

MUSIC EDVENTURES

NEWS AND NOTES

An Association of SongWorks Teachers

September 2016

From the President

Dear Members,

I am hoping that by now you have seen or heard about our 2017 Conference, *SongWorks: Digging Deeper, Reaching Wider*. I am very excited about this theme since the span and scope of material that could and surely will be covered is immense! Even though I have not yet returned to school (one of the few benefits of teaching until June 23rd), I have been using the conference theme to prepare some goals for the year.



**Ruthanne Parker
Wyncote, PA**

Digging Deeper:

- ⇒ How can I provide the most meaningful experiences for my students? Which concepts will we focus on and when will be the best time to teach those concepts? Which strategies will be most valuable for my students and with which concepts?
- ⇒ How will I help them connect with the material we are studying and apply it instead of repeat it? What will I do to keep my instruction student-centered?



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Reaching Wider:

- ⇒ How will I expand my students' perspectives of music?
- ⇒ How will I share what I do with my colleagues within, as well as outside, the music department? Are there opportunities for me to share SongWorks in formal and informal settings?
- ⇒ How will I connect SongWorks strategies to other relevant curricula?

These are just some of the questions I am considering as the new school year begins. Of course, it's not all work! I also ponder other important things such as "What will be the cutest Halloween costume for a 15 month old?" "How can I put a healthy meal on the table every night without cooking?" and "Why don't these clothes from college fit me anymore?"—life's great mysteries!

This article has been full of questions, but there is one thing that is not in question at all—NOW is the time to start planning to attend the SongWorks conference this spring! Get in touch with your favorite substitutes, submit a request for time off, and start looking for deals on a flight. You will not want to miss this year's gathering in Minnesota, and it will be here before you know it! I am wishing everyone a smooth start to the school year, and may your positive influence on students be as deep as it is wide.

-Ruthie

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REFLECTIONS FROM APRIL 2016 MUSIC EDVENTURES CONFERENCE

CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT

Kevin Nguyen

When I came to the Music Edventures Conference, I was in the middle of my student teaching semester at the University of Colorado, Boulder. I was new to teaching every day and was honestly a little afraid of the whole thing. It's kind of like seeing a piece of delicious German chocolate cake while you're on a diet; or when summer is around the corner and you have tickets to Hawaii but you haven't walked off that extra bite of turkey from Thanksgiving. I knew I loved teaching, but I just dreaded the idea of messing up. I had to convince myself that the world would not end if I had just one bite of that cake or taught something incorrectly. The thoughts of me, even for a little while, being in charge of an entire school's music education program excited me, yet terrified me. It's too easy to compare myself unfavorably to my cooperating teachers and all the wonderful music mentors and instructors throughout my life. Plus, I felt that it wasn't fair that my students were learning from little Mr. Nguyen straight from college when there were masters already inspiring and teaching kids to genuinely love music. What if I mess up? What if I'm not good enough? What if I turn a student off to music? What if I spoil this child's great musical potential?



Kevin Nguyen
Seattle, WA

Fortunately, fear didn't force me out. Thankfully, I had the most caring and supportive cooperating teacher, MEI member Beth Gadbaw. She thought I would absolutely flourish in a cohort of like-minded, fun, energetic, and creative people. This is when she introduced me to MEI and shared her views about the SongWorks philosophy. She suggested I attend the MEI annual conference in Denver, CO. It seemed too perfect to be true! I remember being super excited about absorbing everyone's knowledge and getting a chance to listen to what well-seasoned teachers had to share! The conference day finally arrived and my expectations were exceeded. Not only did I get a vast collection of wonderful repertoire for my students, but I got to see the rationale behind each lesson. I observed ideas of how to foster a community of learners (both inside and outside the classroom), and how to be creative with each game and song.

