

# CAN WE DO IT AGAIN?

Grades  
K-5

Elementary Sound and Movement  
Activities Fostering Learning,  
Creativity, and Joy

ERIK WHITEHILL

Editor: Jenny VanPelt  
Cover and Book Design: Katie Hufford

©2020 Heritage Music Press, a division of The Lorenz Corporation. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

Permission to reproduce the downloadable resources included in this product is hereby granted to one person as part of the purchase price. This permission may not be transferred, sold, or given to any additional or subsequent user of this product. Thank you for respecting the copyright laws.

Heritage Music Press  
A division of The Lorenz Corporation  
P.O. Box 802  
Dayton, OH 45401-0802  
www.lorenz.com

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-0-7877-6928-4



**HERITAGE**  
MUSIC PRESS

# CONTENTS

Introduction & Acknowledgments . . . . .	3	Percussion Improvisation Stories . . . . .	26
Notes on Movement Activities . . . . .	4	K-5 • Imagination and percussion	
<b>WARM-UPS</b>			
Imitate and Improvise . . . . .	6	Program Music Composition Project . . . . .	28
K-5 • Non-locomotor movement		4-5 • Percussion composition with flow maps	
Seed Activity . . . . .	7	Stick-tation Activity . . . . .	32
K-2 • Sound differentiation and movement		K-2 • Rhythmic dictation	
Sleep and Stomping Game . . . . .	9	<b>CLOSURE &amp; LINE ACTIVITIES</b>	
K-2 • Sound differentiation and movement		Music Teacher Hat Closure Activity . . . . .	35
Student Directors . . . . .	11	K-5 • Summarizing lessons	
K-5 • Expressive qualities		Puppet Time Closure Activities . . . . .	36
Spooky Forest . . . . .	12	K-2 • Class reward	
K-1 • Instrumental and movement cues		Sharing Time Closure Activity . . . . .	37
<b>BIG IDEAS</b>			
Back to School Percussion Song . . . . .	15	K-5 • Relationship building	
2-5 • Singing with percussion instruments		Clapping Line Game . . . . .	38
Bologna Sandwich Game . . . . .	17	K-5 • Bodily control and focus	
1-4 • Timbre differentiation and movement		Statues Line Game . . . . .	39
“Send Them Away” Game . . . . .	20	K-5 • Non-locomotor movement and focus	
K-1 • Echoing rhythm patterns		How to Access Your Digital Files . . . . .	40
Locomotor Percussion Activity . . . . .	23		
K-5 • Differentiating timbre and movement			
Sound Path Activity . . . . .	24		
K-2 • Imagination and percussion			
Messy Room Activity . . . . .	25		
K-1 • Identifying, classifying, playing, and sorting percussion			



# INTRODUCTION

I am a self-proclaimed foodie. Not only do I take great delight in the culmination of a beautifully crafted dish, but also in figuring out how to prepare it myself. Upon seeing a cooking task that I want to replicate, I assemble whatever ingredients and resources are available and practice. Then I put my own spin on the dish and let my creativity go wild. This process is how I grow in my cooking skills.

Likewise, in my career as an elementary music teacher, I have had the great fortune to observe many successful master teachers. When I've observed engaging lessons and activities, I've spent hours replicating them and practicing. Then I put my own spin on them. This process is how I grow as a music educator.

Now it is my turn to be the chef. Like any chef, I have my own culinary point of view. My elementary music education point of view is built on three statements of belief:

## **Music can be understood**

Children can analyze timbre, texture, notation, and form

## **Music is a way to express yourself**

Children can create and perform musical sounds and movements

## **Music learning is enjoyable**

Children learn best when given opportunities to find joy in discovery and accomplishment

This book is a menu of activities and lessons that I have created and honed over the years. The concepts are not new... but they have my particular spin. A suggested grade-level range is listed with each activity, but most of them are easily adaptable to elementary children of all ages and ability levels. Also, I use the piano for a lot of activities. If you are not a pianist, you will find suggested percussion alternatives for all of the piano parts. You can also download recordings of my sound cues. See page 40 for instructions.

