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## *From the President*



Terolle Turnham  
Eagan, MN  
MEI President

Greetings dear members,

Anna Langness and I were talking about stress management and teacher wellness. In her school district, a stress management specialist addressed the staff. His ideas made sense and caused Anna to prepare her room differently. "He talked about creating a place or space in the room where you could LOOK and be returned to a 'Centered' state. Something to remind us to 'release tension,' 'to breathe,' 'to reframe,' 'to return to centeredness.' Can you hear his mesmerizing voice? I enlarged a photo of a Swallowtail Butterfly on a flower...and placed a cluster of photos from an outing in Rocky Mt. National

Park on the board above my desk. I could smell the fresh air and pine scent when I looked at it."

What about YOUR school room? Perhaps one of these ideas will find you saying, "I can do THAT!"

**Color scheme:** Select 2-3 colors that work well together. Use them throughout your space for a sense of cohesiveness.

**Teaching site bulletin board:** Prepare maps of the folksong forms in your colors. Refer to it frequently. "What form does this song use?" SongWorks 2 p. 216

**Fonts used in room displays:** If you print text, use a font that is easily read by a first grader. Remember you are teaching literacy, too!

**Clutter management:** What will you allow on your desk? How will you store student work? Can it be near your work site? Decide where you will post important dates so you see them as you do your planning. Try using a list for the day of tasks that you intend to accomplish.

**Beauty:** What beautiful item will you display? How about an indoor plant that you love that will thrive in the classroom light? Maybe your desk has room for an attractive table lamp. How about a table runner (in your color scheme) on your desk?

**Cleaning supplies:** Custodians clean the floor of your room, but who dusts off the instruments, the desk, the books? Students love to do these tasks! Gather some dusting cloths, some damp cloths, and a little furniture oil for the xylophone bars and put the kids to work.

I sound like your Grandma, but knowing you are well as a person and teacher is important to all of us who know and care about you. You spend so many hours in your school room. Think of yourself and prepare it. And you will "Be well!"

*Terolle*

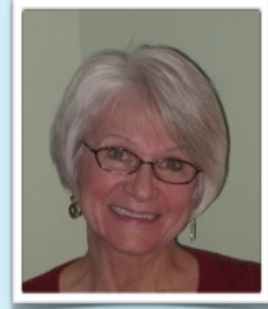


**MEI Members! Do you have something to share?**  
The "Conference Presenter Submission Form" was emailed to you in July.  
Complete the form and email it to the Conference Chair, [lehrsteffen@gmail.com](mailto:lehrsteffen@gmail.com)  
Deadline is **Monday, August 5th**

From Terolle Turnham, Eagan, MN

In the July newsletter article, "Framing Your Instructional Goals," I described some of the decisions I make when I am doing long-range planning. I focused on fourth grade. Four songs were given as a group of songs to present based on the song analysis that matched outcomes in my district.

The articles included here describe the games including teacher dialog for the four folksongs. Next month look for samples of "what to do after the game."



## Secrets in Songs: An Activity for Intermediate Ages



### Rain Rain

Rain, rain, the wind does blow.  
Stars are shin - ing to and fro. Ma -  
rie Rich-ard - son says she'll die if she  
don't find a fel - low with a ro-guish eye.

Older students may know that some folksongs use language that has a hidden meaning; they carry secrets. "Rain, Rain," a folksong from Nova Scotia, provides the setting for rich imagining and puzzling to discover the meaning of the text.

"As you listen the first time, be alert for clues that might help unravel the secrets in the words."

**Sing the song.**

Some leading questions pave the way:

"What name did you hear?"

"What is the weather?"

"What time of day?"

"Was there a word that is unfamiliar to you?"  
(roguish)

"Check your answers as you listen a second time."

**Sing the song.**

Further questions:

"Is there anything you missed during the first listening?"

"What if Marie Richardson is not a girl but an object?"

"As you listen a third time, think about the rain with stars shining."

**Sing the song.**

"Is there anything odd about the scene with the weather and the stars?"

"What does to and fro mean?"

"Some of you are ready to join in on the song in places. Please do so."

Think about the roguish eye. What could that mean in this context?"

**Sing the song.**

Gather the answers asking for more information about the thinking behind responses that are confusing. "Help me understand your thinking."

“As we all sing the song, watch for an action. I will give you a clue to the secret.”