*"...absolutely flourish
in a cohort of
like-minded, fun,
energetic, and
creative people."*

Most importantly, I was able to observe how to:

- ⇒ Encourage students to participate in music lessons
- ⇒ Meaningfully engage with students
- ⇒ Teach with sincerity
- ⇒ Set goals
- ⇒ Build a fully comprehensive musical environment

The biggest thing I took away from the MEI conference was confidence and support. I was more confident in myself as an educator than ever before, and I gained an entire network of fantastic friends that would help me through the toughest of days (indoor recess). When I came home, I was more excited about my potential as a teacher than terrified of the mistakes that may happen along the way. All in all, I can't give enough thanks to all the speakers and the teachers who were there. You all have done more for me and my students than you can realize.

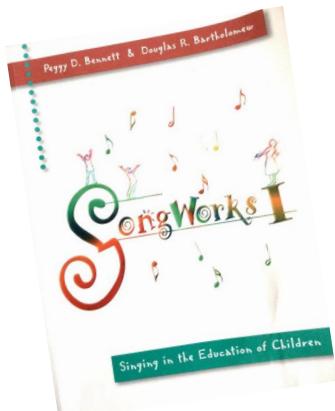
Kevin Nguyen graduated from the University of Colorado-Boulder in May 2016 with a Bachelor of Music Degree in Euphonium Performance and a Bachelor of Music Education Degree in General/ Instrumental Music. He was the General Music representative for the local NAfME chapter at the University, as well as a member of the honorary music fraternity, Kappa Kappa Psi. Kevin Nguyen will be starting his first year teaching at Wing Luke Elementary School in Seattle in the fall and will continue his education at the University of Washington.

SongWorks

by Peggy D. Bennett and Douglas R. Bartholomew

Available at

songworkspress@gmail.com



TIPS FOR TEACHER INTERACTIONS

*Part 1 of 5**

Jake Harkins

Too often, teachers simply “burn out.” In our attempt to please everyone, excel at our profession, and establish a strong work ethic, we are often conditioned early on to never say “no.” For this teacher, that was certainly the reality. Teachers, who are in the limelight more often than not during the day, are expected to model thoughts, choices, and behaviors that are calm, collected, organized, responsible, and respectful. The inherent conflict between the pressure-filled nature of the profession and the high role-model expectations of those experiencing the job can create an inner turmoil that may leave some of us feeling neither peaceful nor powerful.

Surviving the first few years of teaching requires a steep learning curve to understand how we feel, how to speak about what we feel, and how to communicate what we want to say. To prosper, we need to understand our intentions (behind what we feel, think, say and do) and develop strategies for responding to external pressures so we can "own" our professional choices and persona. The following five action items (each offered in consecutive newsletter issues) may guide both new and veteran teachers to feel empowered and at peace during their marathon of a work day:

- I. Knowing our Levels of Assertiveness
- II. Feeling Better About ‘Misbehavior’
- III. Choosing Effective Teacher Language
- IV. Providing Feedback that Feeds
- V. Intentional Professionalism



*Part 1 of 5, excerpted from Harkins, J. (2015). Peaceful and powerful: Tips for teachers' interactions. 2015 SongWorks Certification Capstone Paper.

I. Knowing Our Levels of Assertiveness

What if there was a way to always say what we mean, and mean what we say during the school day? What if every interaction we had with students, parents, colleagues, and administrators had the potential to leave us and others feeling positive, peaceful, and powerful?

Peggy D. Bennett provided five levels of assertiveness for consideration during interactions (2015, 2011). Being aware of our own tendencies of response—with colleagues, administrators, parents and students—and knowing how to shift them, empowers us to say what we mean, mean what we say, and retain a feeling of calm during and following interactions.

The spectrum of assertiveness ranges from inauthentic compliance (Level 1) to a teacher tantrum (Level 5). Many of us may acknowledge that we, and others, habitually function at a Level 1 or 5. Both are unhealthy and should be avoided. While sometimes necessary, cease and desist (Level 4) is not peaceful but may be powerful when used sparingly. Intentionally aiming our assertiveness at Level 2 (short, direct, honest response) or 3 (advocating more firmly for our position) entails meaning what we say, and using our words to represent our true intent and emotions without demeaning, defacing, or degrading others.

