Rico’s Pizza Restaurant
Solo Singing for Intermediate Students

Loretta Mitchell
Adapted by Mari Schay

GRADEs: 2–5
NCA Standards: 1, 11

It can be challenging to provide solo singing opportunities for older students. This fun strategy will get them singing independently without noticing that’s what they are doing.

Objectives
Students will sing a call-and-response sequence that provides an opportunity for group and solo singing.

During Your Prep
- Download and print the order forms from ActivateOnline. There are four to a sheet. Depending on how you choose to do the lesson, you will either need one quarter-sheet per student or you will need one quarter-sheet per repetition of the song.
- Sharpen pencils.
- Download accompaniment recording.

Lesson Sequence
1. Teach the class the song, emphasizing the call-and-response form.

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<td>Blank order forms Orff accompaniment</td>
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| MATERIALS |
| Two phones as props (optional) Pencils |

| GRADES: 2–5 NCA Standards: 1, 11 |
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| Rico’s Pizza Restaurant, Any topping that you want. |
| All our pies have extra cheese. May I take your order, please? |
| What size? (Large) What crust? (Deep dish.) What sauce? (To-ma-to.) |
| First topping? (Extra cheese.) Second topping? (Pepperoni.) |
| Third topping? (Green peppers.) Thank you for your order. |
2. Pass out a pencil and blank order form to each student. Ask the students to fill in their favorite pizza order, deciding on size, crust, sauce, and toppings.

3. Select an order taker who will sing the calls and a customer who will call in their pizza order based on what they circled on their order form. If you like, give each student a real or toy phone when it is their turn to take an order or place an order.

4. Have the class sing measures 1–8 together for the A section. In the B section, the order taker (or the whole class, if you prefer) will sing the calls and the customer will sing the responses. The whole class should sing “Thank you for your order” at the end.

5. Let the order taker and the customer choose new students to take their place and start again. They only have sixteen beats to be ready for the next order, so have a plan in place for how they will choose quickly.

Variations:
- Let students work in pairs and take turns as the order taker and the order placer.
- Choose one student to take the order, but let them ask different students to answer each question. (This gives more turns more quickly.)

Tools to Check Understanding
As students take turns on the solo singing, assess their pitch accuracy and tone quality.

Add Donna Dirksing’s Orff accompaniment to this lesson for a little more color and interest.
Stretch for the Sky
Calming Movement

Jeanette Morgan
Finn Elementary School: Southborough, MA

GRADES: PK–1
NCA Standards: 5, 6

I developed this little piece for my younger students as a way to help them transition from one busy activity to a calmer activity or to the end of class, while promoting a sense of mindfulness. I use it as a calming stretching activity to engage students and provide a quiet moment for reflection. This piece could easily be taught to your entire school and perhaps incorporated into morning meetings or announcements.

Objectives
Students will move to a song to calm their bodies.

Stars are twinkling in the night. Filling the sky with sly very light.

Clouds are drifting by and by. What a peaceful night-time sky. The sun is rising in the east. Waking people, birds and beast.

Stretch your arms then reach to your toes. Let us see how this day goes.

This piece really doesn’t require teaching, per se. Think of it more as a moving and singing meditation. I invite the students to move with me as I perform the song and movements. The range and text is pretty demanding for this age group, so I wouldn’t expect the students to be able to perform it. That said, if you regularly incorporate this piece, they may just surprise you!

Take a deep breath and have a mindful day.

Begin with just the movement. Try not saying anything, but instead just begin to move. Chances are good that the students will automatically mirror you. If not, invite them to do so. Then, go back and add the melody.

Music connects our brains to our bodies to our hearts. It brings individuals together to share in a powerful, synergistic moment. I love developing a series of sequenced and spiraled lesson plans that ensure students will have pleasing and energizing experiences in my classroom. I draw upon the many methods and outstanding educators I’ve had the pleasure of interacting with throughout my life in music education.
Connecting Kids to Music

Mari Schay

Earl Boyles Elementary: Portland, OR

As the articles and lessons for this issue rolled in, I began to notice one thing almost all of them had in common: each writer focused on connecting the kids to the music they sing, play, move to, listen to, and read. Though “student engagement” has become a catchphrase in education lately, it occurs to me that music teachers have always placed a high value on this aspect of teaching. We work hard to find both content and strategies that draw the kids in. I suppose this is, in part, because we feel like we have to “sell” the kids on music. Or, it could be because we are passionate about music in a way most people are not about fractions or spelling. Music teachers are usually passionate about both the kids and the content.