Everything in this book has been tested successfully in my classroom over years of time. My students ask for these activities over and over again! It is my hope you will find these lessons and activities useful. It is also my hope you will find engaging things in this book that you will customize and develop with your own particular spin.

Best wishes to you and your students!

—Erik Whitehill

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank all of the elementary music teachers and teacher educators who inspire me onward in this incredibly rewarding vocation, especially:

### **My General Music Teachers:**

Jennie Streyffeler, Belinda Jacoby, and Phyllis L. Whitney

### **My Orff Instructors:**

Carla Cose-Giallella, Marilyn Wood, Rob Amchin, Joshua Block, Karlana Leal, and Greg Gooden

### **Collegiate Instructors:**

Dennis Darling (Luther College) and Sandra Stauffer (Arizona State University)

### **General Music Master Teachers:**

Carole Lea Arenson, Mary Jo Cranwell, Mary Jo Finkle, Karen Keuhmann, Nathan Crabtree, Artie Almeida, Michael Chandler, Don Dupont, and Brian Hiller.



# NOTES ON MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

My Orff instructors impressed upon me the importance of movement and dance in elementary music classes. Subsequently, I use locomotor and non-locomotor movement concepts in a lot of my teaching. For many activities, I give students the opportunity to choose movement words from a list of options. In my classroom, I have a movement “word wall,” which I reference daily. You can also print my words or project visuals from the files available with this book.

**Locomotor Movement**—Moving the body while traveling around the room

**Non-Locomotor Movement**—Moving the body without changing location

The movement words I use are listed below and available for download. See page 40 for instructions.

## Locomotor Movement Words

Amble  
Crawl  
Gallop  
Hop  
Hustle  
Leap  
Limp  
March  
Meander  
Plod  
Prance  
Race  
Roll

Run  
Saunter  
Scurry  
Skip  
Slink  
Sprint  
Stagger  
Stride  
Stroll  
Strut  
Waddle  
Walk

## Non-Locomotor Movement Words

Bend  
Bob  
Contract  
Curl  
Drop  
Expand  
Flop  
Jump  
Lunge  
Pounce  
Rise  
Rock  
Rotate

Sag  
Shake  
Sink  
Spin  
Squirm  
Stretch  
Sway  
Totent  
Turn  
Twist  
Uncurl  
Undulate  
Wiggle

LOCOMOTOR  
MOVEMENT  
WORDS

SLINK

This list is certainly not exhaustive and is infinitely customizable. Some of the words are not in students’ regular vocabulary. Many of the words are also synonyms, which is intentional and provides opportunities for expanding language skills. For very young children, I present them with verbal options—e.g. which do you like better, jump or twist?—until they learn to read movement words themselves.