**Sing the song and move your outstretched arm back and forth (a beam from a lighthouse) on “fellow with a roguish eye.”**

“What action did you see?”

“What words were sung as the action happened?”

“Fellow with a roguish eye is not a person. It is a structure. What could it be?”

“Right! The lighthouse that roams across the water, leading the boat to the safety of the shore.”

“Now, as I walk around the sitting circle, remember the name of the person in back of whom I stop at the cadence.”

**Sing and stop.**

“As the new person joins me and leads, his/her name will come before Marie Richardson in the song like this: Duke MacKenzie, Marie Richardson. Demonstrate singing the two names on the pitches RE up to SO, in the same way Marie Richardson is sung. “The challenge is to remember the names, the order and the person to whom the name belongs.”

To move the game along, the song starts after each final cadence. If the singing becomes hesitant at the naming section, allow the students a singing practice, gesturing to the person as each name is sung. After four or five names have been collected, ask: “What will happen if the leader walks in and out of the circle between people? Let’s try it and see.”

**All sing two or three more times.**

“How did the singing or the game change as the leader moved in and out?”

Gather answers. Some may say nothing changed. Perhaps the memory challenge is more difficult because some walkers are hidden in back of circle members. Or it might be trickier to walk between classmates because the open space varies.

“Let’s say that the leader may weave and/or cut across the circle.”

**All sing two or three more times.**

“Are there any changes you can tell us about?”

If the leader leads under the walking line, it will not be able to move. You may need to guide a

conversation about the role of the walking line versus the role of the open spaces in the circle. Collect any answers or comments.

“As you sing the next three times, the challenge is for the class to carry on the song without my voice.”

Listen especially well so that you can give specific feedback on how well this singing challenge was performed.

After you’ve made your comments, **start the original song alone**, then gesture to the class for the next phrase, antiphonning back and forth to your gesture. Do not stop at the cadence but keep singing for three or four times in a row giving the class shorter or longer phrases to sing.

End the class by having them **begin the song twice without you**. Start singing after the second “rain.” Students may or may not be able to hear that you are singing behind them in the song.

Ask: “What did you hear?” Name this way of singing as singing in canon or singing in a round or ask them if they know what this way of singing is called.

Preteen students have several years of experience in a school setting. They love figuring out codes or hidden meanings and they are very good at doing so. When given the chance to puzzle out the hidden meaning, students feel as though they are being treated in a way that honors their years of experience and respects their abilities. It is fun but not childish. §



Here is a brief description of this chasing game: For safety and flow of the game, a sitting circle of students with running space on the outside of the circle is needed.



The person who is the rooster walks around the outside of the circle, touching the person nearest to him/her when the second 'catch' is sung. That person becomes the chaser. The rooster must run around the outside of the circle and sit in the spot vacated by the chaser before the end of the song, trying to avoid being caught.

This is how I set up the game:

"Watch my hands for a gesture. Try to remember the word you hear when you see my hands move."

**Sing** and slightly move pinkie fingers on the word 'catch' as you sing it in the second phrase.

"What did you hear and see?"  
Gather answers and offer a second chance to check and notice.

**Sing** again moving hands or fingers differently than before so it becomes more obvious.

"What did you find out as you listened a second time?"

Gather answers without telling what is correct. Let the students do the thinking and noticing.

"If you are certain you know the word that makes me move my fingers, join me in snapping your fingers on that word this time."

**Sing** and snap your fingers on the second "catch."

Clarify that the action happens the second time you sing the word "catch."

"That very word will give you a turn if you are tapped on the shoulder by the person who is having the walking turn."

"What do you think the two people will do during their turn?"

## Let's Catch a Rooster



### Sing.

"What do you predict will happen in the game?"  
Gather some predictions.

"I will take the part of the rooster in the first turn. Let's see if the person I touch on the shoulder on the second "catch" will know what to do. Sing with me this time."

**Sing** and begin walking on the outside of the circle. Touch the shoulder of the child nearest you as you sing the second "catch." Then run forward around the circle and sit in the empty spot where the chaser was sitting before the song ends and before the chaser tags you.

"Does the game make sense with the words of the song?"

Gather a few comments.

"Did you notice when the rooster sat down in the circle?"

"Where did the rooster sit?"

"When was the rooster sitting?"

Gather the answers.

Clarify that the rooster sits in the empty spot left by the chaser before the song ends.