Let’s look at what is in this issue of Activate and see how our contributors can help you and your students connect to all the essential parts of a well-rounded music education.

How do we connect our kids to singing in a way that is joyful and compelling? In Mandy Coffee’s Kodály-based Apple Tree lesson, the kids don’t just play the game and move on (like they did in my classroom last winter); instead, the song and game become a springboard for lessons about beat vs. rhythm, rhythmic notation, and melodic dictation. Loretta Mitchell’s lesson provides a fun way to “trick” intermediate kids into solo singing. In my experience, kids will typically sing alone if that’s the culture that has been built up over time, but if your kids are not yet confident enough to sing independently, Rico’s Pizza Restaurant will give them an age-appropriate scaffolded lesson to get there. And they’ll be having enough fun that they may not even notice they are singing alone. Read Darcy Morrissey’s and Katie Ballantyne’s complementary articles about Riu, Riu, Chíu by Linda Spevacek and you will find concrete strategies for drawing warm-ups from the octavo, connecting to all types of learners, moving from unison to harmony, memorizing lyrics, teaching kids to respond to the weight of the conductor’s beat, and helping young singers to understand the meaning behind challenging lyrics. The drummer in me read these articles and had multiple “ah-ha” moments.

That same internal drummer finds that playing instruments is a natural kid-pleaser, but with the huge variety of strategies, philosophies, and instruments available, honing in on what kids need to know and be able to do instrumentally can be difficult. Sometimes, it feels like throwing water balloons—throw enough of them and everyone is going to get wet, but sometimes it just becomes a free-for-all. The lessons presented here are simple without being simplistic and again, they are all about connections. Don Dupont and Brian Hiller have provided a social studies connection with their lesson for The Seven Continents. Not only does the lesson include a traditional Orff accompaniment, but it takes the essential Orff concept of canon and applies it both vocally and instrumentally. Paul Corbière’s original composition, Grey Day, gives us a sweet little recorder piece with classroom instrument accompaniment. Because it’s in Dorian mode, this simple piece sounds more complex. Paul offers suggestions for simplifying it further if the full arrangement doesn’t suit your kids’ skills or your pedagogical needs. Both of these pieces provide you and your students with an opportunity to extend the kids’ connection to the music by letting them create their own unique form.
One of the first submissions I received for this issue was Doug Edwards’s arrangement of *William Tell Overture*. He inadvertently sparked a mini-theme for the entire issue because there is so much you can do to connect with this piece, from this stripped-down ensemble to moving and singing to history and form lessons. This got me thinking about bigger connections to classical music and jazz. My own school participates in Carnegie Hall’s LinkUp to the Orchestra. It is a general music curriculum in which kids learn a set repertoire of classical or jazz pieces, both to sing and play on recorder (or violin), that culminates in a performance with a local orchestra. This program really connects my kids to the music in a deep and meaningful way. Because I’m so familiar with it, each of the remaining four issues of this volume will include a lesson that draws on a work from the LinkUp curriculum. If LinkUp isn’t an option in your area, this will simply be a series of great classical and jazz connections for your kids.

There is a phrase in neuroscience: “if you aren’t moving, you aren’t learning.” The movement lessons in this issue really support that phrase because they use movement as a pathway to stronger musicianship: connecting to musical form, demonstrating beat vs. rhythm, and connecting to children’s literature. In every case, the movement serves a greater purpose: to deepen kids’ connection to the music they sing, hear, and play.

Finding ways to connect kids to the more academic aspect of music, reading and writing standard music notation, can be the most difficult of all. Though worksheets can be an effective tool for practicing out of context, using too many worksheets goes against the evidence that learning is deepest when it is active and in context. As such, we have provided lessons to teach one concept—simple rhythms—many different ways: a game that gets kids working collaboratively (*Splat!*), a percussion activity (*Rocky Mountain Drum Game*), steady-beat canons, and several activities for using rhythm cards. And of course, we have also given you a couple worksheets, because they do have their place, as well.