## TIPS

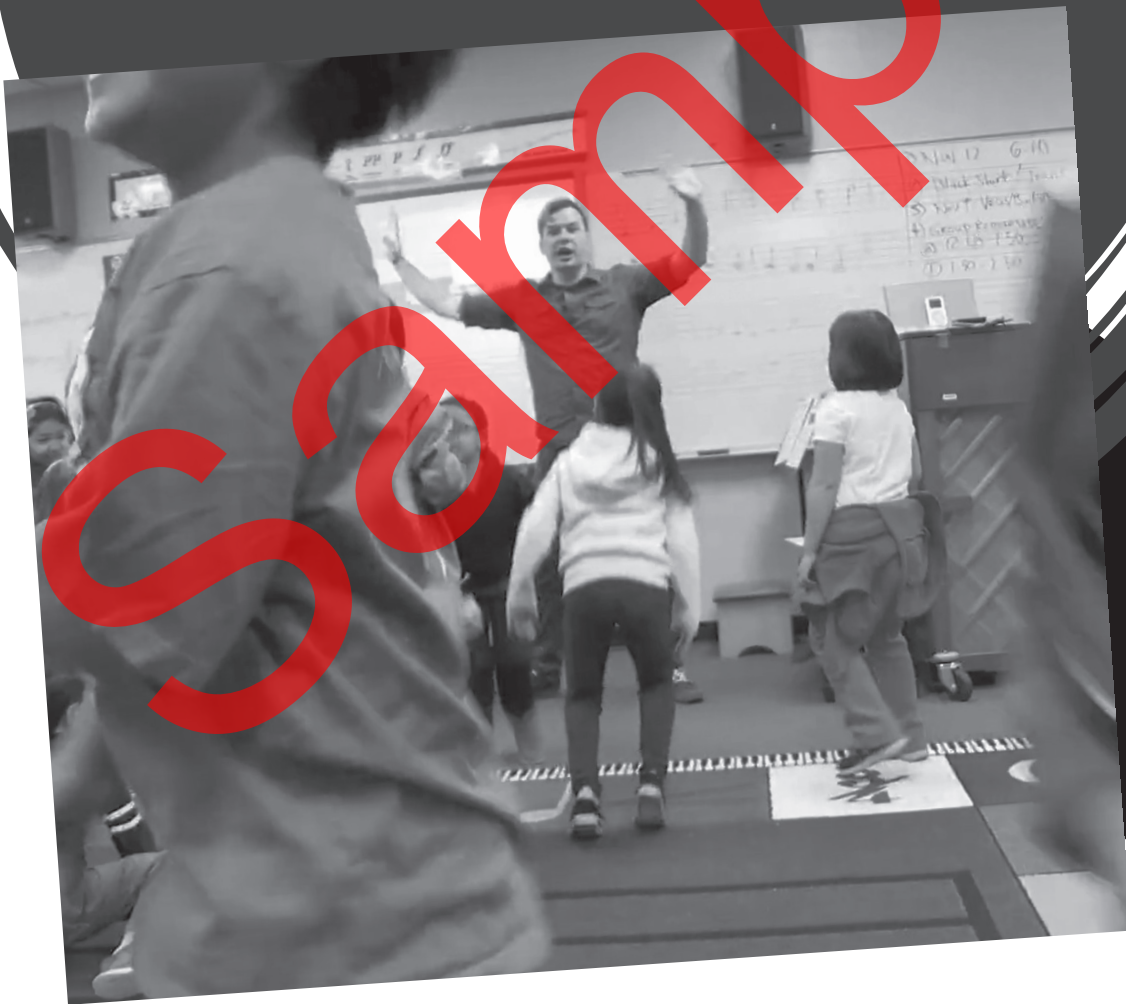
- **Drop and Sink:** I don’t allow the students to fall all the way down to the floor. I tell them, when they lower their bodies to keep both feet on the floor the whole time. Otherwise they can’t stand fast enough.
- **Rotate, Spin, and Turn:** I ask the students to switch directions frequently so they don’t get dizzy and fall.
- **Rock:** I give the students a choice between rocking back and forth like a rocking chair or “rocking out” on air guitar. You can guess which one they usually pick!
- **Run, Race, and Sprint:** I usually ask students to do it in overly dramatic slow motion because my classroom is filled with so many pointy things.
- **Roll:** In addition to laying on the floor and literally rolling, I give students the option to walk around the room while rolling their fists and forearms around each other (*Rolling on the River* style). This option accommodates students who are not comfortable or dressed inappropriately to roll on the floor.



# Section 1

---

# WARM-UPS



# IMITATE AND IMPROVISE

Warm-Up  
Target Grades: K–5

## Objective

Students will imitate and improvise non-locomotor movements.

## Supplies Needed

Movement word wall—see Notes on Movement Activities (page 4)  
Recorded music with a steady beat

## Process

- Select three student leaders to choose a non-locomotor movement from the word wall.
- Write each word on the board and have the student leaders spread out in a line in front of the class.
- Have each student leader demonstrate their movement for the class.
- Ask the students to stand. Turn on your recorded music. I use different music each time.
- Ask the first student leader to demonstrate their movement and have the class imitate that movement as exactly as possible for a short time, like 16 beats.
- Then ask the students to improvise their own version of the movement—making sure it is still non-locomotor—for about the same length as the imitation.
- Once all three student leaders have gone through this process, challenge the class and leaders to do all three movements simultaneously. This part is their favorite!