EXAMPLE, when speaking to a group of students after an activity:

Level 1: *state of mind: weak, pleading*
“**Please, sit down. OK? Thanks...Please?**”
reaction: subjugating self to students

Level 2: *state of mind: calm voice, moderate volume, invitational*
“**Sit down class.**”
reaction: calm, assertive, powerful

Level 3: *state of mind: stronger voice and volume, moderate command*
“**Sit down.**”
reaction: assertive, not aggressive

Level 4: *state of mind: no-nonsense strength, more forceful*
“**SIT down, RIGHT NOW...**”
reaction: commanding, authoritative, no demeaning words

Level 5: *state of mind: demeaning, threatening, yelling*
“**EVERYONE! SIT! DOWN! NOW! You’re the worst class ever!**”
reaction: insulting, degrading, wielding power

EXAMPLE, when speaking, *not writing, to an administrator who requests an additional leadership project you don't want to accept:

Level 1: state of mind: insincere, acquiescent

"Oh sure, I'm happy to work on that project. How exciting! Thanks!"

reaction: storm into your room, complain to co-workers, resent the administrator, hold a grudge

Level 2: state of mind: confident, fair-minded, not overly apologetic or assertive

"I appreciate your confidence in me, but my current obligations mean I can't commit to this."

reaction: calm, sincere, straightforward

Level 3: state of mind: more assertive than level 2, requests understanding

"I must say 'No thank you.' I hope you can respect my decision."

reaction: self-advocating, polite decisiveness, firm

Level 4: state of mind: crisp, clear, confident, desist

"As I have explained, I am declining your request."

reaction: succinct, clear, decisive, assertive

Level 5: state of mind: indignant, angry, accusatory

"No! And, I can't believe you are asking! I already do more for this school than anybody else!"

reaction: confrontational, insulting, aggressive, brash

*We tend to interpret spoken words differently from written words. The examples here are intended to represent verbal statements.

authors: Peggy D. Bennett & Jake Harkins

It takes practice to implement our assertiveness without resting at either end of the spectrum. Particularly considering interactions with administration, some of us may feel the need to respond with Level 1 assertiveness, rather than a more honest Level 2 or 3. We may consciously avoid Levels 4 or 5 in these interactions, but struggle to find a way to express our needs without feeling disrespectfully assertive. It is empowering to know we can respect ourselves and others simultaneously by saying what we mean, and meaning what we say.

Check back next month for tip **II. Feeling Better About "Misbehavior."**

Bennett, Peggy D. (2015). Getting along: Reframing difficult moments in schools. Maryland Music Educators Association State Conference, Baltimore.

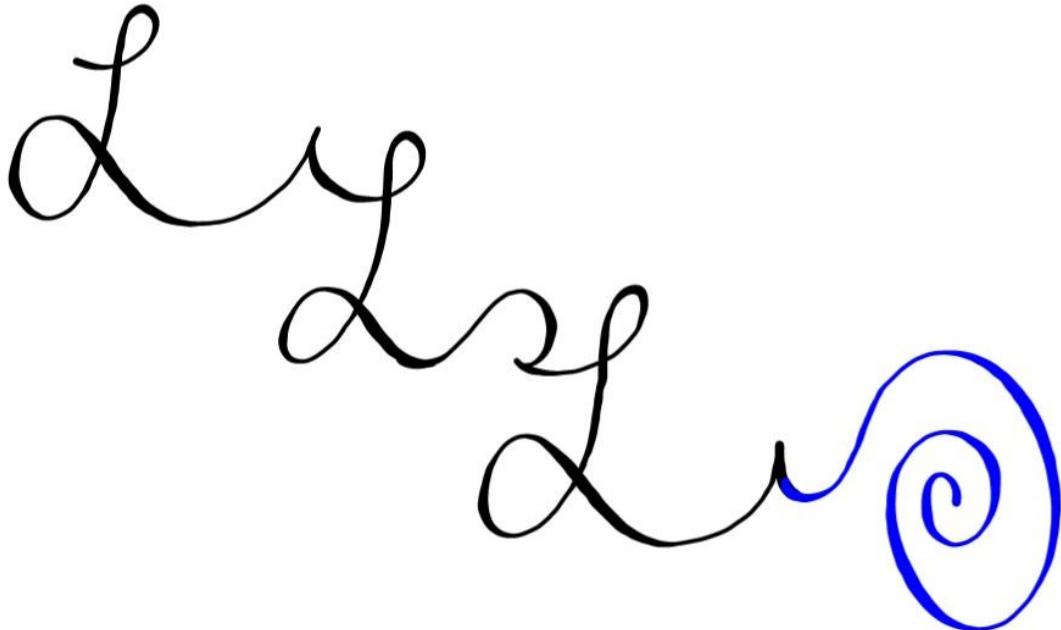
Bennett, Peggy D. (2011). Speak for your self!: Being your best in difficult situations. Keynote address, Texas Music Educators Association State Conference, San Antonio.

