

# MUSIC EDVENTURES

NEWS AND NOTES

An Association of SongWorks Teachers

June 2016

## *From the President*

Hello from Philadelphia!

I am very excited to be writing my first column as President of Music EdVentures! I hope you will get to know me better through these monthly columns, and get to know our organization better as well. Speaking of MEI, it feels like we were all just together in Denver!

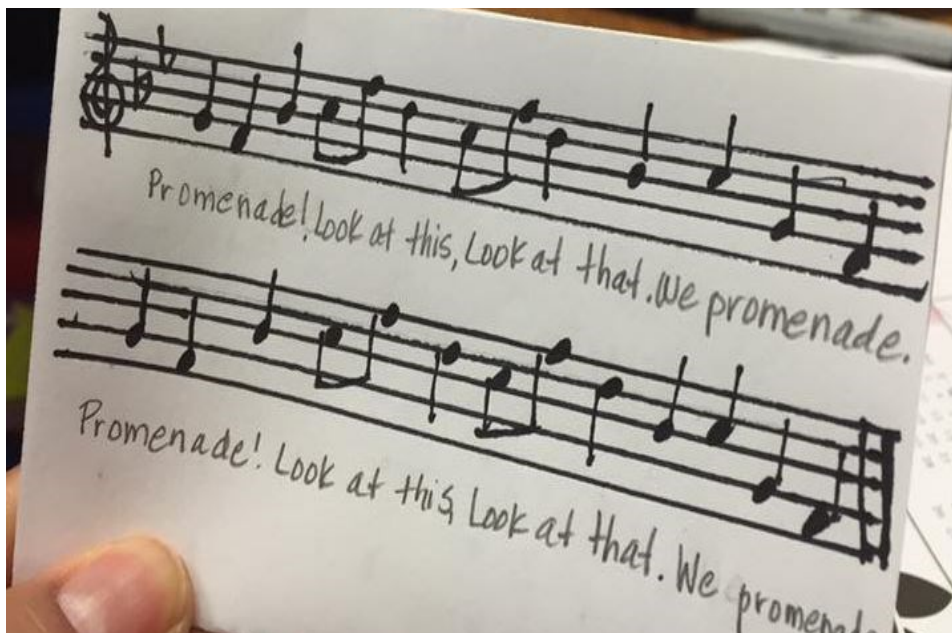
If you attended this year's conference, "SongWorks: Basics and Beyond," then you know there was a thread running through our sessions—the "sturdy songs" which we know and love, some of our strongest resources, presented in new and exciting ways. Now, although I knew the conference would go well, I have a confession to make.

Those songs were the sturdiest things about me! I did not feel sturdy as I cried all the way to the airport after saying goodbye to my 8-month old son. After I arrived at the airport, the lack of sturdiness continued. An alarm wailed as I tried to check my bag, the screen flashing "LATE CHECK, LATE CHECK" over and over again.

The attendant assured me the bag "might" arrive on time. It did...with a giant neon green tag that read "LATE CHECK" just in case anyone missed the alarm. I did not feel sturdy when the hotel was unable to check people into their room for 2 hours, and



**Ruthanne Parker**  
Wyncote, PA



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I certainly did not feel sturdy just before I stepped in front of everyone to officially begin the conference! And then something happened. My part ended, and all of you took over. Presenters expertly shared their songs, games, and ideas; presiders seamlessly transitioned us between sessions; Anna made sure lunch was ready (and a whole host of other things), Theresa and Alison helped us relax in the hospitality room, and everyone pitched in to help with whatever was needed. I was not doing this alone, and I felt sturdy again.

Why am I telling you this? Because I know that as the school year comes to a close, you might be feeling a little less than sturdy, and I want to tell you that you are not alone! Are you in search of ideas for engaging your students through June? Check out our website! The sturdy songs I spoke about and more are all available for members. Not a member? You can still access past newsletters, filled with ideas. Do you need to vent? Call an MEI buddy! Our contact list is on the members-only section of the website. Maybe you could give someone you just met at the conference a call or send an email so that connection doesn't end! As you can see, our website continues to grow and update, just as our organization does—getting better and better! I look forward to staying in touch with all of you throughout the year and hope you enjoy the start of a very relaxing summer!