## Extensions

- As an optional steady-beat extension, ask the student leaders (and class) to make their movement pulse to the beat of the recorded music.
- As an optional language skill extension, have the student leader spell the word aloud and/or write it on the board before they demonstrate the movement.

## Tips

- If the children are too young to read movement words from a word wall, present the student leaders with verbal choices. e.g. Which do you like better, twist or jump?
- I make a big production of having the class stand silently whenever we stand. I usually ask the students to stand while I am cueing up the recorded music for the activity. I say to them, “Stand SO quietly that I can’t even tell you are moving.” If they make any sound, I have them sit down again and repeat the process until they stand silently. Building this habit is very beneficial.
- You will most likely have to remind the students (repeatedly) that it is a non-locomotor activity.
- Be sure that the student leaders select contrasting movements. e.g. If one child selects Spin and the next chooses Rotate, you might ask the second child to make a different choice to give the activity more variety.

# SEED ACTIVITY

Warm-Up  
Target Grades: K-2

## Objective

Students will improvise non-locomotor movement based upon sound cues.

## Supplies Needed

Piano, various percussion instruments, or recorded examples

## Advance Preparation

There are four sound cues in this activity. If you are pianist, my scoring for each of these sound cues are printed here. You certainly can choose different piano music if you prefer. Or, if you do not wish to use the piano, choose a percussion instrument with a unique timbre for each sound cue. Some suggestions are listed below each score. You can also download recordings of these sound cues. See page 40 for instructions.

### 1. Sun

Musical score for 'Sun' in 4/4 time. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains four chords: C major, F major, G major, and C major. The bass staff contains a whole note chord of C major, followed by a whole note chord of F major, and then a quarter note C. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Fun alternatives: windchime, glockenspiel, or flex-i-tone

### 2. Rain

Musical score for 'Rain' in 4/4 time. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains four quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5. The bass staff contains four quarter notes: C3, D3, E3, and F3. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Fun alternatives: rainstick, bass xylophone, or bongos

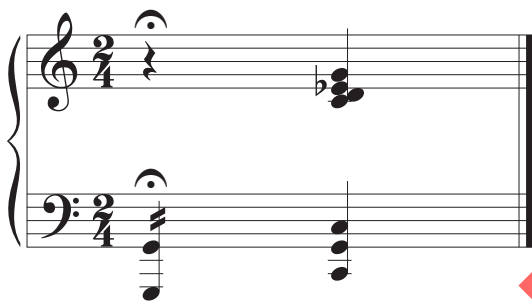
# SEED ACTIVITY, CONT.

## 3. Wind



Fun alternatives: hand drum (use fingernails in circular motion on the drum head), slide whistle, or ocean drum

## 4. Chop Down



Fun alternatives: low-pitched drum, crash cymbal, or ratchet

## Process

- Tell the students that the next activity use non-locomotor movements. Remind them what that means if necessary.
- Ask the students to spread out in the space, lay down, and make themselves as small as possible. They are being seeds.
- Tell them the following story, leaving space for instrument sounds and students to move as directed.

Once upon a time there was a field of newly planted seeds. They were tiny and curled up tight. One day the sun came out (music 1). The seeds began to wiggle. Then it began to rain (music 2) and the seeds began to stretch and sprout. Then there was more sun (1) and rain (2) and sun (1) and rain (2) and more growing. The young plants grew taller and taller until they bloomed into beautiful flowers. The wind began to gently blow (music 3) and the flowers danced back and forth happily in the breeze. Then one day, the owner of a flower store came to collect flowers. The florist raised a pair of magic clippers (music 4, hitting the chord as you say the word "chop".) and *CHOP!*, all of the flowers tumbled to the ground and became a beautiful bouquet.

## Extensions

- Go through the whole story using the instrument sounds to give movement cues without speaking.
- Go through the story in fast forward, ultimately: "sun, rain, wind, CHOP!" Students LOVE this activity!
- Go through the story in slow motion, editing to not be ridiculously long.

