

Introduction to Orff Schulwerk

The Orff Schulwerk approach is one of the most sustainable practices in music education. It adapts and evolves with the times, without compromising child centered and child generated learning outcomes. Common threads of *Teaching for Understanding*, *Understanding by Design*, *21st century Education*, *Teaching Tolerance*, *PBL*, and *Project Zero* frameworks are building relationships, developing healthy interactions, inspiring creativity, curiosity and wonder, and focusing on collaborative learning as optimal learning. We find these and more, in a well thought out Orff Schulwerk program. Every child thrives and all learning is imbued with joy.

Orff Schulwerk was developed by German composer Carl Orff (1895-1982) and his colleague, Gunild Keetman (1904-1990). “Schulwerk” literally means “schoolwork,” but is better described as “learning by doing.”

This approach to music teaching and learning, is combined with and supported by movement. It is based on things children like to do: sing, chant rhymes, clap, dance, and keep a beat or play a rhythm on anything near at hand. These natural behaviors are directed first into responding to and making music. Reading and writing music are a later natural outgrowth of these experiences. Composer Carl Orff, called this music and movement activity “elemental” – basic, unsophisticated, concerned with the fundamental building blocks of both art forms. The purpose is to provide a means for awakening the potential in every child for being “musical” – to be able to understand and use music and movement as forms of expression. The further intent is to develop a foundation for lifelong enjoyment of music and movement/dance, and for some, the incentive for specialized individual study.

The pedagogical materials used in the Orff classroom include poems, rhymes, games, songs, dances, and instrumental pieces. Rhythmic ideas are developed and extended through liberal use of “body percussion” (clapping and finger snapping, for example), and small percussion instruments (wood block, triangle, tambourine, and various types of drum). Specially designed melodic percussion called Orff-instruments, include xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels are used extensively. The experience of playing together as an ensemble fosters sensitive listening, and the enjoyment and satisfaction of group music making in a supportive atmosphere. It also allows students of varying ability levels to contribute successfully to the total effort.

The process of teaching unfolds through

- **Preliminary Play** – guided experiences of exploration of goal material
- **Imitation** – teacher-modeled response, performed simultaneously or as an echo
- **Exploration** – the opportunity to alter a musical experience through experimentation
- **Improvisation** – creation of a musical experience or idea with or without the element of time
- **Literacy** – the use of graphic or traditional notation leading to musical literacy

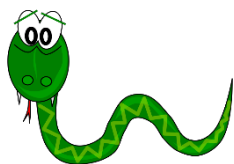
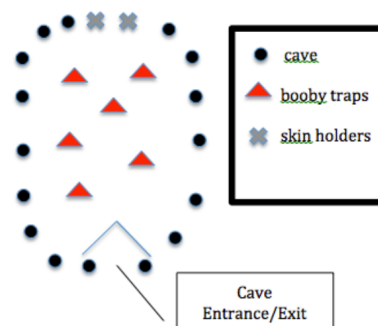
The sample lesson demonstrated in this session illustrates how musical objectives may be realized through discovery learning. There are multiple possible outcomes.

Let's Play!

Echo me please..."Rattlesnake Oh rattlesnake, watch out or he'll bite you!"

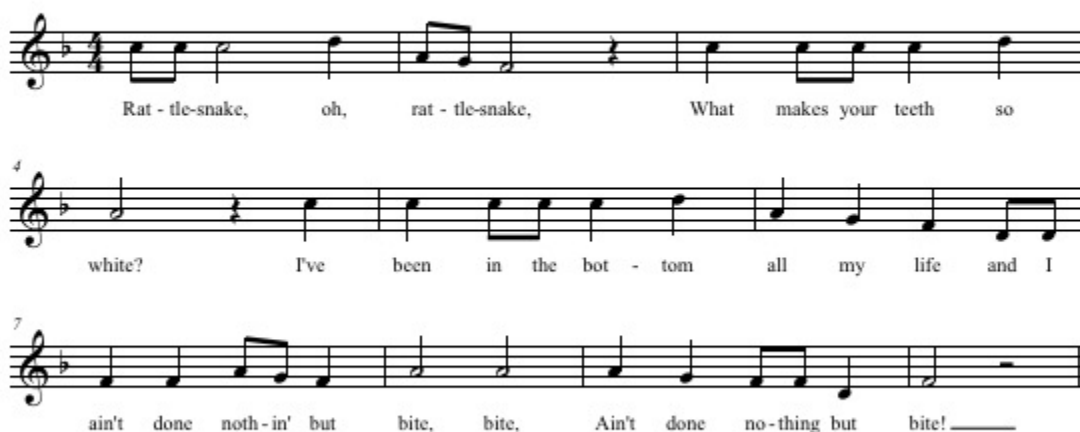


Game: Have students say the chant, take an egg shaker, and follow you on the floor in a line. Turn the line into a large oval shape (longer on the sides). Now, count off by twos around the oval. Twos step into the center and scatter around (They are the booby traps). The two people at the end get scarfs (the sacred snake skins) and the opposite two people are assigned as the house exit. 2 people from the circle are selected as robbers and 1 person from the center is anonymously selected as the rattlesnake. The game starts and so does the chant. Inside people need to spread out with hands at their sides as the robbers make their way into the oval through the house and down to the sacred snake skins. When they grab the skins from the two people at the end, everyone says "Rattlesnake!" and they booby trap people put their hands out to the sides like an airplane. The robbers have the make their way back out, going around or under the inside people but not through them. But, the secret rattlesnake has awoken and is out to stop them before they get to the door by biting (tagging) them. Everyone shakes their shakers like crazy (like a rattlesnake's tail). If the robber(s) escape, they get to turn one letter to spell RATTLESNAKE. When all the letters are turned they win and the cave collapses!



Rattlesnake

Traditional Folk Song



Rattlesnake

arranged by: Jason Robert Krauswiede

Traditional Folk Song

Voice/Sop Rec. Rat - tle-snake Oh, rat - tle-snake, what makes your teeth so white? I've been in the bot - tom
 Soprano Xylophone (Look-out snakes!)
 Alto Xylophone
 Shaker
 Vibra-slap
 Bass Met./Xyl (R A T... T L EL. S N A K E E HITU)
 Medium/High Drum
 Low Drum

S. Rec. all my life and I ain't done noth - in' but bice, bice, ain't done noth-ing but bice!
 Sop. Xyl.
 Alto Xyl. (here it comes!)
 Shk.
 Vibra-slap
 Bass Met./Xyl
 H/M Drum
 L. Drum

2 - 4 - 6 - 8

Folk Rhyme

Improv Line Xylophones 2 4 6 8 Jon - ny caught a ratt - le snake. Snake died Jon - ny cried. 2 4 6 8
 Bordun BX/BM Boo, hoo! Boo, hoo, hoo! Boo, hoo! Boo, hoo, hoo!

Some Resources for Orff Schulwerk

American Orff-Schulwerk Association: www.aosa.org

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