*-Ruthie*



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## 2016 EMERGING PIONEERS: CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

### Yi-An Ann Lo

The 2016 MEI conference, "SongWorks: Basics and Beyond," was an eye-opening learning experience for me. The warm greetings and smiles welcomed me to join this wonderful feast of knowledge and celebration of learning and teaching. Being touched by the quality of each encounter and presentation, I am thrilled and certain that the love and respect I experienced at the conference is identical to what our students experience in our classes. What a great lesson to keep in ourselves as educators; that "what is done in love is done well!"



**Yi-An Ann Lo**  
Hsinchu, Taiwan

*"One song can be taught through different games, variations, and techniques in SongWorks."*

From the moment my dear mentor, Dr. Fleurette Sweeney, nominated me for the Emerging Pioneer award, I was grateful for this wonderful opportunity to learn more about SongWorks. With support from Peggy and Anna before the conference, I gradually realized the importance of hearing, seeing, and acknowledging the individual

uniqueness and the beauty of diversity. The honor of receiving the EP award was not only a valuable chance for my growth, but also was a step forward for me to offer my learning experience and reflections to my community.

Listening is the fundamental skill in music behavior. As well, this quality of listening is the key for learning community-building. After I hopped off the airplane in Denver, and throughout the whole MEI conference, I was constantly engaged in meaningful and interactive conversations, warm greetings by name, and welcoming eye contact. These foundational basics of quality listening support us in making connections that we can cultivate as educators in our classrooms. Caring-listening can also carry us forward and beyond in our own life-long learning journey, and in being great role models for our students.

Interestingly, some similar themes were shared by presenters during the conference: families learning together, movement, playfulness, interactive teaching, and learning partnerships. It occurred to me that, just like seeing an activity from various angles to practice certain principles, the diversity of our own backgrounds as teachers provided wider views for all of us. The sharing of SongWorks techniques and variations opened up the windows for me to see different techniques and teaching skills for additional age groups and classroom settings. Experiencing the stories and reflections helped me evaluate and plan new possibilities for my own future lessons. Having research and academic practices that echo the SongWorks principles, we were again reminded of the importance of our daily work and beliefs. Just like one song can be taught through different games, variations, and techniques in SongWorks, each of us attending the 2016 MEI conference demonstrated the unique experiences of playing, learning, and teaching to the MEI family.

“With an open-minded and mindful heart...”

Having now arrived at my home in Taiwan, I am thankful for encountering each of you who shared your own culture sincerely. I could hear the fluidity in our teaching: that we are willing to hear and see from different backgrounds, classrooms, and cultures with a beginner's heart, no matter where we are in our teaching career. With an open-minded and mindful heart, I am excited to apply SongWorks in my future classes.

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**Yi-An Ann** Lo has been an early childhood educator for six years. Ann believes that when singing and playing with young children, the pure joy of music, play, and social connections creates a great foundation for human learning experiences. Currently a graduate student at Self Design Graduate Institute, Ann would like to incorporate the Sound to Symbol Praxis method and SongWorks into her work with children when she returns to Taiwan this year.

**2016 Emerging Pioneer, Yi-An Ann Lo,  
shares this as her second of four assignments to fulfill her  
Fleurette Sweeney Fellowship for Emerging Pioneers award.**

## 2016 EMERGING PIONEERS: CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

### Mary Stockum

In reflecting on the 2016 Music Edventures conference, “SongWorks: Basics and Beyond,” I feel strengthened and renewed in who I am as a teacher and as a person. There is something magical that happens when like-minded individuals with a common goal—to provide the best music experiences for children—come together to learn and share ideas. The culture of Music EdVentures is welcoming, vibrant, and musically satisfying! Even more, it has been the invaluable principles and practices of SongWorks that have guided our interactions. As we were learning together in Denver, these principles and practices became a natural embodiment of how I could teach with a sense of playfulness and musicality when I returned to the reality of my mountain school.