## Tips

- Make sure the student seeds don't become full-grown plants too quickly. Keep reminding them to slow down and sprout one little leaf at a time.
- Be sure that when they are chopped and tumble down, they do not land on top of each other. I very frequently emphasize that they ALWAYS need to keep their bodies to themselves in music class.
- Remind them that this is a listening game, and they are not to add any sounds to the story.



# SLEEP AND STOMPING GAME

Warm-Up  
Target Grades: K-2

## Objective

Students will differentiate musical sounds and respond with movement choices.

## Supplies Needed

Piano or various percussion instruments

## Advance Preparation

There are two sound cues in this activity. If you are pianist, the scores I composed for each cue are printed here. You certainly can choose different piano music if you prefer. Or, if you do not wish to use the piano, choose a percussion instrument with a unique timbre for each sound cue. Some suggestions are listed below each score. You can also download recordings of these sound cues. See page 40 for instructions.

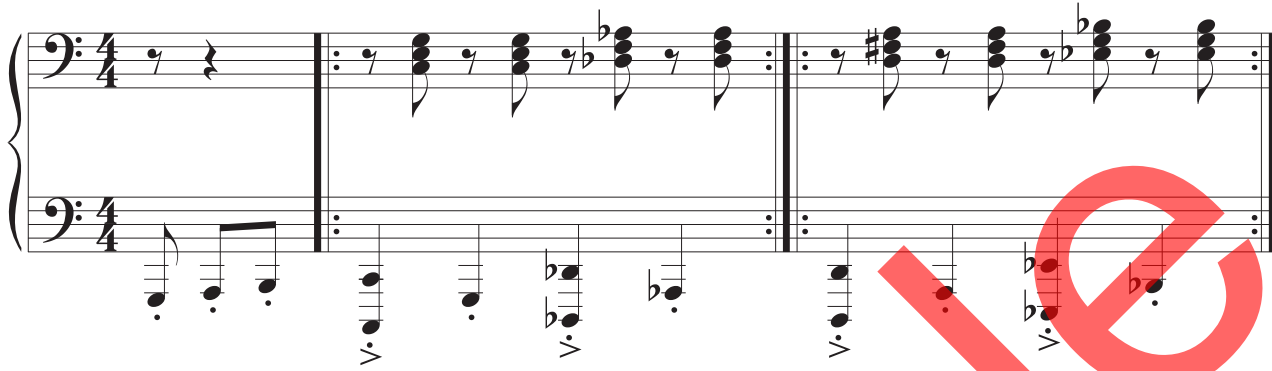
### Sleep Music (both hands 8va)

The musical score is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system is labeled '1.' and the second system is labeled '2.'. Both systems feature a treble clef and a bass clef. The melody in the treble clef is simple and repetitive, while the bass clef provides a steady accompaniment. A large red 'Sample' watermark is overlaid on the score.

Fun alternatives: windchime, glockenspiel, or bell tree

# SLEEP AND STOMPING GAME, CONT.

Stomping Dance (continue ascending by half steps, if desired)



Fun alternatives: large tubano, congas, or cajon

## Process

- Ask the students to spread out in the space, lay down or find a standing sleeping pose, and be still.
- Play Sleep Music using piano or percussion.
- Tell them whenever they hear this music, go to sleep.
- Then, suddenly, switch to the Stomping Dance music (piano or contrasting percussion).
- Tell them to do “The Stomping Dance”—whatever that means to them—when they hear that music.
- Start alternating between the two music cues randomly, being sure the students do the correct movements. Try to trick them; they love it!

## Extensions

- Ask the students to play percussion instruments as sound cues for the class, with you gesturing instrumentalists when to start and stop.
- Ask the students to come up with other movements and sounds—or you can come up with something on the piano to go with a movement they choose—to add to the sleep and stomping options. e.g. spin, jump, tip-toe, etc.

## Tips

- Remind the students that their voices are not used in this activity.
- Remind students to keep their bodies to themselves in this activity.

# STUDENT DIRECTORS

Warm-Up  
Target Grades: K–5

## Objective

Students will demonstrate crescendo and decrescendo or accelerando and ritardando.

