



LET'S START AT THE VERY BEGINNING

The Kodály System for Teaching Melodic Music Reading

Presented by Darla Meek

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Kodaly training is a complete and comprehensive approach to music education. The goal is to train basic musical skills and teach the reading and writing of music. The development of musical skills begins very early with simple tasks. As knowledge grows, skills are developed further in a sequential manner through a process of *preparation-presentation-practice-prove*.

In addition to music reading and writing, children develop skill in part-singing, part-hearing, improvisation, intonation, listening, memory, phrasing, and understanding of form.

This session will focus on a sequence for young children for melodic reading.

SEQUENCE (K-1)

Vocal Exploration
High/Middle/Low pitches (extremes)
High/Low at the octave
High/Low at the fifth
The Staff
Same/Step/Skip/Jump
High/Low minor third (sol/mi)

EXAMPLE ACTIVITY

"Mr. Brown and Mr. Black" fingerplay
"The Three Bears" story
"Old King Glory"
"Hunt the Cows"
"A Silly Love Story"
"A Day on the Farm" movement story
Millions of Cats children's book

“Mr. Brown and Mr. Black”

A Fingerplay for Vocal Exploration

Once upon a time, there were two friends, Mr. Brown (show right thumb) and Mr. Black (show left thumb). Mr. Brown lived in a house at the top of a high hill (enclose thumb inside fist and raise hand as if placing the house on a hill). Mr. Black lived in a house at the top of another high hill (do the same).

One day, Mr. Brown decided to go and visit Mr. Black. He opened his door (pop fingers outward with a tongue click), he stepped outside (lift thumb), he shut his door (close fingers again) And he went....(moving thumb up and down and use vocal inflection) down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill until he got to Mr. Black’s house.

He knocked on the door (knocking motion and three tongue clicks). No answer. He knocked again (same). No answer. He rang the doorbell (“Ding dong!”) “Well, I guess Mr. Black isn’t home today. Oh, well!” And he went...down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill until he got back home. He opened his door (click), he stepped inside (click), he shut his door (click). He ate his dinner (smacking sounds), he brushed his teeth (ch ch ch ch), he said his prayers, and he went to sleep.

The next day, Mr. Black decided to visit Mr. Brown. He opened his door...(continue as before)

The next day Mr. Brown and Mr. Black decided to visit each other at the same time! They opened their doors...they stepped outside...they shut their doors. And they went... down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill and ran right into each other!

“Oh, Mr. Black! I was just coming to see you!” (wiggling thumb as if talking to the other thumb)

“Well, I was just coming to see you, too!”

“Would you like to play with me?”

“Sure! Let’s go to the park!”

So they played and played and played. They each took a turn on the swings (swing arms with vocal noise), and flew down the slide (climb up and slide down with vocal noise), and even went on the merry go round (stirring movement with vocal noise). Then as the sun was going down they said “Goodbye!” and they went... down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill and down the hill and up the hill, until they got back home. They opened their doors...they stepped inside...they shut their doors. They ate their dinners, they brushed their teeth, they said their prayers, and went to sleep.

Darla Meek Collection, 2007

I learned this fingerplay from my mentor teacher Linda McPherson, who taught at Hastings Elementary in Duncanville, Texas in 1989.



Old King Glory

American Children's Song

SOURCE: *Rise Sally Rise*, New England Dancing Masters

Concept: distinguishing high and low at the octave

Old King Glor - y of the moun - tain. The
moun - tain reached so high, it near - ly reached the sky. The
first one, the sec - ond one, the third fol - low me!



- Students stand in a circle. As they sing the song, they step to the steady beat as they move counterclockwise in a circle.
- The leader, "King Glory," marches around the outside of the circle in the opposite direction.
- On the words "first," "second," and "third," King Glory taps a child on the head who then forms a line behind the King.
- The song repeats and game continues until all students are walking in the outside circle.
- The final child left in the inside circle is the new "King Glory."
- Discuss the "mountain voice" (high octave) and the "valley voice" (low octave).
- Play a listening game: play high C and low C randomly on the piano and have the students show with their bodies which they hear.