You may need to stop the action to have students problem solve about

1. what to do if the rooster is caught,
2. what to do if the rooster sits after the song has ended,
3. what to do if some students are chosen second and third times,
4. that the shoulder of the new chaser is just touched, not pounded, slugged or hit.

This is another game that lends itself to continuous singing of the song over and over. So the decisions the class makes need to facilitate the end of one turn at the end of the song and the immediate start of the next turn as the song begins once again. Students will quickly be responsible for the song ...and the game.

Older students might not be comfortable with a running game as they start the year so I usually do not introduce this right away. They do not want to be doing childish activities, but they still love to have fun. When using this song and game, I describe several tasks they will do as they successfully sing

the song and play the game without adult assistance.

What are some of those tasks?

1. Students will be watching for cues from one another to start the song together.
2. Students will need to follow the game rules developed by the class.
3. When selected for a chasing turn, they need to quickly stand and begin running without bumping neighbors or anyone in the sitting circle.
4. Singing the song with energy but without shouting uses lots of self control and breath energy.

Growing to be more independent as classmates and as singers is a goal worth achieving.§



This song and game have been favorites in my classroom since I first learned them in the 1980's. Since it is a name game, I used this material with fourth graders near the start of the school year. I did not use it as a first game due to the vigorous action as well as the complexity of the partner moves. Managing the space needed for the energetic activity is something worth thinking about ahead of time.

## Goin' Down the Railroad

Go - in' down the rail - road, Re, So Do!

Go - in' down the rail - road, Re, So, Do!

Oh! Mar - y's gon - na run all a round!

Oh! Su - san's gon - na run all a round.

Go-in' to turn a-round! Go-in' to go back home!

I enjoy the balanced form of the song and appreciate this clear example for the older students. As first and second graders they learned “Are you Sleeping” and “Scotland’s Burning,” each of which is in balanced form. Since the song includes the pitch names RE, SO, and DO as text, adding hand signs for those pitches is a quick way to introduce them to new students.

This is how I might present the activity.  
“Traveling often invites us to experience something new. For years, the train whistle approaching, arriving and leaving town, would cause me to imagine hopping on board on the way to adventure! Folksongs about trains are abundant.”

As you listen to this one, imagine what shape we will need to make to play a game during the song.  
**Sing.**

“What shape seems to make sense to you?”  
Gather students comments.

“As you listen a second time, notice other phrases that clarify your opinion or alter it.”  
**Sing.**

“What phrases did you notice?”  
“What action might take place during that phrase?”  
Gather comments.

“So if the shape is like railroad tracks, with two lines of people standing side by side facing each other across an empty area, what other action clues do the words suggest?”  
**Sing.**

“I’ll collect answers from 2 or 3 students.”

“Now let’s see how the game unfolds and how it matches your predictions.”

Quickly select 7 students to join you in two lines facing each other. One of the students will be your partner.

“These students and I will stand side by side making the railroad tracks. My partner is standing across from me. We are the first engine. Once the song starts my partner and I will start moving. Notice what word or syllable makes us change direction and then stop.”

The text of the song is “Goin’ down the railroad Re, So, Do. Goin’ down the railroad Re, So, Do.” As the song begins, you will hold hands facing each other and gallop sideways down the center aisle, stopping on “DO” and changing direction to return to the starting spot as you repeat the phrase.

**Sing and move for the first two phrases.**

“What word made us change direction and then stop?” (DO)  
If there is confusion, **sing and do it again** to clarify. Repeat the question.

The second set of phrases says “Oh Mrs. Turnham’s gonna run all around. Oh Mikayla’s gonna run all around.” You will jog on the outside of your line to the opposite end. Then your partner’s name will be used and she will do the same in back of the students in her line.

“Here is the second set of phrases and the action.”  
**Sing that set of phrases** and demonstrate the movement.

“The next action is called “wringing the dishrag” and might be tricky. The words are “Going to turn around” and that is exactly what your feet do. You and your partner turn towards the end of the line, rotating away from one another until you face each other again. Everyone standing try that.” No singing is happening during this brief movement practice.

“Clearly, that foot work was NOT tricky. What DOES make “wringing the dishrag” tricky is that you hold both hands during the action and must go under your arms in the same direction in which your feet moved. It looks like this. (Show how to do it.) Try putting it altogether.”

Gather the attention of the group following that brief attempt and some giggling.