The curriculum director in my district has a phrase that really resonates with me: teaching is not about the teacher’s skills or knowledge, but about each student’s journey. I believe we owe it to our students to lead them down a musical pathway full of interesting sights and sounds. There will always be bumps in the road, but at the end of their journey, they should love music not just because they love their teacher or love to sing, but because they understand where they have been and where they can still go. I hope that the pages of this issue of *Activate* will provide you with all you need to create an amazing journey for each of your students.
Cake’s All Dough

Improvising a Rhythm Recipe

Deborah A. Imiolo
Heritage Heights Elementary School: Amherst, NY

GRADES: 2–6
NCA Standards: 1, 2

This rhyme is a great opener because it gets children up and moving plus it’s a fun way to create rhythms and build phrases. It also utilizes unpitched percussion with a built-in assessment so the lesson has something for everyone.

Objectives

Students will make a connection between the rhythm of speech and rhythm.
Students will create rhythmic interludes individually, in pairs, and in small groups and transfer word rhythms to unpitched percussion.

Lesson Sequence

Create a Cake Recipe

1. Play a steady beat on a drum and instruct the children to walk to the beat of the drum but NOT in a counter-clockwise circle. Remind the children to think of safety. Say something like, “Follow your own path. Keep your hands and feet to yourself, but make your feet match the drum.”

2. While the children are walking to the beat, ask them to echo “Cake’s All Dough” one phrase at a time, then the whole chant.

3. As they walk, ask the children to say the rhyme with a variety of expressions: sad, excited, frustrated, joyful, embarrassed, suspicious, etc. Consider changing the tempo of the beat to match the mood. This will provide plenty of repetition so the chant is memorized.

4. When the class can say the chant independently, ask them to sit down and think of fruits, candy, or any ingredient they think will make the cake dough better. Have them experiment with different rhythmic options for saying their ingredient. For example:

Oh dear, oh. My cake’s all dough! How to make it bet-ter I do not know!

Gum my worms.
Gum my worms.
Gum my worms.
5. Instruct the children to stand again and walk to the beat of the drum and chant the rhyme. When the drum stops at the end of the rhyme, the students will stop, turn to someone standing nearby, introduce themselves and share their cake ingredient. They will then work together to combine both of their ingredients in a rhythmic way.

6. When it seems that each pair has completed the task, start the drum beat again. The partners will move together while chanting the rhyme. When the drum stops at the end of the rhyme, each pair will meet up with another pair to create a four-ingredient recipe. Have the group of four work cooperatively to decide how to say all four ingredients together rhythmically.

Create a Cake Rondo

1. Using the same groups of four, ask each group to stand in a square with their left palms facing up. Move the steady beat to a clapping pattern by patting the neighbor to the right’s open palm, then their own palm, saying “right – me – right – me.”

2. Once the clapping pattern is secure, have the class chant Cake’s All Dough. This will be the A section of your rondo.

3. Next, ask the groups to create movement or body percussion for their four-ingredient recipe. Give the groups time to refine and practice their recipe with the additional movements.

4. Perform Cake’s All Dough as a rondo by alternating the A section with one group at a time performing their recipe.

Tools to Check Understanding

With the students standing in a circle, place a variety of unpitched percussion instruments in the middle of the group. If necessary, demonstrate each instrument by playing the rhythm of Cake’s All Dough.

Tell the class you will clap the rhythms of the various ingredients they added to the cake. If the rhythm clapped matches their ingredient, they will choose an unpitched instrument and play their rhythm together on the teacher’s cue.

Put all the ingredients together to create a drum circle groove using the rhythms of the various ingredients and the unpitched instruments the students chose.

I love spontaneous music making! I love seeing kids smile genuinely. My teenage son said to me, “Mama, you are the teacher who lets kids be kids.”
SubTub

Rhythm Drawing

Need an activity for a sub that will work for every class? Get art supplies ready and keep plenty of these creativity starters ready to go. Leave some calm music for your sub to play while the class creates their artwork.

Rhythm Reproducibles

These rhythm-themed worksheets are perfect for quick assessments, sub plans, or quiet work while you do one-on-one assessments.