

About This Book

It is natural for children to begin moving when they hear music. According to Carl Orff the best music for children is “never alone, but connected with movement, dance, and speech—not to be listened to, meaningful only in active participation.” Orff also said, “Experience first, then intellectualize.”

This resource is a collection of movement activities to help children experience classical music. The activities and corresponding musical examples can be used to introduce, review, or assess the instruments of the orchestra and musical concepts such as dynamics, melody, and form. They can be used as part of a bigger unit or they can stand alone simply as quick, easy, and fun opportunities to experience and enjoy music. As teachers we provide the children the framework, the music, and an experience in which they are actively participating in the music while listening.

Unless I am assessing the children, I always model what I would like them to do. Movement should always keep musicianship in mind. Also remember that all movements should be expressions of the music, and model them appropriately for your students. We know that many children have short attention spans; be sure to read the room and adjust your movements accordingly. Feel free to play as little or as much of the selected piece as the activity allows. If the children are not able to experience the entire piece yet, don't worry. Revisit the activity during a subsequent lesson and see if they can last a little longer. Always remember that movement with young children is not about perfect execution in time with the music. It is rather about experiencing the music and conveying concepts through movement appropriate for this age level. Relax, let your guard down, and be childlike.

Above all, let go and have a great time moving with the students. It is a special thing to see how children use their bodies and space to interpret and have fun with classical music. It's time to watch them listen and wiggle, move and giggle!

Additional Resources

Beginning on page 28, you will find thirteen reproducible worksheets to extend the lessons and provide more concrete evidence of learning.

Additionally, if you would like to purchase high-quality recordings of the musical examples referenced in this resource, there's no need to spend hours searching for them—we've done it for you! Simply visit <http://music4you.lorenz.com/> and select the recordings you would like to purchase.

YouTube links are included for each music selection. Use them for quick access to the pieces while you are getting acquainted with the movements. You may also wish to share these videos with your students so that they can hear and see the musicians and their instruments performing the music. For your convenience the YouTube links are also available at <http://music4you.lorenz.com>.

Get to Know the Instruments

- Display pictures of each instrument as you introduce it to the children. Also play audio and/or video examples of each. YouTube is a great resource for sharing great performances with your students. Take a virtual field trip to a symphony or chamber orchestra concert!
- Use Worksheets 1–4 to have your students show their knowledge of the instruments and their families. You can find these worksheets at the back of the book (see page 31).

The String Family

Violin

Prelude to Partita in E Major by J.S. Bach

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVE8Jy_pPfc

Playing violin is a lot of fun but also hard work. Have fun with this Bach partita and pretend to play violin along with the recording.

- Demonstrate how to hold and play a violin. Many children this age will immediately mirror you. Consider holding your imaginary violin with your right hand instead of your left so that the children will play correctly. Who knows how many future violinists are in your class!
- Once all children are holding their imaginary violins, instruct them to get their bows ready, cue the music, and play along!

Viola

Viola Concerto in G Major, Second Movement by Telemann

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtB28i6ypFw>

Use this piece to introduce the viola and to compare the size difference between the viola and the violin by having the children pantomime playing the violin and then the viola.

- Discuss and pantomime the differences between playing a violin and a viola. Consider using this script: “What would it look like to play viola? Since it is a little bigger than the violin, it would feel different, too. Playing the violin felt and looked like ... Show me. Now watch: playing the viola feels and looks like ... Switch to viola for me now. Remember, since your viola is a little bigger than your violin, you will have to stretch your fingers a little more when you play.”
- Once the children are holding their imaginary violas, instruct them to get their bows ready, cue the music, and play along!

Learn and Compare Musical Concepts

Meter and Grouping

The concepts of time signature and meter are tricky for young children to understand. Plant seeds for a future lesson on time signature by talking about and experiencing how steady beat is grouped in music.

- Review steady beat with the children.
 - Pat a steady beat on your legs. Invite the children to join you.
 - Sing “Ring Around the Rosy” while patting a steady beat on your legs. Naturally, everyone will fall down at the appropriate part of the song.
 - Repeat.
- Explain that to help musicians play music, the steady beat is put into groups, like a group of two, or a group of three, or a group of four, and so on, just like they might put things into groups in math class.
- Introduce a song that has its beats in groups of two.
 - Tell the children, “When we kept a beat before, we only patted our laps. Now I want you to show me two beats. Now you will pat then clap.”
 - Say, “One, two. One, two. ...,” while the children pat and clap.
 - Sing “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” which is in two-beat groupings. Pat and clap while singing.
- Introduce a song that has its beats in groups of three.
 - Review with the children: “When music is grouped into two beats, we pat and clap. Let’s talk about when music is grouped in three beats. Now we will pat, clap, and burst our hands.” (Burst your hands, flick your fingers, or quickly tap your fingers to your thumbs as an alternative to snapping.)
 - Say, “One, two, three. One, two, three. ...,” while everyone practices the pat–clap–burst body percussion.
 - Recognize that this pattern is a little more challenging and review until the children are confident.
 - Sing “Happy Birthday,” which is in three-beat groupings. Continue to repeat the body percussion pattern while singing.