“Another thing that makes it a tricky spot is that the timing of the action and the song is very short. Remember it happens as you sing “Going to turn around.” (**Sing and demonstrate** the action.) Not all the students standing will be able to complete the action smoothly but they have had some experience.

The final phrase is “Going to go back home.” The action uses my right arm and leg with my partners left arm and leg. We move in the same direction with the opposite body part. This action looks like we hop with one foot forward on the word “going.” We hop switching to the other foot and arm on the word “go.”

Then we hop back to the first direction on the word "home." Finally we all clap and hop side ways toward the start of the line. This is how it looks and sounds." Demonstrate the action as you **sing the phrase.**

"Now we'll demonstrate the entire set of actions. We will be singing the song several times to allow each engine to have a turn. Sing as you are able to join us."

**Sing the entire song with all the actions.**

Start the song right away for the second engine to have a turn. You and your partner always do the dishrag and the hopping motions when that portion of the song is sung. So does each engine as they join you are the end of the track. Everyone hops towards the start of the line to keep from running out of space as each new engine is collected at the end of the line.

To bring the observers into the action, the experienced players could invite new partners so that you have two sets of railroad tracks or one very long set. Pairing an experienced student with someone new may work very well. The observer has already

been trying it out in his mind and is most likely convinced that he can do it. "No problem!"

Close out class with all students singing the answering phrases to your call. Switch and see if they can start each new phrase.

### Advanced Game:

Later in the school year, the students are able to move about easily without bumping one another. They have had many music activities which require controlled movement through space as a group. I return to this song for further study. After replaying the game in the original version, I have used this far more challenging version. The engine is NOT in a railroad track. Two or three engines are in random formation throughout the space. The first challenge is to watch closely so that you never bump into another engine. The second challenge is to find your partner so you are ready for the dishrag action! Later, a further challenge occurs if the partner waits with eyes closed while the first partner "runs all around." Add more engines as the class is able to handle the difficulty of the task. If it is workable for only 6 engines, have them find replacements. §



There is not a game for this song but the text lends itself to a creative drama experience in small groups. This is how I have begun the experience in my fourth grade classes.

"The text of this song uses terms that are not usual or common. As you listen, think about what the words mean."

**Sing.**

"I'll sing it a second time to give you a little more thinking time."

**Sing.**

### Man's Life's a Vapor



Man's life's a va - por full of woes.



He just gets up and down he goes!



Down he down he down he down he down he goes!



“Does anyone know what vapor is?”  
“Is vapor long lasting?”  
“What is woe?” (troubles, distress, often humorous such as in “a tale of woe.”)  
“Based on what you have heard from your classmates, what do you think that portion of the song could mean?”

Gather ideas from a couple of students.  
“As you listen again, close your eyes to imagine a man in the song.”

**Sing.**

Invite descriptions of the images of the man in the song.

“As I sing this time, join me. The song repeats the words “down he” several times. Notice what your voice does on that phrase.”

**Sing.**

Give feed back on the singing you heard.  
Which phrase was sung with confidence?  
Where was the diction clearest?

“Antiphon with me. I will take the phrase that was sung with less confidence so that you can hear it specifically. Be ready for your part!”

**Sing and gesture** to the class to sing on phrases that were sung well. **Start the song several times** in a row, giving the class the tricky section in the final turn.

“It sounds like the song is firmly in your voices and memory. During this singing, move from your spot to gather in a group of 4 students. Try to be standing silently at the end of the song.”

**Sing.**

“In your group, work out a way to act out or dramatize the meaning of the words. Be prepared to practice your plan with the song. When my arm is pointing to the ceiling, that is the signal that all talking must stop and we will prepare to begin the song and the action. You will have about 2 minutes.”

Gather the attention of the group, **sing “ready” and start the song.**

Gesture to the group to sit in place.

Before giving students a little more time to work on their plan, ask some guiding questions to expand their thinking:

“What shape will your group use to show that you are ready to begin?”

“Will you stand in a line, a circle, a semi-circle?”

“Will there be any walking or will the group remain in one place?”

“Will all people do each action or will there be some ‘follow the leader’ sections?”

“Stand to continue adding to your group plan. Remember to be ready to practice when I raise my arm.”

Guide the class in another total group practice turn. When most groups are ready, announce which group will be first to share their plan. Have the other groups sit so they can see.

Ask the performing group:

“Does your group want to sing the song alone or with the rest of the class?”

Announce:

“Observers watch closely so you can do what they show us.”