**Mary Stockum,  
Kremmling, CO**

“Something magical happens when like-minded individuals...”

This was my third Music EdVentures conference, and something different happened for me this year. I noticed with great clarity how SongWorks principles and practices create the musical and joyful experience we all share. Active participation in the sturdy song games and music study gives life and tangible meaning to the *SongWorks*

*Principles of Teaching and Learning*. We are treating one another with respect and dignity for ideas, feeling safe to demonstrate understandings, developing responsiveness to music, and caring about the way music sounds as we use various notations to preserve that musicality. None of these efforts is by accident. We strive to be intentional in our words and actions to bring out the best in everyone and to experience joyful learning. These intentional principles and practices are basic to good teaching, and they are beyond empowering!

Finally, I'm grateful for the opportunity to be an Emerging Pioneer! It is a great honor to be given the Fleurette Sweeney Scholarship and receive support for my teaching practice. Presenting a session on "Productive Planning," and having it resonate with others, felt very rewarding.

Making friends and having the support of this network have contributed incredible gains for my professional and personal growth. I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for everyone I connected with at the conference. Thank you for sharing your wisdom, passion, and child-like spirit! I'm certain my quality of life has been enriched through music and singing, and joining the SongWorks family!

"Sharing your  
wisdom, passion, and  
child-like spirit..."

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**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.



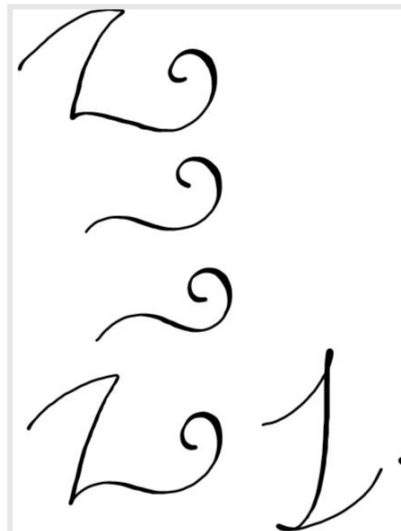
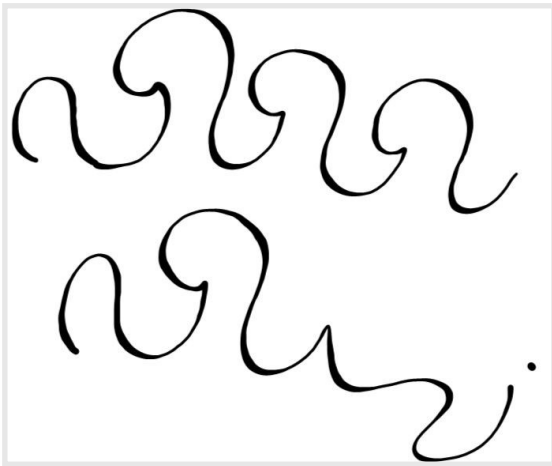
**2016 Emerging Pioneer, Mary Stockum,  
shares this as her second of four assignments to fulfill her  
Fleurette Sweeney Fellowship for Emerging Pioneers award.**

## MYSTERY MAP

Can you figure out the secret song in my brain? The song starts and ends on solfeggio DO.



Still thinking? Here are a few more maps of the same song to test 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](mailto:jeharkins@fcps.edu)

## SONGWORKS CERTIFICATION

### From the Executive Director

#### *Of SongWorks Certification*

Just over one year ago, we launched the long-awaited SongWorks Certification Program. The Foundations and Practicum courses were completed in December. Now, we are proud to announce that a full class of educators completed their specialized training in December 2015 and are the first group to achieve the designation

#### **SongWorks Certified Educator!**



**Terolle Turnham  
Eagan, MN**

It is so very satisfying that most of that group are continuing their education by taking the specialty course, **Music Literacy for Children** on July 18-22 at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota. Those five days together will be full of learning and collaboration both in and out of the classroom.