"And They Danced"

by Clara E. Spelman (*Music & You: MacMillan Grade 2*, pp. 110-111)



Concept: distinguishing high and low at the octave

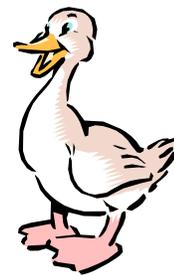
Voice

A fid - dler picked up his bow one day, and he fiddled a-way, he fiddled a - way, and he fiddled, and he fiddled a - way. A duck heard him play and the duck be-gan to say, "Quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, quack!" and they danced, and they danced all day.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The first staff is labeled 'Voice' and contains the lyrics: 'A fid - dler picked up his bow one day, and he fiddled a-way, he'. The second staff continues: 'fiddled a - way, and he fiddled, and he fiddled a - way. A duck heard him play and the'. The third staff continues: 'duck be-gan to say, "Quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, quack!" and they'. The fourth staff concludes: 'danced, and they danced all day.'

2. A mouse heard him play, so the mouse began to say, "Squeaky, squeaky, squeak! Squeaky, squeaky, squeak!" (sung up an octave) "Quack, quack, quack! Quack, quack, quack!" (low octave) and they danced, and they danced all day.

3. A frog heard him play... "Croak, croak, croak!" (low octave) "Squeaky, squeaky, squeak!" (high octave) "Quack, quack, quack!" and they danced, and they danced all day.



4. A cricket heard him play... "Ticka-ticka-tick! Ticka-ticka-tick!" (high octave) etc.

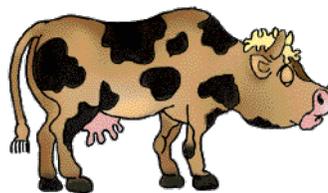
5. A bee heard him play... "Buzz, buzz, buzz..." (low octave)

- Sing the song for the children, using pictures of the singing creatures to aid memory.
- Display the pictures on the board. Ask the children to describe the voice of each animal as high or low. Move the picture up or down according to the octave sung.
- Sing the song again, having the children join you.
- Add motions, such as pretending to fiddle, flapping wings like a duck, and shaking jazz hands from side to side to reflect dancing.
- Ask the students about other animals that live on a farm, such as horse, pig, cow, puppy, cat, chicken. How might THEY sing this song? Would their voices be high or low?

Darla Meek Collection, 2011

“Hunt the Cows”

Appalachian Singing Game



CONCEPT: high/low (interval of a fifth)

Musical score for the song "Hunt the Cows". The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 2/4. The lyrics are: "Wake up, you sleep - y - heads and go and hunt the cat - tle. Wake up, you sleep - y - heads and go and hunt the cows. The cows are lost! "The cows are lost!" The sun is hot! "The sun is hot!" think I'll rest... "I think I'll rest..." Till they come home. "Till they come home.""

SINGING GAME DIRECTIONS:

- In the 2/4 section, students march in place on the beat. (When students are ready, they may march through the space on the beat.)
- In the 4/4 section, the leader sings each phrase, with a movement, and the class echoes.

“The cows are lost.”	(Hold arms above head, then throw them down to sides in exasperation on the word “lost.”)
“The sun is hot.”	(Use hand to wipe sweat from brow, put arm to side on the word “hot.”)
“I think I’ll rest.”	(Hold up one finger, as if you have a great idea. Go down on one knee on the word “rest.”)
“Till they come home.”	(Lie down on the word “home”)

Students lie quietly until the leader jumps up singing, which is the signal for all students to begin again.

- Repeat as desired. Allow the children to take over as leaders.

Darla Meek Collection, 2007. I learned this game from Kathy Kuddes at a Kodaly workshop in 2002.

“A Silly Love Story”

by Darla Meek

Concepts: staff and clefs

Materials:

- a chalk board or equivalent
- chalk, or equivalent
- keyboard
- small round candies, coins, or tokens
- Staff and Clef Manipulatives



1. Tell the following story, drawing the symbols as you go:

“Once upon a time, there was a lovely young treble clef. She always stood up very straight, and she had a soft, curling arm.

She lived in a staff. Humans, you see, live in houses, and clefs live in staves. Her staff had five lines (Count the lines, from the bottom, up.) and four spaces (count the spaces from the bottom, up.)

Ms. Treble Clef had many children. And all her children loved to sing! They all sang in very HIGH voices. Those nine rooms in her staff were not enough to hold all her many children. So, she built some tree houses, which are really called ledger lines, for some of her children to live in.