## Supplies Needed

Various percussion instruments  
An object to use as a conducting baton

## Process

- Prepare the students by giving them percussion instruments that you have already taught them to play with the technique you prefer.
- Select a student leader to be the conductor and give them a baton to use. I will often use objects like a plush long-stem flower, a fantasy wand, or a rubber chicken. Kids love these things!
- Tell the class that when the baton is pointed to the floor, they should make no sound with their instrument(s). When the baton is pointed straight up to the ceiling, play the instruments with their fullest sound. I avoid saying “as loud as possible” for obvious reasons.
- Tell the class that as the conductor slowly raises the baton, the volume gets gradually louder, which is called **crescendo**. Also tell them that as the baton lowers, the instruments get gradually quieter, which is called **decrescendo**. I do not use the term “softer” in reference to dynamics because it is a tactile texture, not a dynamic quality.
- Bring in a new conductor and repeat as desired.

## Extensions

- You can do this activity with body percussion—e.g. clapping, patting legs, stomping feet, etc.—avoiding the time needed to pass out and collect instruments.
- This activity also works well with students improvising on Orff barred instruments set for a C pentatonic scale (remove Bs and Fs).
- You can use this same process for teaching accelerando and ritardando. Start the students on a steady beat with instruments or body percussion. The conductor would need to start the baton at a middle position. As they raise the baton, the tempo of the beat increases, and it decreases as the baton lowers. It is a big challenge for the class to stay together, listening to each other.

## Tips

- Constantly reinforce proper instrument techniques.
- Be sure the conductors move slowly enough for the class to successfully follow them.
- Reinforce the expressive qualities vocabulary words.

# SPOOKY FOREST

Warm-Up  
Target Grades: K-1

## Objective

Students will start and stop movements based on sound cues.

## Supplies Needed

Various unpitched percussion instruments

Recommended: windchimes, thunder tube, and cymbals

Various barred instruments

Recommended: xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels, and contrabass bars

Scarves (optional)

## Advance Preparation

- Preset xylophones and metallophones for playing only C and G
- Preset glockenspiels to C pentatonic scale (remove Bs and Fs)
- Set out contrabass bar C and G (optional)



# SPOOKY FOREST, CONT.

## Process

- Choose an area of the classroom to be the forest and have the children gather off to the side of that area. In my classroom, I have a large music rug that I deem the forest.
- Divide the children into three groups: trees, wind dancers, and instrumentalists. Be sure to let them know that the groups will rotate, letting everyone do everything.
- Have the instrumental group move to instruments, making sure that one student has a very loud instrument. I use a cymbal, but it could be whatever loud instrument you have. Instruct the xylophone players to do a mallet roll on the bars you have selected. Ask the glockenspiels to improvise using their whole instrument. Give appropriate playing technique instructions for these and any other instruments the students are playing. Let the students experiment with sound for a few seconds and then ask them to wait until the you ask them to play.
- Have the tree group move into the forest area and form spooky tree statues, leaving a fair amount of space between them.
- Instruct the student playing the loud instrument to only play when you cue them. Tell the students when they hear the loud instrument, they are to sit down or stop playing their instrument.
- Tell the wind dancer group to move amongst the trees when they hear instruments playing. I give my wind dancer group scarves to use with their movement, but they are totally optional.
- Cue the instruments to start playing. The tree group forms tree statues, and the wind dancer group is moves around the trees windily.
- After a short time, cue the loud instrument to play. The tree and wind dancer groups sit. The instrumentalist stop what they are doing.
- Rotate the groups and repeat until everyone has been in all three groups.

## Tips

- This activity is meant to be quick-paced warm-up. I wouldn't let it last longer than 5–7 minutes.
- Insist on proper mallet technique. Yes, young students can absolutely do it correctly! I tell them to hold the mallets like bicycle handlebars, with a little bit of the end of the mallet sticking out from the bottom of their closed hand. Be wary of students who extend their pointer finger onto their mallets—I call it FINGERS OF DOOM—and correct it! I also tell them to “hit and bounce” the mallet on the bars, theoretically helping them let the bar vibrations ring without stopping the sound.
- A fun, spooky atmosphere can be enhanced by reducing the lighting and/or projecting a forest image on a screen.