Trying the ideas prepared by another group expands the ‘knowledge base’ of actions for future study. It also gives students practice using gestures or actions that might not be comfortable for them to select without being on the spot. Performing the plan prepared by another group minimizes unwanted behaviors and comments because everyone has something to do very quickly following the demonstration.

“As we prepare to move on to your next class, groups on this side of the room will start the song and their actions first. The other half of the room will begin singing after “full of woes.” Perform your plan and sing the song two times.”

**Start the song.** Gesture to the second half of the class to begin singing as the first half sings “He.”

This song pairs well with “Let’s Catch a Rooster” as well as “Goin’ Down the Railroad.” Keep this in mind for another day and another group action plan. The action will help the group carry the song without shouting. Perhaps these three songs will develop into a performance piece. §

# We've Had a Good Time Playing the Game: Now What? (Revisited)

Published Winter 1985, Revised Summer 2013



Peggy D. Bennett, Ph.D.  
Professor of Music Education  
Oberlin College  
Conservatory of Music

Because singing games are foundational experiences that begin music study in *SongWorks* teaching, they often receive a great deal of time and attention . . . in our planning and in our lessons. Attention to games is important: we need to know what each game offers our students, and we need to know how to manage all the behaviors that each game may evoke.

But, what comes after the game is played? How can the intellectual play, begun by the game, continue through other study practices?

In 1985, I identified a teaching sequence that outlines the means, the rationale, the progress, and the process of leading students from sound to symbol. Even though it was created nearly 30 years ago and long before *SongWorks 1* was published (about 10 years later), I think this procedure may still have some merit for those of you who struggle with “How do I get from playing the game to studying music notation?”

## A *SongWorks* Teaching Sequence: Progressing from Sounds to Symbols and Symbols to Sounds

1. **Build** students' repertoire of songs
2. **Develop** students' awareness of musical sound and specific sound patterns
3. **Allow** students multi-sensory experiences with what they hear in select sound patterns
4. **Assign** appropriate labels to select sound patterns
5. **Guide** students' notations of whole songs and select sound patterns.
6. **Present** conventional symbols for select sound patterns.
7. **Provide** music reading opportunities with select sound patterns.

## Step 1: Build Students' Repertoire of Songs

**Means:** Singing games

**Rationale:** Games provide varied repetition of songs. This repetition allows students to internalize the whole song, including sound patterns within the song that will be studied later.

## Build Independence

- Respect the song while playing the game (encouraging/reminding singers, giving a starting pitch for the song<sup>1</sup>)
- Provide sufficient repetition so that students can learn the song well
- Give students responsibility for various turns during the game.<sup>2</sup>
- Tap students' imaginations to give the song and game meaning.<sup>3</sup>

## Sample Questions & Statements<sup>4</sup>

- “Who will start the song for Sarah's turn?”
- “Wiggle your thumb if you think you can sing all the words to the song during this next turn.”
- “Just as our song begins with a brief silence after you hear the starting pitch, the end of the song has a brief silence after we finish singing. Let's listen for those silences this time.”

## Step 2: Develop Students' Awareness of Musical Sound and Specific Sound Patterns

**Means:** Antiphonning, movement, chinning, inner hearing/audiation<sup>5</sup>

**Rationale:** Experiencing a singing game does not necessarily develop awareness of specific sound patterns. The teacher leads students to perceive sound patterns (aurally cohesive chunks of sound)<sup>6</sup> within a song by using playful focus to highlight those patterns through antiphonning, movement, chinning, and audiation. [For a thorough treatment of finding and teaching study patterns in a song,

see “Song Analysis Process” in *SongWorks 2*, pp. 274-275; “Common Rhythm Patterns for Study,” pp. 277-278; “Common Tonal Patterns for Study,” p. 279; “Phases of Learning Music Notation,” pp. 284-286.]

### Build Independence

- Give students opportunities to demonstrate their bodily and aural awareness of the whole song and select sound patterns through antiphonning, audiation, chinning, and movement.
- Allow students to function in smaller groups (solo, partner, 3 or 4 students) occasionally as they demonstrate what they hear.

