



## Song Mapping

A music **map** is a line that represents the flow or movement of music. Drawn while a song or an instrumental work is being sung or heard, a map is a kinesthetic symbol as well as a visual one.<sup>1</sup> It begins when the singing (music) begins and ends when the singing stops.



### Why Mapping is Used in the Classroom

- Making and reading maps involve and integrate auditory, motor, and visual modes and focus on the structure and flow of a song.<sup>1</sup>
- Maps often are the first symbol of music that students will create or read. Making maps needs no prerequisite skills in notating and reading sound patterns.<sup>1</sup>

- A map becomes a visual means to facilitate learning about music which is auditory.

## **Introducing Mapping to Your Students**

**Teacher-Generated Maps** With some classes, a first mapping experience works best if students have the opportunity to watch several maps being made by the teacher.<sup>1</sup> “Watch what happens as we sing the song.” (Teacher holds a marker on the board, sings, beginning to draw as the music begins, and stops when the music ends. Thus, making a music map.) “Describe what I just did.” Making a new map, the teacher can repeat the process and then check student observations. “What did you notice?” “How are my two maps alike? How are they different?”

**Student-Generated Maps** Three or four students come to the chalkboard. “Hold your chalk on the board, and when the song begins, let your marker sing by making a line for the song. Feel the song in your hand and let it move your chalk. Stop your chalk at the end of the song.”<sup>1</sup>

Attention is drawn to similarities and differences in maps. This process can be done with other groups of four children. After this, students can use large pieces of paper to make maps for sharing and exploring.

## **Explanation of Term to Your Students**

“A music map is a line that is drawn while a song or piece of music is in progress. It begins when the music begins and ends as the music stops. A map shows how each of us ‘feel’ the song. It doesn’t need to look like anyone else’s map, because it is your personal movement to the song.”<sup>1</sup>

## **How Mapping is Used the Classroom**

- Certain places in the song can be located on the map. For example using the song, Scotland's Burning, “How many times is the word ‘fire’ sung in the song?” (4) “Find where you are on your map when the four ‘fires’ are sung.” Options for study:
  - “Highlight that portion of the map by making the line thicker or by tracing it with a different color.” Sing, and follow again to check for accuracy.
  - A picture can be drawn at the designated sites.

- Rhythm notation, song dots, solfege (letters), or notes on the staff can be placed at the site and sung when that part of the song is sung.

- Lead maps (teacher generated or taken from a book) can be used to study recorded music.

### **Bibliography**

Bennett P. D. & Bartholomew, D.R. (1997). SongWorks I: Singing in the education of children. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Pgs. 95,96.

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