MYSTERY MAP: September

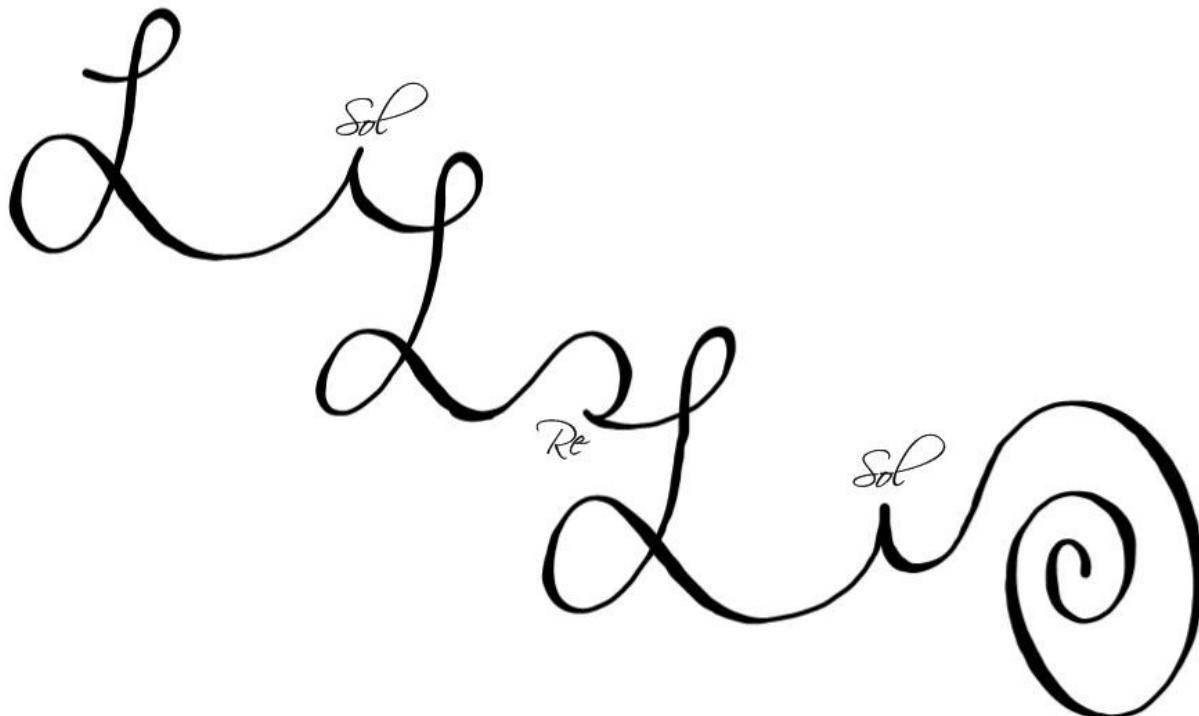
(Did you figure out the August Mystery Map? See p15 for the answer!)

This new mystery song has plenty of skips in its rhythm and its melody.

The melody of the blue cadence chunk, however, moves up and down in stepwise motion.



Still thinking? Here are some solfège clues to guide your ideas:



Check back next month for the answer!

Want to submit a secret map from one of your favorite songs? Don't be shy!