### Sample Questions/Statements:

- “Choose a new way to make the sounds of ‘go jiggety jiggety jog.’ How could you do that? Let’s sing the whole song and listen for your sounds of ‘go jiggety jiggety jog.’”
- “Let’s see if you can put that part of the song in your inner hearing and just show the movement when we get to that pattern.”
- “Here’s our challenge! Let’s audiate the whole song, move our knees every time we hear ‘Circle Left’ in our heads, and pat the rhythm of ‘shake those fingers down’ on our tummies. Good luck! [singing] Here’s our starting pitch.”

### Step 3: Allow Students Multi-Sensory Experiences with What They Hear in Select Sound Patterns

**Means:** Verbal/Vocal description, movement

**Rationale:** Students need to process perceptions initially through their own bodies, their own vocabularies, and their own experiences. The teacher gathers important information by observing and studying these demonstrations of students’ perceptions.

### Build Independence

- Give students time to explain and demonstrate what they hear, see, and think
- Ask supportive, follow-up questions if students’ answers are unclear
- Treat answers as opportunities to clarify and learn about students’ thinking while

interacting with an attitude of curiosity and interest in students’ ideas.

### Sample Questions & Statements

- “How would you describe what you hear in that part of the song?”
- “Show us how the melody moves during that part of the song.”
- “What words would you use to describe this rhythm pattern?”
- “Show us how you will demonstrate (move to) the slur as you perform the rhythm of “hi ho hi ho hi ho.”

### Step 4: Assign Music Labels to Select Sound Patterns

**Means:** Say the label (solfa syllables, rhythm syllables, music terms) and write the word for students to see

**Rationale:** After awareness and student description, it is appropriate for the teacher to give students the label (name) for the pattern being studied (anacrusis, MI MI RE RE DO, DU DA DI DU DA DI DU, fermata, treble clef, solfa syllables, rhythm syllables, and so on)<sup>7</sup>. [See *SongWorks 2* for mini-lessons of this type of study.]

### Build Independence

- Challenge students to sing the new words/ labels when the select pattern occurs in the song
- Create opportunities for practice with new labels through varied repetition of the song using antiphonning and audiation

### Sample Questions & Statements

- “Let’s call that pattern MI MI RE RE DO. Sing those words this time when we get to that pattern in the song.”
- “Some people call this a ‘bird’s eye,’ because it looks like that. But, the musical word is ‘fermata,’ and that’s the word we’ll use. Freeze and look surprised this time when you hear the musical fermata.”

### Step 5: Guide Students’ Notations of Whole Songs and Select Sound Patterns

**Means:** Line maps, song dots, ideographs

**Rationale:** Prior to reading conventional music notation, students need to translate what they hear into movement, then into graphic notation. Introduced through teacher modeling, line maps, song dots, and ideographs allow students to record their perceptions on paper, with simple symbols that are drawn and read simultaneously with the singing of the song.

**Build Independence:** Students need several opportunities to notate during initial writing experiences. Repetition helps students become comfortable with writing the sound *at the same time as they are producing* the sound. Encourage students to read and check their notation several times by touching and tracking the symbols as they sing or speak. Challenge students to read the notation with original song words, as well as the solfege and rhythm syllables for the select pattern/s.

## Sample Questions & Statements

### Line Maps

- “Let your finger sing the song as you move it on your paper. . . Now let your marker sing as it moves on your paper. . . Now, you get to sing the song as you read your map! Let’s see how you do that.”

### Song Dots

- “Let your fingers tap the words to the song [the pattern]. . . Now let your marker sing the rhythm of the words [or “each syllable of each word”]. . . You get to read your song dots so that they fit with the words you are singing. Your body already knows how to do it!”

### Ideographs

- “Point to the symbol and say/sing the words that go with it. Read at your own speed.”
- “What would your speaking voice sound like if you read the symbols as if you’re telling us the story? We’ll listen.”

## Step 6: Present Conventional Symbols for the Select Sound Patterns

**Means:** Write/draw the conventional symbol/s for the pattern/s being studied.

**Rationale:** Just as with the previous steps from sound to symbol, repeated, playful experiences are used to introduce conventional notation to represent the pattern/s being studied. The meaning of the symbol is already “present” in children’s bodies, now they see the symbol in “music language.”

**Build Independence:** Students write conventional music symbols on their individual papers to represent a portion of a line map, a section of song dots, or a symbol in an ideograph. Maps, dots, and ideographs can be mixed with conventional music symbols to create a score for the whole song. When working with rhythms, encourage students to read their scores by touching the bottoms of note stems (the dots/note heads), rather than tracing the stems or beams of notes. Students sing notated songs or patterns with original song words and with rhythm or solfege syllables, connecting new knowledge of symbols with previous knowledge of symbols. [See *SongWorks 2* mini-lessons for numerous examples of connecting sound to music symbols.]