### Music Literacy for Children

July 18-22, 2016

Being Executive Director for the SW Certification (SWC) Program means I'll have a "front row seat" for the teaching and learning that occurs in this course. I know that our study will spiral from general to specific understandings, from self-designed symbols to

conventional notation, from pathways that may be familiar to those that are newly understood. Guiding students through music activities designed to support their understandings and skills in "music literacy for children" is a challenging, but very rewarding, task. What is our approach? Playful Teaching, Vibrant Learning ... of course!

Do you yearn for playfulness and vibrancy in your teaching? Do you crave studying and learning with a group of like-minded educators?

**If you do, be sure to add the  
2017 SongWorks Foundations Course  
to your calendar.**

SongWorks Certified Educator and MEI President-Elect, Dr. Taryn Raschdorf revealed some thought-provoking perspectives in one of her assignments for the SWC Foundations Course. I thought you might find it as stimulating as I do.



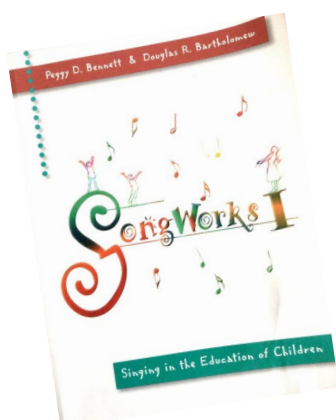
**Taryn Raschdorf**  
Virginia Beach, VA

"I am still learning about the SongWorks principles, the songs and games, and various teaching techniques, but there is one thing I have taken to heart. I do not want SongWorks to be applied to just one area of my life. I want the SongWorks principles to be foundational in my teaching, how I interact with students and colleagues, and something that just "is" who I am. Meaning, I do not want SongWorks to be the way I teach elementary school children, but how these children experience music. I do not want SongWorks to be a method I use in my choirs, but the way middle

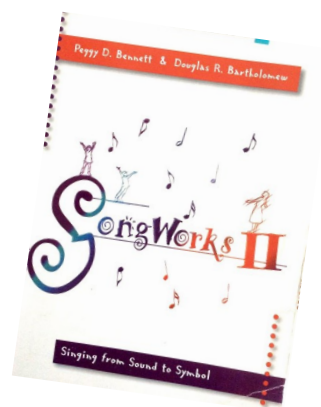
and high school students learn to listen to each other, understand music concepts, and sing. I do not want SongWorks to be the handbook I use to teach my college classes, but a lens through which pre-service teachers see the value of playfulness and how children interact with music. And finally, I do not want SongWorks to be a certification I can finally put on my Curriculum Vitae. Rather, I want SongWorks to be a framework through which I base future career decisions."

# SongWorks

by Peggy D. Bennett and Douglas R. Bartholomew



Available  
on Amazon.com



## ENGAGING TO THE LAST DAY

### Spring Activities

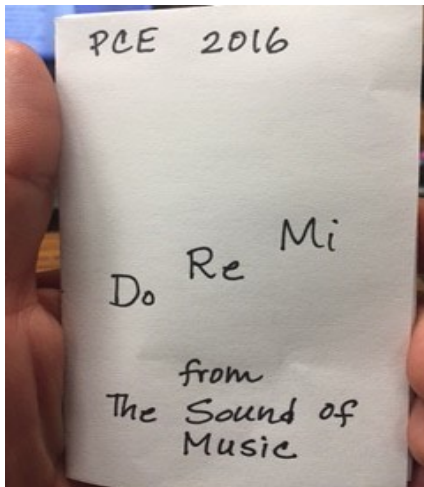
#### Do, Re, Mi!