Submit maps for consideration to jeharkins@fcps.edu

THE CHILDREN ARE COMING!

Kindergarten: What I do and Why

Alice L. Nordquist

At the beginning of each school year I often find myself caught somewhere between excitement and apprehension. While I look forward to greeting children, exploring new ideas, and building upon my experiences from previous years, I also tend to worry. What challenges will I face? How can I cover an extensive curriculum in limited instructional time? Will all of my classes get off to a solid start for a successful year? As I've become more familiar with this late summer discomfort, I have realized the benefit of focusing on the quality that I find at the intersection of my excitement and apprehension: curiosity. Approaching each new class with a purposeful sense of curiosity helps me channel my nervous energy into intentional planning and teaching choices.

One of my favorite ways to start the year in my Kindergarten classes is to sing and play with "Bumpity Bumpity Yellow Bus" and the accompanying activities as presented in *SongPlay** (Bennett, 1999, pp. 17-22). Over the past couple of years, I have come to rely on this sweet and simple name game as a way to engage my curiosity about the children in my classes. Singing this song helps me learn about my students while cultivating a playful, musical, and welcoming environment for learning. Along the way I find plenty of opportunities to begin establishing classroom expectations and assessing students' skills.

**"...the quality that
I find at the
intersection of my
excitement and
apprehension:
curiosity."**



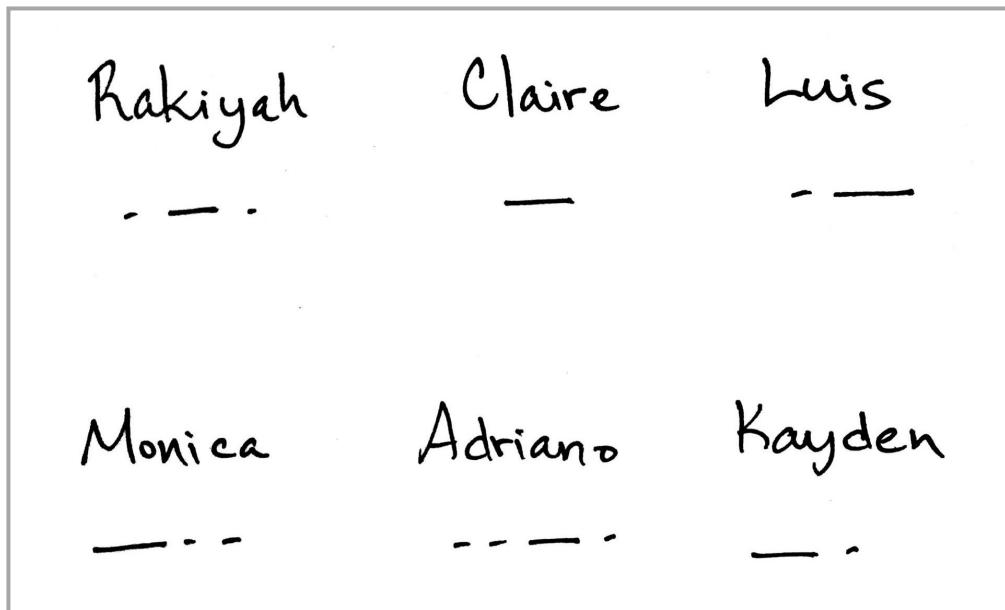
**Alice Nordquist,
Baltimore, MD**

I begin by sitting in a circle with the children and singing the song. I sway gently to the pulse, from left to right, lightly touching my fingers to alternating knees to follow the motion of my upper body. On "Oh, you can say your name..." I gesture outward, with open hands, palms up, and I point my hands toward myself on "...for us."

I invite the class to join me, and we sing and move with a couple repetitions of the song. I ask, "What is this song telling us?" We acknowledge that everyone can say their name for all of us to hear, and we know when to say it. As we take turns singing and gesturing to individual students in the circle and listening to their names, the detail that I treasure the most from this experience emerges. "Did you hear how Rakiyah said her name? Let's say it just like she did. Rakiyah." As we sing to each child and listen to each individual voice, we make sure to match the sound of each name with attention to stress, tone, and inflection.