You can imagine what it was like living in that staff...all those children singing and yelling, and slamming doors, and getting snacks and finishing their homework. (play higher notes on the keyboard)

But on warm summer evenings, all the children would gather on the back porch to sing...and it sounded just heavenly! (play high chord)

One day Ms. Treble Clef met a very handsome, distinguished Mr. Bass Clef. His tie was always perfectly knotted,

...and he wore two cufflinks on his wrists.

Like all good gentlemen, Mr. Bass Clef bowed when he met Ms Treble Clef. In fact, he bowed every time he met a lady, and this made his back become permanently bent over.

Like Ms. Treble Clef, he lived in a staff

...that had five lines (count them) and four spaces (count them).

His staff also had tree houses, which are really called ledger lines,

...because he, too, had many children.

Here was a difference, because his children all had very LOW voices.

You can imagine what it sounded like in his staff...all those children singing and yelling, and slamming doors, and getting snacks and finishing their homework. (play lower notes on the keyboard)

But on warm summer evenings, all the children would gather on the back porch to sing...and it sounded just heavenly! (play low chord)

After a while, Ms. Treble Clef and Mr. Bass Clef fell in love...and decided to get married. So they moved into the GRAND STAFF, which is treble staff and bass staff tied together with a bracket.

Now imagine what it sounded like in the grand staff... all those children singing and yelling, and slamming doors, and getting snacks and finishing their homework. (play high and low notes)

But on warm summer evenings, all the children would gather on the back porch to sing...and it sounded just heavenly! (play arpeggiated chord from low to high)

2. Retell the story, having the children supply the names of the music symbols as you go. You may wish to have the children draw the symbols as you draw them.

3. Reinforce.

- Distribute individual staves. Give each child a candy, coin, or token.
- Play a game to have the children practice placing note heads on the staff by calling out numbers of lines or spaces at random. (For example, fifth line, second space, etc.)

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“A Day on the Farm”

Movement Story and Lesson by Darla Meek



CONCEPT: same/step/skip/jump

MATERIALS: step bells; staff with note icons;
floor staff, bean bags
visuals for each child: *stay the same, step up, step down, skip up, skip down, jump up, jump down* (OPTIONAL)

1. Tell the story, inserting sound effects with a barred instrument.

Drew, Aubrey, Micah, and Greg were invited to spend the day with their friend Ryan on his parents' farm in the country. The children decided to play a game of hide and seek.

Ryan was IT first. He hid his eyes and began to count...."1...2...3..."

Greg stepped carefully up the ladder leaning against a huge tree in the front yard! He hid himself in the branches and waited. (play a scale from low C to high C: C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C')

Aubrey jumped onto the top of a huge haystack. (Play a jump from C to G.) She lay down flat so she would not be seen.

Micah ran to hide in the old red barn. (Play eight C's.)

Drew skipped up the staircase that led to the second story of the old red barn. (Play every other note: C-E-G-B) There, he crouched down and waited.

"28...29...30!" called Ryan, and off he ran to find his friends. (Play eight C's.)

He spied Aubrey's foot sticking out of the haystack. Down jumped Aubrey. (Play jump from G to C.)

Ryan ran to the old red barn. (Play several of the same note.) He looked up and saw Drew peeking down at him over a ledge. Down skipped Drew. (Play B-G-E-C)

A stray chicken chased Micah out from his hiding place. (Play eight C's.)

The children ran into the yard (Play eight C's.). They searched everywhere for Greg... down by the duck pond (play eight low C's), in the hen house (play eight G's), and waaaay up in the orchard (play eight high Cs). Finally they gave up. Ryan called, "Olly, olly, oxen free!"

"Here I am!" called Greg, waving from the tree in the front yard. He carefully stepped down the ladder to the ground. (Play C'-B-A-G-F-E-D-C). And the children, tired from all their play, ran inside the house to get a snack. (Play eight C's)

2. Play melodies that stay the same/step/skip/jump.

- Display the step bells. Ask the children to listen as you play a melody, and tell you if it sounds more like stepping up a ladder, skipping up steps, jumping onto a haystack, or running along the ground. (Repeat several times)
- Have the student describe the differences between same, step, skip, and jump.
- Ask, “Who can play a melody that sounds like someone skipping up stairs?” Have one child at a time come to the steps bells and play a melody that reflects your instructions.