The end of the school year is here! If you're like me, you are thinking of the things you might not have taught your students this year. I like to write down the things I didn't get to, to be sure and include them the following year. We have so many resources available to us these days: MEI newsletters, state organizations' workshops and conferences, college courses, series textbooks, Facebook groups, and many others. As the years go by, we create our own treasured lessons we like to return to each year. I am going to share one with you here.



**Vicky Suarez**  
Richardson, TX

This lesson is based on the song **Do-Re-Mi** from *The Sound of Music*, and I have taught it to grades K-2. It could span two or three weeks. My students come to music class twice a week for 45 minutes.



I begin by singing the song to the students, and some are familiar with it. I show students the video segments from the movie where Maria and the children sing the song while on the mountain and then while walking through Salzburg.

We can sing and play the melody of the song by using hand signs and pointing to syllables written on the board. I write the solfa vertically, (the "solfa ladder"), and also horizontally, and I point to the syllables as we sing.

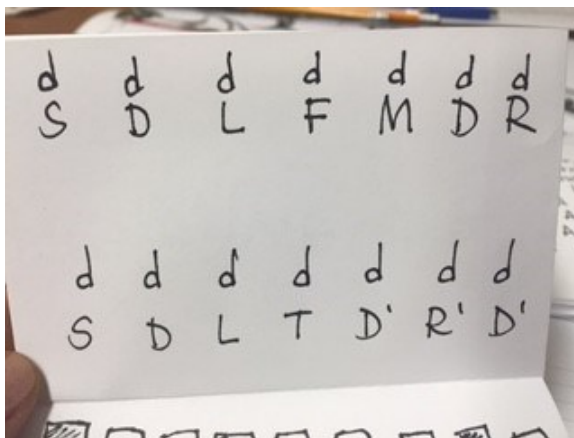
Sometimes we sing with the recording and sometimes without it. The point here is for the children to be very familiar with the song.

In order to play instruments along with the recording, I use the resonator bars. Mine are the red wooden blocks of wood with white or black metal bars on top. The recording is in the key of B-flat, so we use the black bars B-flat and E-flat ("Do" and "Fa").

I place the resonator bars in a row on the floor so the children can sit behind them, one student per bar. Make sure the bars are in the order of left to right/ low to high, so they correspond with what a xylophone or glockenspiel would look like from the children's perspective.



We sing the scale with syllables while I point to the children so they know when to play their notes. Then we play along with the recording. The recording I have lasts a little over five minutes. The children are usually very focused for this long time, even the ones who are not playing. The first class periods we play with the beginning of the song, the part that has "Do, a deer." But once they feel confident with this part, we move on to the other melody ("When you know the notes to sing, you can sing most anything."). We might begin class looking at the board while I teach them this part with solfege:



**So Do La Fa Mi Do Re**

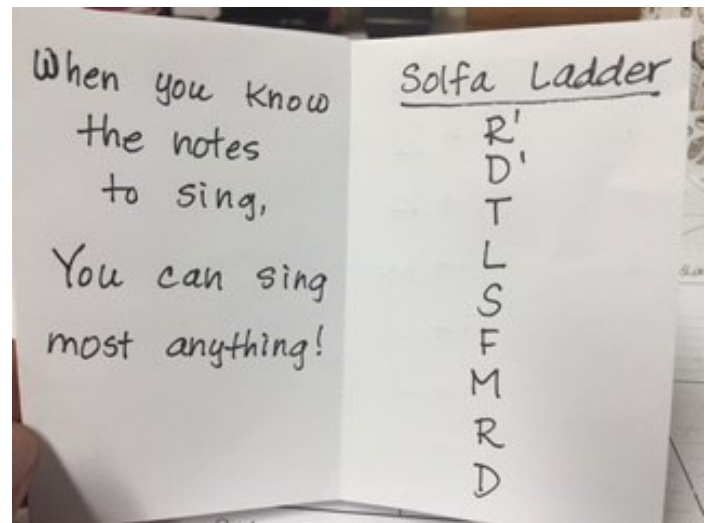
**So Do La Ti Do' Re' Do'**

I think the great fun of this lesson is playing along with the recording. I believe there is something really engaging with feeling like you are a part of all the music being made on the recording.