*Bennett, P. D., (Ed.). (1999). *SongPlay: A collection of playful songs for children*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard.

This year, I plan to extend our experience of “Bumpity Bumpity Yellow Bus” to include further study of the syllabication and stress patterns in our spoken names, as described in *SongPlay* (Bennett, 1999, pp. 21-22). During the second or third week of school, once we are familiar with singing and playing “Bumpity Bumpity Yellow Bus,” we will tap each name in our palms to find the number of syllables and the stressed sounds. To check and correct our answers, we can say and tap each name four times in a row, providing a context for focused listening. I saw the effectiveness of this particular step in Peggy Bennett’s observation class during our July 2016 Music Literacy for Children course in St. Paul, MN. As a final experience, we can create a visual record of our aural and kinesthetic discoveries by using dots and dashes to notate our names.



Singing “Bumpity Bumpity Yellow Bus” at the beginning of the year yields several practical benefits:

- 1) I can hear each of the children as they articulate their name the way they wish it to be pronounced, in a context that is far more fresh and playful than reading through a class list and asking for corrections.
- 2) I can model expectations for attentive listening and patient turn-taking in a musical context with minimal verbal reinforcement.
- 3) I can begin to assess skills such as singing with a group, starting and stopping sound, demonstrating pulse, and responding to cues—in this case, students fit the sound of their names into the timing of the song, following the verbal, visual, and musical cues provided by the cadence.

Looking beyond the overtly practical layers of this activity reveals further explanation for its staying power. The language of this song and the nature of the activity convey the environment and spirit of curiosity I wish to establish for my classes each year. "You can say your name for us" is a simple statement letting children know that they can contribute to our class, their identities are important to us, and we will listen to their voices. As we take time and care to repeat the particular sounds of each child's name, we make space for every member of our classroom community through song and play.

"Bumpity Bumpity Yellow Bus" has earned a place in my essential teaching repertoire. Its gentle energy and inviting warmth elicit eager singing and verbal responses from classes full of five-year-olds who are navigating through so much that is unfamiliar—new classmates, new teachers, new routines. I have been grateful for this song's power when meeting students who enter Kindergarten with no prior school experience and teaching classes with significant percentages of students who are learning English. Students who return to my classes in first and even second grade have requested this song at various points throughout the year. With its ever present and welcoming space for individual children's voices, "Bumpity Bumpity Yellow Bus" will always find a home in my teaching.

The musical notation consists of two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef, 6/8 time, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes:

Bump - i - ty bump - i - ty yel - low bus.
Oh, you can say your name for us.

Alice Nordquist is a SongWorks Certified Educator teaching elementary general music and chorus in Howard County, MD, with previous experience teaching band and strings in Redwood City, CA. A flutist with undergraduate degrees in Music Education and Latin from Oberlin College and Conservatory and a graduate degree in Music Education from the Peabody Conservatory, Alice has a particular interest in exploring the interactions between music and language.

2015 Emerging Pioneer, MEI Registrar

THE CHILDREN ARE COMING!

Upper Elementary: What I do and Why

Mary Stockum

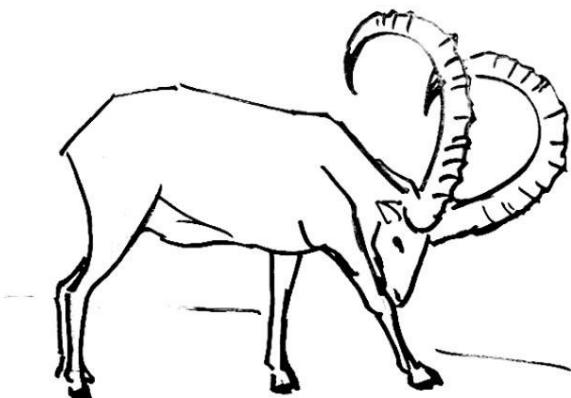
As a new school year comes into focus, one thing that eases my nerves those first weeks is using an activity or song game that has worked well in the past. With 5th Grade, I love starting our year with the icebreaker, Name Gestures Activity, then moving on to the "Darby Town" Name Game. After the first few days, we can begin to connect and compare "Darby Town" to other folk songs looking at rhythmic, melodic, or structural elements.