## Sample Statements & Questions

- “You already know how to sing and read this pattern, so reading it with music symbols will hardly be a challenge.”
- “This is what MI MI RE RE DO looks like on a music staff. How would you describe this pattern?”

## Step 7: Provide Music Reading Opportunities with Select Sound Patterns

**Means:** Show the traditional notation of the study pattern in new contexts. Create new arrangements of the rhythm or tonal pattern. Challenge students to find the study pattern in a full score of the song, a different familiar song, or an unfamiliar song.

**Rationale:** Moving from familiar to new contexts, the teacher leads students to recognize the same and similar patterns in music notation. Stretching students’ knowledge and recognition this way can give them confidence in music reading and a system of scanning for familiar patterns in an unfamiliar score.

**Build Independence:** Give students time to study in their inner-hearing when they are challenged, “See if you can read this.” Also, reviewing/singing

the song just prior to the reading experience can help get the song “in their heads” before students are to audiate the score.<sup>8</sup>

### Sample Statements & Questions

- “Let’s see if I can create a reading challenge for you. I’m going to change just a little part of the score for Scotland’s Burning, and see if you can still read it.” [Teacher makes a slight change in the rhythm or tonal pattern notation, i.e. repetition, deletion, inversion, augmentation, and so on.]
- “Here is the score for a new song. Take a moment to study it and see if you can find any patterns of DI DU DI DU. Cross your arms if you found that pattern and can perform the sound you are reading.”

### Summary and Caveat

I originally wrote this article and have revised it here to offer one answer to the question, “Now What?” for teaching music notation to children. The best way to make these ideas successful is for you to breathe life into them through your own teaching style. No teaching sequence can accomplish its purpose without your eagerness and ingenuity in teaching it.<sup>9</sup>

So, the caveat is . . . you need not stick to these steps, accomplish them in order, or avoid teaching one step before students have mastered the previous one. Ideas presented here are a pathway, a “game trail” of sorts, that others in SongWorks have traveled and found to be a successful, reasonable way to teach music to children based on the Principles of Teaching and Learning Music.

Infused with your own vitality for teaching and curiosity about your students’ learning, this pathway could offer you some answers for the ever-present, perennial question in teaching: “Now what?”

1. See SongWorks 1, pp. 55-57.
2. See SongWorks 1, pp. 16-17.
3. See SongWorks 1, pp. 335-337.
4. For additional examples of statements and questions to engage listening, see SongWorks 2, pp. 44-46.
5. See SongWorks 1, pp. 86-94.
6. See SongWorks 1, pp. 122-126.
7. In teaching children, even young children, I have never used “watered down” or “cute” labels for music terms. To me, there is no reason to do so. Children learn the meaning of terms such as “anacrusis,” “fermata,” and so on by experiencing them.
8. Doug Bartholomew’s Two Part Songs books are excellent examples of weaving the familiar and the unfamiliar for challenging and delightful experiences with reading music notation.
9. See SongWorks 2, pp. 284-286 for a synopsis of “The Four Phases of Learning Music Notation”

Bennett, P.D. & Bartholomew, D. R. (1997). *SongWorks 1: Singing in the education of children*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Bennett, P.D. & Bartholomew, D. R. (1999). *SongWorks 2: Singing from sound to symbol*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.



Emerging Pioneers complete four assignments to fulfill their Fellowship award. In this essay, Taryn Raschdorf, a 2013 recipient, describes a conversation with a colleague about SongWorks.

I wanted to challenge myself in one of my EP assignments and so this option sounded like just the challenge I was looking for... "Visit with at least one colleague about the SongWorks approach and its benefits for children." The reason I found this assignment challenging is because I feel so new to SongWorks myself, so who was I to talk to any of my colleagues about its benefits when I am still learning about them myself? My initial idea for this assignment, therefore, was to meet with Anna Langness about how to talk to colleagues about SongWorks and its principles in order to see how it's done by a pro. The funniest thing happened, however! Towards the end of the 2012-13 school year, I went on a field trip with my son and had the privilege of sitting next to his teacher. Guess what we talked about? That's right...SongWorks! I am not exactly sure how long we talked, but it seemed like our conversation lasted for over an hour or at least as long as it took to get from Rocky Mountain National Park back to my son's school.