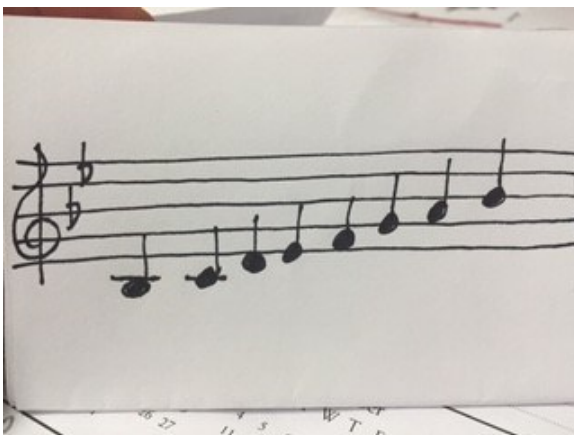
There is much musical learning going on in this lesson. The children are learning to recognize low and high within the context of a song and using the music language of solfege. They are being introduced to solfege and absolute pitch and how they relate to each other. They can visually see the relationship between the pitches from low to high both spatially in length. There is a great deal of inner hearing and anticipation going on as the students sing and wait for their note to happen so they know when to play.

I have found this lesson to be extremely engaging each time I use it. I once thought that because it was so much fun, it must not have much pedagogical heft. But I don't think that anymore! Now I can see how the lesson and recording make some complex ideas accessible in a playful way.

As a culmination of our Do-Re-Mi study, I make a form book for the kids to fold and take home. I've included photos here of the most recent form book I made for my kindergarten students. My students seem to love having a little book of their own that has elements of our song study. I enjoy being able to assess how well the students can track various aspects of the song notation when they are following the song in their own little book.



I hope you will find something fun from this lesson to share with your own students! Even if you don't do exactly what I did, maybe my thoughts will spark something you can create that will be meaningful to you and your students. I welcome your comments and questions ([vsuarez1965@gmail.com](mailto:vsuarez1965@gmail.com)).



**Vicky Suarez** teaches K-6 music at Prairie Creek Elementary in Richardson, Texas, and is in the Master of Music program at Southern Methodist University. A member of the first SongWorks Certification Class, Vicky has also completed Orff Schulwerk Level II. She was recently honored with the Texas Music Educators Association Scholarship and the Texas PTA Honorary Life Membership. Vicky and her husband, Rob, enjoy time with their blended family of five children.  
**2011 Emerging Pioneer, MEI Board Member**

## ENGAGING TO THE LAST DAY

### Spring Activities

#### Mysterious Fathoms Below

As the end of the year is in sight, my fifth grade students' attention and control of voice and body somehow seems to sink to mysterious fathoms below my expectations. Instead of fighting it—as I would in past years—I've shifted my goals for their participation. Instead of insisting on group composition projects, which last year's fifth graders adored, I've engaged this year's students with a new goal: one last sea shanty! We've played and studied many sea shanties throughout the year: **Seasick Sailor**, **Heave Ho, Three Pirates**, **Rain Rain**, and **Turn the Glasses Over**.



**Jake Harkins**  
Falls Church, VA

I wanted to spend the last few weeks of school 'playing' —literally and figuratively—with **Chanty Song**. However, this special group of fifth graders demonstrates that fast-action games are above their current threshold for respectful and successful participation. Still, as we are in the midst of SOL (Standards of Learning) testing, I knew the activity needed to include an opportunity to get their energy out in a non-locomotor manner, while remaining just competitive enough to create fresh excitement and buy-in.

I'll sing you a song of the king of the sea  
And it's heave to the starboard, we go!  
Where Triton is king and his merpeople sing in  
mysterious fathoms below.  
Fathoms below, below;  
Where Triton is king and his merpeople sing in  
mysterious fathoms below

I'll tell you a tale of the bottomless blue  
And it's heave to the starboard, we go!  
Brave sailor beware, for I lost my gold ring in  
mysterious fathoms below.  
Fathoms below, below;  
Brave sailor beware for I lost my gold ring in  
mysterious fathoms below.