**Mary Stockum,
Kremmling, CO**

NAME GESTURES ACTIVITY

We all start in a circle. The idea is say one's name as naturally as possible (without beat or syllabic emphasis). As they speak their name, students are instructed to create a motion to show something they like to do. I start with an example of saying my name, "Ms. Stockum," as I act out playing a viola. To encourage students to describe what they saw, I ask: "What did you notice?" or "Describe what I did." Students describe what I did and then everyone copies my motion and how I said my name. Usually we go around the circle in one direction adding three names each time until we have included everyone: watching and copying each person's idea.



For their movement ideas I've seen students:

- ◆ Show gestures depicting sports they like to play
- ◆ Depict activities they did over the summer
- ◆ Capture a personality characteristic

A fun challenge is to see if someone can recall everyone's name and gesture. This might be done the day of the activity or on another day. I use this activity because it is a fun icebreaker leading to "Darby Town" Name Game in which everyone is participating and singing! It is especially helpful if you are teaching in a **new** school.

"DARBY TOWN" Name Game

After we've gone around the circle with the Name Gestures Activity, we review the song game "Darby Town" from last year.

- ◆ Begin in the same circle formation.
- ◆ Everyone sings "Darby Town" while a ball is passed around the circle.
- ◆ The cadence phrase changes to, "and see the same as Emily" (or the name of the student who has the ball at the end). That student stands up in his/her place, and the song begins again.
- ◆ The ball stops at the cadence again with another person and all sing "and see the same as David," as David stands up and passes the ball to Emily while all sing "and see the same Emily."
- ◆ Song repeats with names accumulating in turns at the cadence until all students are standing.
- ◆ Students are actively engaged in passing and remembering the order of names.

Darby Town



As I went down to Dar - by Town, 'twas on a sum - mer's day,



I saw the fin - est ram,____ sir, that ever was fed on hay.



And if you don't be - lieve____ me and think I tell a lie,



then you come down to Dar - by Town to see the same as I.

NAME GESTURES ACTIVITY and “DARBY TOWN” NAME GAME promote:

◊ Valuing Names

- ~ Learning names through the use of memory when recalling all names and gestures is respectful.
- ~ Preserving the natural pronunciation of names with movements that do not distort the names requires careful planning and listening.

◊ Playfulness

- ~ Some actions are silly and some are serious, the fun is in being surprised by each name and movement idea.

◊ Community Building

- ~ A feeling of peer acceptance can happen when sharing a gesture for others to copy.
- ~ Students contributing their part to the whole in an inclusive environment.
- ~ Making eye contact with others within the context of a playful experience greets each person.
- ~ A feeling of personal accomplishment and communal acknowledgement may happen when a student makes his/her way through the name gestures activity.

CONTEXT

- ◆ At my school in a small mountain town, class size is between 15-20 students, and we meet once a week for 45 minutes. Depending on your class size, you may want to change how students share their name and gesture each time. For example, you could add five names instead of three names to speed up the process in going around the circle.
- ◆ I allow students to choose their spot in the circle, and they can stay in that place as long as they can pay attention and participate in music. Opportunities for teaching expectations will open up while students are playing the games.
- ◆ I've also done the Name Gestures Activity with 3rd & 4th Grade and noticed students don't mind doing the activity again as 5th graders as long the pace moves quickly with an engaging flow.

CONCLUSION

The beginning of the year can feel overwhelming for many of us while we plan and consider our options. When we remember to establish an inclusive and interactive environment where all students have a voice, we will enter into a year of endless possibilities where we and our students will engage with music and each other in powerful ways! Have a great start to your year!

