the colonists and used to update how the war was going. The Anacondas are learning about New York City through such songs as "The Sidewalks of New York."



Adam and Camille dramatizing the song "Miss Polly had a Dolly who was sick" playing the roles of doctor and stay at home daddy.



Jack and Langston "hopping in the garden" during the song "Here Comes a Bluebird" - a song that encourages turn taking, asking to dance, movement in and out of "windows," thinking of different kinds and colors of birds, and moving to the beat of the song.

Does the Smart Board Sing?



Maddux adds his color to the rainbow during the song "Rainbow 'Round Me."



The Alligators learn sign language from an online dictionary.

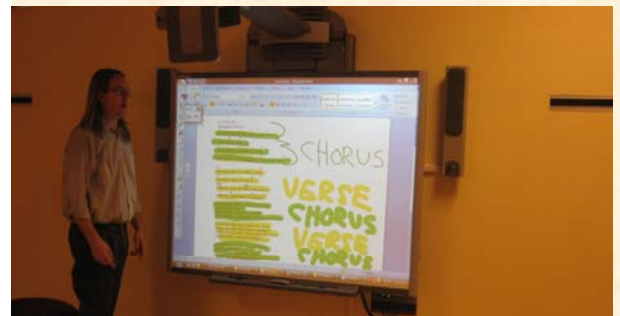


The Dragons reference a world map to locate Latin America



Listening to 3 Honduran girls sing their national anthem.

The "Smart Board" is often incorporated into a typical music lesson. It helps to visually identify and represent the elements of music. Words can be highlighted and videos containing songs and native instruments can be shown. While learning to sing new songs, numbers, pictures, and words supported by the lyrics can be drawn. Children are often given turns to draw their own ideas, which can motivate them to stay focused and on task.



Identifying the difference between verse and chorus.



Identifying the elements of music in each song such as tempo, volume, genre, instrumentation, etc.

Instruments



Quality instruments (purchased through your donations) are only used in the music room. We want your children's experiences with instruments to be meaningful and real from the first moment they interact with them.



Songs we are singing now

RAINBOW 'ROUND ME by Ruth Pelham

When I look outside my window,
There's a world of color I see,
Fiddle de dee, outside my window,
There's a world of color I see.

*Rainbow, rainbow
Rainbow 'round me
Rainbow, rainbow
Rainbow 'round me.*

And the **sky** outside my window,
Is as **blue** as **blue** as can be,
Fiddle de dee, the **sky** outside my window,
Is as **blue** as **blue** as can be.

CHORUS

And the **sun** outside my window,
Is as **yellow** as **yellow** as can be,
Fiddle de dee, the **sun** outside my window,
Is as **yellow** as **yellow** as can be,
And the **sky** is as **blue** as **blue** as can be.

CHORUS

And the **flower** outside my window,
Is as **purple** as **purple** as can be,
Fiddle de dee, the **flower** outside my window,
Is as **purple** as **purple** as can be,
And the **sun** is as **yellow** as **yellow** as can be,
And the **sky** is as **blue** as **blue** as can be.

CHORUS

And the **car** outside my window,
Is as **red** as **red** as can be,
Fiddle de dee, the **car** outside my window,
Is as **red** as **red** as can be.
And the **flower** is as **purple** as **purple** can be,
And the **sun** is as **yellow** as **yellow** as can be,

This is one of the songs we'll be singing at the upcoming achievement ceremony on June 19th. It represents what we are working on as a school. We're a community of learners and the names of each group at Gillen Brewer are sung in the last verse. The song also works well for the entire school because with each class you can sing what they are working on in the classroom. For example, with the Dragons and Dollars we can replace the words in the verse with "Canadians, Mexicans, or Puerto Ricans" in order to incorporate their subject of different cultures. With the Grapes we can add different adjectives in place of each word. We also will be singing "Love Grows" which is shown on the opposite page. Both songs will be sung with sign language.

Under One Sky

words and music by Ruth Pelham © 1982 (ASCAP) verses adapted by Robert Kennedy

Chorus:

We're all a family under one sky, we're a family under one sky
We're all a family under one sky, we're a family under one sky

We're sisters (we're sisters), we're brothers (we're brothers)
We're fathers (we're fathers), and we're mothers, too (we're mothers, too)
We're grandmas (we're grandmas), we're grandpas (we're grandpas)
We're friends (we're friends), and we're neighbors, too (we're neighbors, too)

(Chorus)

We're Dragons, we're Dollars, Praying Mantises, Anacondas, too
We're Alligators, we're Grapes, we're Bugs and Frogs, and Caterpillars, too.

Love Grows

by: Carol Johnson

CHORUS:

Love grows one by one, two by two
And four by four
Love grows round like a circle
And comes back knockin' at your front door.

Note by note we make a song
Voice by voice we sing it
Choir by choir we fill up the world
With the music that we bring it.

(CHORUS)

So let me take your hand my friend
We'll each take the hand of another
Hand in hand we'll reach round the world
To our sisters and our brothers.

(CHORUS)