The conversation started because this 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher (whom I will call Mrs. H) had heard from the principal about the Fleurette Sweeney Fellowship I had been awarded. Mrs. H wanted to hear about the details of this honor, the conference, and finally about Music EdVentures and SongWorks. I was surprised about how easily I could talk about each topic; as if I had been involved with this group longer than my four months. The conversation started with how I have just started to bring SongWorks into my classroom after teaching for more than 10 years. I talked to her about the Kindergartners and 1<sup>st</sup> graders and my use of icons and song dotting. I explained that using notation can be really frustrating for the students, but by using icons, the students can "read" the music, compose their own, and be prepared in a relatively short amount of time for "real notation."

Mrs. H was interested in what I had to say about SongWorks in my music classroom, but it wasn't until I mentioned the session that Pam Bridgehouse conducted using nursery rhymes that she really perked up. It was obvious that this *classroom* teacher was especially interested in

**Taryn Raschdorf**, her husband and four children are moving from Colorado back to Norfolk, VA. She will be teaching Music K-6 at Coleman Place Elementary while completing research towards a Ph.D. in Music Education from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Her research focuses on mentorship of beginning teachers.



how the SongWorks approach can help *classroom* teachers. At this point I began to feel my insecurity build up, but I told her what I recalled from Pam's session about replacing images with words and how the children were able to read rather difficult words. It was at this point I remembered the song "I Can Sing a Rainbow" used in Marilyn Winter's session and how reading skills were incorporated into that song. I also mentioned Anne Hammond using SongWorks in her first grade classroom and the success she has found. Even with my inexperience, I feel I was able to share what I had learned. SongWorks is not a methodology, but really is (as the Music EdVentures website states,) "a set of techniques and teaching strategies used to engage students in movement, language, thinking, listening, and music."

As we got closer to the school, I was able to tell Mrs. H about our next conference coming up in April of 2014 and told her anyone is welcome to attend and that she should really think about attending. She then asked about having an in-service with someone from Music EdVentures. I hadn't even thought of this idea. I eagerly told her about Anna and said that she is an expert teacher and one of the most knowledgeable folks in the SongWorks world. Mrs. H got very excited and said she couldn't wait to talk to the principal about this. WOW!

What I got out of this experience was that these conversations don't need to be a scary ordeal. At the 2013 conference, I kept hearing some of our more "seasoned" SongWorks teachers talk about the need for new teachers to enter into this community of learners. That is one of the reasons I am here, writing this essay . . . I would like to start reaching out to others as well, and I would challenge *and encourage* those of you who may feel inexperienced that talking about SongWorks to fellow teachers, co-workers, parents, administrators, or community members really isn't that scary at all. Even in this "training wheels" period of using SongWorks and incorporating the principles into my teaching and way of thinking, I can and will continue to have these conversations,

increasing my proficiency and confidence with each conversation. Interestingly, I am finding that my zeal for this approach is contagious.

In closing, I would still like to have that conversation with Anna. I would like to know how she talks to colleagues about SongWorks: What language does she use? How do these conversations start? Is there different verbiage for music and non-music teachers? What is her goal or what should be the goal for these types of conversations? I will keep you updated as to whether or not the in-service at my son's school takes place, but needless to say I was very pleased with this impromptu conversation with a fellow colleague about the SongWorks approach and its benefits for children.§

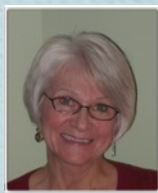
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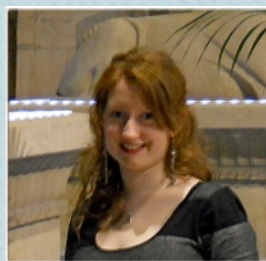
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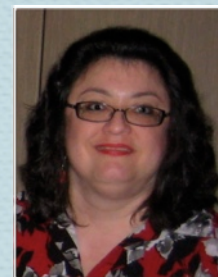
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**EdVentures, Inc.** is to search for and practice ways of making music and interacting with people that preserve and celebrate the dignity of both. As a guiding principle, this purpose will focus our work on:

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.

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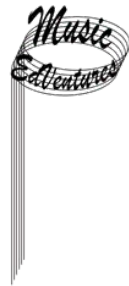
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SAVE THE DATE

**2014**  
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April 3, 4, 5  
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