Mary Stockum teaches K-5 music and 6-8 choir in Kremmling, Colorado. A University of Colorado at Boulder graduate with a Bachelor of Music Education, Mary is now pursuing her Master of Music Education at the University of Northern Colorado. She also teaches private violin lessons, plays viola with the Summit Community Orchestra, and loves hiking, outdoor concerts, spending time with family, and living in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. **2016 Emerging Pioneer**



MUSIC EDVENTURES
2017 International Conference

Digging Deeper & Reaching Wider

Save the Date: March 30 - April 1, 2017

Location: Holiday Inn Bloomington Airport South,
1201 W. 94th Street, Bloomington, MN 55431

August Mystery Map Revealed!

Jolly Miller

G major, 4/4 time. Treble clef.

There was a Jol- ly Mil- ler and he lived by him - self,

as the wheel went round he made his wealth.

With one hand in his pock-et and the oth - er in his bag,

as the wheel went round he made his grab !

COLORADO STUDY GROUP, August 2016

Anna Langness Reports:

On the beautiful blue-sky summer morning of Saturday, August 6th, 12 music teachers attended the first Colorado SongWorks Study Group meeting! We spent three activity-packed hours together. Presenters for the day included Mary Stockum, Aimee Newman, Melody Epperson, and Anna Langness.



The purpose of the SW Study Group is to study selected practices and principles of SongWorks, and for this gathering, presenters focused on Antiphonning and Ideographing.

STUDY FOR THE DAY:

1. **The Kids at School:** a song and stick-passing game and a great starter for the year; multiple ways to engage singing and memorize the song, including antiphonning; song analysis to show the language pattern approach to notation for rhythm and tone.
2. **SongWorks and Executive Function (EF):** definitions of Executive Functions and how the song games and SongWorks ways of teaching provide an authentic setting for development of EF. Twenty games listed as example activities. See Aimee Newman's 2016 Conference Handout on MEI website Members Area.
3. **Rocky Mountain High ideograph:** background, purpose, demonstration, and value of ideographs for reading symbols; memorizing song lyrics; showing the meaning of the language; and special benefits for English Language Learners.
4. **Circle Left:** ideograph reading for young grades, adding symbols in order of the song, symbol changes for dynamics and audiating.
5. **Barn Dance Form Songs** (Paw Paw Patch, Bluebird, Little Red Wagon, Roll That Brown Jug): create game and movements in small groups, share and observe, part sing/part listen, sing partner songs, antiphon in groups, follow conductor signals to "hold and listen."

Following the meeting folks socialized during lunch at a nearby restaurant. With plenty of hours of Colorado sunshine remaining for the day, we left feeling inspired for the new school year.

Colorado SongWorks Study Group

Saturday, October 15

9:00-12:00

Mamie Doud Eisenhower Library
3 Community Park Road
Broomfield, CO

**Cost
FREE**

RSVP
alangness@gmail.com

Certificate of Participation
for CEUs available

SPECIAL FOCUS

The SongWorks Sound to Symbol progression

Based on language patterns and bridge notation,
this holistic approach enables students
to understand the sounds produced and the symbols represented.
It's musical! It makes sense! It works!

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS - TBA

EVERYONE WELCOME!

DISCUSSIONS CONTINUE FOLLOWING THE MEETING
JOIN US FOR LUNCH AT A NEARBY RESTAURANT

2016 MUSIC EDVENTURES LEADERSHIP

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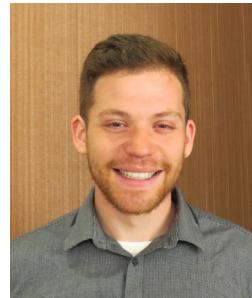
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The Purpose of Music EdVentures, Inc.

is to search for and practice ways of making music and interacting with people that preserve and celebrate the dignity of both. As a guiding principle, this purpose will focus our work on:

1. Practices that foster interactive, facilitative learning environments.
2. Strategies that empower the learner within the context of music experience and study.
3. Networks that encourage collaboration between diverse disciplines, professionals, and interest groups.

Any Member of Music EdVentures, Inc. can receive a copy of the MEI Policies and Procedures Manual and By-Laws by contacting Past President Samantha Smith at samanthameese@gmail.com

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