Taking inspiration from the opening song of *The Little Mermaid*, I changed a few words to craft the tale of a sailor losing his gold ring at sea. Why? Well, I remembered a guessing game I had played as a child involving a gold ring passed around on a rope. It was much like the well-known **Closest Key** game, except the object being hidden was passed in front, not behind, us.



Additionally, the person in the center—guessing—could keep his/her eyes open during the singing and passing of the ring. This twist meant the singers (holding the rope and sliding the ring from fist to fist around the circle) had to be sneaky, careful, attentive, and focused.

For instant attention, I weaved the song into a twisted tale of the Flying Dutchman from 17th century nautical folklore. We discussed fathoms, sailing, and sea monsters. I purchased a nice thick white rope and huge gold “ring” (a brass nut) from the hardware store, and demonstrated how sailors hoist ropes on a ship. Forming a large circle, we sat and held the rope with both hands. To the pulse of the music we performed the motions “together, apart” with our fists around the rope. This large, expressive motion was the ticket—movement to get their energy out, without the need of students self-monitoring and negotiating group and personal space.



I'll sing you a song of the king of the sea and it's heave to the starboard we go



Where Tri-ton is King and his Mer-people sing in mys- ter i ous fathoms be - low



fathoms be - lo - w be - lo - w



Where Tri-ton is King and his Mer-people sing in mys- ter i ous fathoms be - low

Note: we did not sing it in this key. I arranged it in this range for facility on the recorder and triad study accompaniment on the xylophones. We sang it in many places of our voice, but usually cadenced somewhere between middle C and E. It has an extensive range, but the kids loved the challenge!

My fifth graders have really explored the nuances of the song game. The girls *and* boys alike enjoy making facial expressions while pretending to pass the small gold ring, when they don't really have it at all. They crave the subtle tricks of opening their fingers slightly and pretending to struggle to pass the ring, unseen, to their neighbor—capturing the guesser's attention—

when the ring is actually on the other side of the circle! They began to figure out that the more expressive they ALL were in their singing, expressions, excitement, and gestures/motions, the more difficult it was for the 'sailor' to find his/her gold ring when the song was over.

*"The more expressive they ALL were in their singing..."*

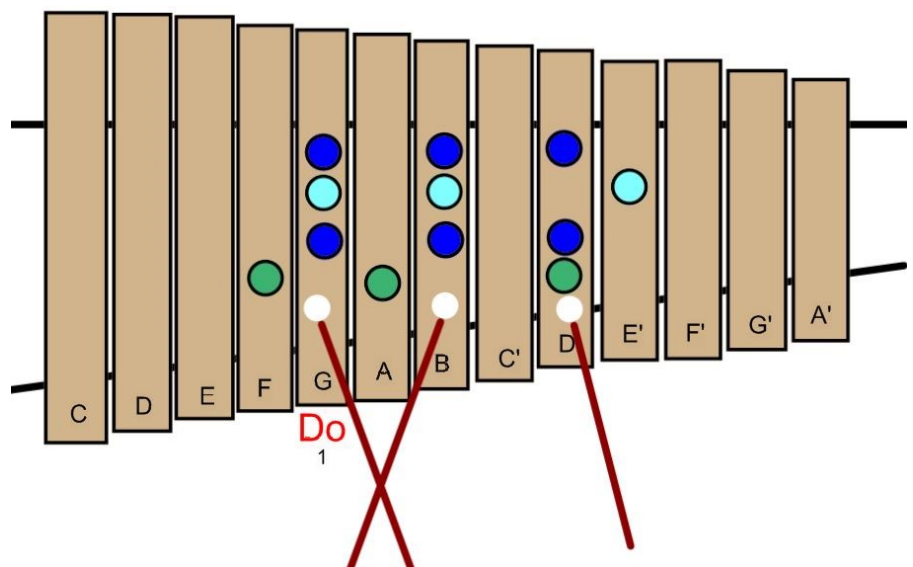
I've incorporated a variety of SongWorks strategies—antiphonning, mapping, chinning, song dots, solfege—to study stress patterns, anacrusis, phrasing, vocal production, etc. While parts of the melody rest lower in the voice, the phrase "Fathoms Be-lo-w, Be-lo-w" (S L T D' S S D' S) resonates so wonderfully in their upper register that many of the more macho students were able to access these notes without a second thought, embarrassment, or difficulty. We have begun extension-activities on instruments; studying familiar triads and their inversions to accompany the melody. So far this has proven to be engaging and successful. However, even just the song/game itself, with its playful nature, enticing lyrics, and haunting modal qualities, has my students hooked!