- Introduce a song that is in groups of four beats.
 - Review with the children: “When music is grouped in two, we pat and clap. When music is grouped in three, we pat, clap, and burst. Let’s talk about music in groups of four. We will pat, clap, burst, and ... clap again!”
 - Say, “One, two, three, four. One, two, three, four. ...,” as you practice this pattern with the children.
 - Sing “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” Continue to repeat the body percussion pattern while singing.

- Introduce a song that has its beats in groups of six.
 - Review: “When music is grouped in two, we pat and clap. When music is grouped in three, we pat, clap, and burst. When music is grouped in four, we pat, clap, burst, and clap.”
 - Continue: “Let’s think about groups of six beats. We will pat our legs, clap, clap, pat our heads, clap, clap. The claps will need to travel up and down so that we can get our hands from our laps to our heads.”
 - Say, “One, two, three, four, five, six. One, two, three, four, five, six. ...,” as you practice this pattern with the children. The children may have more success if you begin slowly and gradually increase the tempo.
 - Sing a song in six beats, such as “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” Continue to repeat the body percussion pattern while singing.

Review and Extend

- Say: “We learned that music has a steady beat and we learned that music is grouped into two, three, four, and six beats. We also learned that the beat is what keeps the musicians playing together correctly so that the music sounds good.”
- Show the students examples of a time signature in sheet music or in their music textbooks.
- Use body percussion patterns while actively listening to music in two, three, four, and six beats. Here are some ideas to try:
 - Music in two: *Prince of Denmark’s March* by J. Clarke
March Militaire by Schubert
 - Music in three: *A waltz* by Brahms or Chopin
 - Music in four: “*March of the Children*” from *The Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, Movement 1 by Mozart
 - Music in six: “*The Flower Duet*” from *Lakme* by Delibes
“*Morning*” from *Peer Gynt* by Grieg
- Worksheet 5 reviews how music is grouped and will be especially meaningful for your youngest students. You can find it at the back of the book (see page 32).

Dance to the Music

“Finale” from *The Overture to William Tell* by Rossini

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIbYCOiETx0>

Saddle up! Use the introduction to get your horse ready and hop on.

- After the introduction, face left and bounce in place as if you were riding a horse for sixteen beats (A).
- Turn or jump right, and continue bouncing in place for sixteen beats (A).
- Bounce in place to the front for thirty-two beats (B).
- March in place facing the front for sixteen beats (interlude).
- Face left, and bounce in place as if you were riding a horse for sixteen beats (A).
- Turn or jump right, and continue bouncing in place for sixteen beats (A).
- Children often like to pretend that their horses take a break and rest during the middle section. (You will be glad for this!) The students can walk carefully around the room. Some may even pause to eat some grass or hay. Be sure to cue them to get back to their places before the beginning theme returns.
- When the beginning theme returns:
 - Bounce facing left for four beats.
 - Bounce facing right for four beats.
 - Bounce facing left for two beats.
 - Bounce facing right for two beats.
 - Bounce or jog in place facing front until the end.

I Got Rhythm by Gershwin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U67H2foLYSk>

The Charleston is a dance that originated in the 1920s. Bring this dance to your classroom while listening to this jazz standard.

- Teach the children a basic Charleston step to dance with while listening to the music (begin after the introduction).
 - Beat 1: Step right foot in place.
 - Beat 2: Step left foot back.
 - Beat 3: Step left foot to place.
 - Beat 4: Step (or low kick) right foot front.
- Students can also alternate free dancing with doing the Charleston.

The Stars and Stripes Forever by Sousa

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-7XWhyVpE>

Patriotism abounds as your students experience this American favorite composed by America’s “March King.”

- Look at and discuss the United States flag with the children. Notice the stars and the stripes and tell the students what they represent.
- Distribute paper, crayons, and/or markers to the children.
 - Give the students time to create their versions of the United States flag.
 - Their flags may look similar to or very different from the traditional US flag.
 - Attach each of the flags to a rhythm stick using tape or sticky tack.
- March in a parade while listening to the music.
- Instead of flags, the students can use rhythms sticks or other non-pitched percussion instruments to keep the beat while marching in their parade. They can also clap their hands or click their tongues if no instruments are available.