3. Notate same/step/skip/jump on a staff.

- Say, “Now, let’s talk about how to *write* notes that are the same, the step, that skip, and that jump.
- “Notes that **step** go from a line to the very next space, or from a space to the very next line.
- “Notes that **skip** go from one line to the very next line, or one space to the very next space.
- “Notes that **jump** are further apart than a skip.”
- Tell the children you are going to play one of the interval choices. Have them listen, and then describe what they hear (same note, a step, a skip, or a jump). Have them determine if the second note went higher or lower. If desired, have the children use their visuals to respond.

4. Play a floor staff game.

- Display a floor staff. Stand on a line or space. Instruct individual children to stand on a line or space according to the direction you indicate:

Same

Step up

Step down

Skip up

Skip down

Jump up

Jump down

This game can also be played with bean bags.

5. Guide children to find instances of same/step/skip/jump in notated music.

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Millions of Cats

Book by Wanda Ga'g

Lesson Plan by Darla Meek

CONCEPTS: introduction to barred instruments, *sol-mi* interval

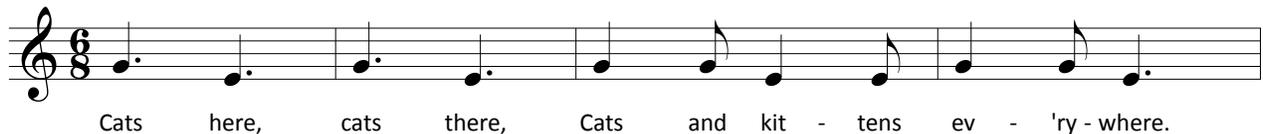
MATERIALS: text visual, barred instruments, cat sound cue cards or PowerPoint

1. Introduce the story.

“Once upon a time there was a very old man and a very old woman. They were very lonely and wished they had a cat. One day the very old man went looking for one. He went up the high hilltops (pretend to play a barred instrument moving upwards) and down through the low valleys (pretend to play moving downwards). Can you do that with me?” (Repeat.)

2. Teach the song.

- “He did finally reach a place that had lots and lots of cats.” Display text visual and sing melody for “Cats here, cats there...”



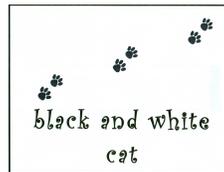
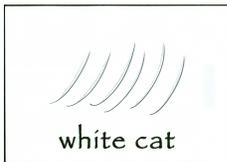
- Have students sing the melody, patting the steady beat on their laps.

3. Introduce the barred instruments.

- “We have the perfect instruments to play sounds for the old man walking up and down the hills, AND to accompany our singing! These instruments are called barred instruments. They are in the percussion family. We play them with mallets. Let’s learn how to use our mallets first.”
- Distribute mallets. (*Rhythm stick or popsicle sticks could also be used.*) Have students place them on the floor in front of them. Instruct them to mirror you. Lead them through a pantomime showing how to grasp the mallets (and how NOT to!), where to place the fingers, the position of the arms, and how to bounce them lightly. Also include “ready position” and “mallets at rest.”
- Hold one glockenspiel vertically, low side down. “Do you see how this instrument looks kind of like a mountain or a hill? The large end is where the ground is, and the small end is where the sun is.” Ask one child to “walk up the hill” with his/her fingers. Encourage the child to play in the center of the bars, and to bounce fingers lightly on each bar.
- Place the instrument on the floor in front of the child and have him/her play again. Reinforce which direction is UP and which is DOWN.
- Display a large visual of a barred instrument and have all children “air play” (pretend to play) the instrument, moving upward and downward.
- Now, have children move to the barred instruments to practice.

- Have children play the steady beat on C1 and G1 as they sing the song.

4. Display iconic notation for each of the featured cats:



- The students will create short motifs for the featured cats that depict the notation. The students will play each motif as the cats are introduced in the story.
- On “chosen them all,” everyone picks one motif to play, so that all motifs are being played at the same time. This also will happen when the cats get into a fight.

4. Assign vocal sound effects and perform.

- On “Mew, mew!” everyone meows.
- On “each cat took a sip of water,” everyone slurps.
- On “each cat ate a mouthful of grass,” everyone nibbles.

IDEAS FOR PRACTICE

- Place icons higher/lower
- Sing with solfège ladder (“Follow My Finger”)
- Play on step bells
- Read solfège cards
- Read from hand signs
- Dictation with individual staves and chips; partner work
- GAME: Instructor plays or sings four notes and students arrange themselves in the correct configuration by standing or stooping
- SINGO!
- Find the interval in previously learned material

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