intro **1 6 1 6**

**1 6 1 6 1 6 1 6**

**1 6 1 6 1 5 1 5**

**1 6 1 6 1 6 1 6 1 5 1**



**Jake Harkins** is a General Music Specialist (PK-6) in Falls Church, Virginia, where he also conducts after-school ensembles for chorus and percussion. Jake has a BM in Percussion Performance and an MMT in Music Education from Oberlin Conservatory of Music. Drawing from the teachings of many approaches, Jake believes music activities foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, language study and acquisition, expressive communication, and confidence. **2012 Emerging Pioneer, MEI Board Member**

## MEI WEBSITE : GOOD NEWS!

### A new face for our Sturdy Songs Collection

Many of us have found it difficult to navigate through the Sturdy Song Collection on the MEI Website. Thus, we are giving it a facelift. Notice that the new postings have everything on one page.

- As you open your song choice, you will find the music score on the first page.
- Immediately under the score you can hear the song. Look for the icon near the singer's name.
- Next, find various activities to help experience the song.
- Finally, find study extensions, various activities, and resources.



Marilyn Winter  
Sun City, AZ

A few more songs have been added since the MEI Conference. You will not want to miss the activities for the beautiful song **Windy Weather**, many of which were contributed by one of our most gifted teachers, Sandy Murray.



As we move forward with the Study Song Collection **we need your feedback**. To help us maintain a site that will serve everyone, please answer the following questions. Cut and paste them into an email box, respond, and send to [mfw406@gmail.com](mailto:mfw406@gmail.com).

1. Do you find the Study Song Collection a valuable resource for your teaching?
2. Is there a song/s that you'd like to see posted that is not?
3. Do you have materials/ideas/a-ha moments to share about any of the songs?
4. How might this collection be of more value to you?
5. How might we improve the website as a whole?
6. Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_.

Thanks for your help.

Happy summer of re-creating,

*Marilyn Winter*



## 2016 MUSIC EDVENTURES LEADERSHIP

### *Board of Directors*



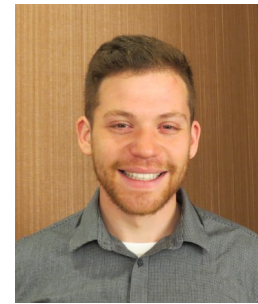
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## The Purpose of Music EdVentures, Inc.

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 by contacting Past President Samantha Smith at [samanthameese@gmail.com](mailto:samanthameese@gmail.com)

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Send to: Jeanette Potvin, Treasurer  
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News and Notes is the monthly communication of Music EdVentures, Inc. (MEI). Regular features will keep members and friends up to date on coming events and the latest teaching techniques, tips and strategies. Submissions are due on the 15th of the month prior to publication and may be submitted months in advance, indicating the month in which publication is preferred. The committee reserves the right to select material to be published according to length and appropriateness. Articles should be 200-325 words. Visuals should be scanned and submitted as pdf or jpg files. Submissions may be sent to [jeharkins@fcps.edu](mailto:jeharkins@fcps.edu) with the subject line "MEI Newsletter" and may be edited to accommodate space limitations.