

SONGWORKS

Educators Association

From the President

I hope this newsletter finds each of you safe and well. So much has happened since the last time I wrote this column. We were eagerly anticipating our conference, which, of course, was then cancelled. Everyone involved in conference planning was very disappointed about this, but also certain it was the right thing to do.

Unfortunately, we have also had to cancel the summer SongWorks Certification courses at River Falls, Wisconsin. And you may be wondering why I am still the president! At our April 1 meeting, the SongWorks Educators Association Board of Directors voted to keep all officers in place for a year since we were not able to meet in person at the conference. Members of SWEA are welcome to view all Board business, and the officer and committee reports, in the Members Access section of the website at www.songworkseducators.com. If you take a look, you'll see so much behind-the-scenes work that happens and keeps our organization running smoothly and moving forward. We can always use more volunteers! Please reach out to me or to another Board member and let us know if you'd like to help out.

It's likely that if you were teaching before the middle of March, you are now making lessons for remote learning. We've all learned so much about virtual meetings, making videos, and reaching our students from home. In such a difficult time, it's been very heartening to see the amazing creativity of the music teachers! So many of you are pushing out video lessons, making YouTube channels, and sharing ideas. If you visit our Facebook page, SongWorks Educators, you will see many wonderful ideas for reaching students via remote learning. Just this past week, my friend and SWEA Board Member Jake Harkins started a



Vicky Suarez
2020-2021 President
vicky@songworkseducators.com

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Thursday night virtual meeting to talk about ways we can keep SongWorks Principles and Practices in mind as we plan remote learning lessons. Reach out to Jake (jake@songworkseducators.com) or me (vicky@songworkseducators.com) if you'd like to join in this weekly meeting.

In making my own teaching videos, I'm keeping some things in mind :

Meaningful connection with my students is my goal, and songs, games, and masterworks we've already studied are my focus.

Speaking in a kind and natural way is more important than feeling like I have to be an entertainer. I'm imagining my students as I look into the camera.

I try to make each lesson interactive in some way: hand signs, tapping, movement, singing, guessing a secret song, following a music map. Remember that students are being asked to stare at a screen for long periods of each school day, so doing things that are engaging in a different way can be a relief for them.

Thank you to all who were planning to attend our conference, and thank you to Registrar Alice Nordquist, who has been refunding conference registration fees. Many of you generously donated your registration back to SWEA, and we thank you! Please stay tuned for information about Conference 2021, back again in Dallas in April. Can't wait to see you then! Stay safe and be well.

Vicky

The Board of Directors of SWEA met for their quarterly meeting on April 1. At that time they voted to freeze the Officer and Board positions for a year because of the cancellation of the 2020 SW Conference. Officers and Board members agreed to continue in their positions for another year, until we can all meet in person at the 2021 Conference in Dallas, set for April 8-10.

From Betty Phillips, Executive Director, SW Certification

It is with great sadness that we announce the need to cancel our 2020 *SongWorks* Summer Certifications Courses held on the campus of The University of Wisconsin at River Falls. We cannot in good conscience risk the health of faculty, students, and children during this pandemic.

Although the virus takes away the opportunity to gather together, face to face, hand to hand, it cannot take away our commitment:

The purpose of *SongWorks* 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:

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

To this end, we are working to develop ways to continue working and learning from each other wherever we are.

Stay tuned!

I SongWorks in Action ~ II SongWorks for Musicality



Bring Playful Teaching
and Vibrant Learning
to your classroom!!!

SongWorks
Summer Certification Courses
Level I & II

University of Wisconsin at River Falls
July 13 - 17, 2020
Details songworkseducators.com

**SONG
WORKS**

CANCELLED

Goodbye to a Dear Friend!

Peggy Bennett & Marilyn Winter

On March 11, 2020 our beloved friend, Betty Hoffmann left this life. She was 96, a great friend, an expert cook and baker, a contagious laughter, an organizer extraordinaire, a lover of all things Education Through Music, Music EdVentures, and SongWorks Educators, and especially the people in this organization.

Betty was a proud descendent of Montana pioneer N.J. Bielenberg. She loved Montana and was eager to tell everyone about the history of her family. She eagerly shared her belief that from the bramble bushes at the edge of the forest to the tall tree tops of the mighty evergreens there is a magic. A magic of how each thing acts as support for every other living thing therein. She loved her wonderful little cabin on the lake and the wild flowers that charmed her so. At one time Betty hosted Mrs. Zoltan Kodaly in that little cabin.



In the late 1970s, Betty, as President of the Montana General Music Teachers Association, invited Mary Helen Richards to be the featured clinician for Montana's annual conference. With Mary Helen was our dear Fleurette Sweeney. Mary Helen and Fleurette were immediately drawn to the spirit of Betty's stride and how it solidly embodied the notion of being grounded to the earth. They often proclaimed that Betty was "Montana personified." **Indeed, that she was!**

Not long after this first encounter, Betty retired from teaching in the public schools and went to work full time for the Richards Institute. Betty taught Education Through Music courses throughout the NW United States and SW Canada. She spent time in Portola Valley, CA with the Richards Institute where she worked alongside Mary Helen, Fleurette, and others of the Institute staff.

Sometime in the late 1980's Betty invited Montana Education through Music friends to spend a weekend at her house. Eight educators came to that meeting. They studied, shared food and ideas, and formed an everlasting bond of friendship. Betty, encouraged these teachers to document their ideas which, with the help of Peggy Bennett, were eventually published as SongPlay. Betty was the driving force behind this project.

Out of these Montana meetings grew the organization of Music EdVentures, now known as SongWorks Educators. Teachers all over Northwestern US, Southwest Canada, and Japan attended this event. Their common belief in how children best learned drew members to this organization for support as professionals and as friends. Betty was a driving force behind these endeavors.

Betty enlivened any gathering with her enthusiasm, optimism, and her sense of good humor. She approached all situations with integrity. These qualities created enduring friendships with people of all ages. She was as devoted to her friends as they were to her.

The following comments, contributed by those who knew Betty, tell a story of who she was as a person, teacher, mentor, and friend.

~ I'm sure our life-long love and enjoyment of music was profoundly shaped by Mrs. Hoffmann. I can still sing dozens of songs I learned from Betty. I use her teaching ideas nearly every day as a music teacher.

Nancy Labbe

~ It was always a great day at school when we got to go to music class. She had songs for every holiday.

Stephanie Johns

~ She had such a wonderful way with kids. After all these years, I still can't get out of my head the way she would count the rests when directing along. "Zap, zap, zap-a-diddy-zap-zap" I often sing this and my family just looks at me like I've lost it. Such a sweet woman. **Lisa Nesman Folberg**

~ Beyond our teaching, she was a wise life-mentor for us. She had a special, delightful friendship with our husbands, too. We'll always remember our dear Betty, "Mother Hoffmann." **Anna Langness**

~ I have a hole in my heart! What an incredible woman she was and I am sure still is! I love her to pieces. She gave me so much and I hope the laughs we had together are still going on. A resplendent sense of humor and a magnificent zest for life and for the people who were dear to her. **Carol Nelson-Rae**

~ What a blessing, our dear Betty Hoffmann. Such a strong woman with a special place in her heart for you! I think of her often with such gratitude for all she shared, the foundations she laid. My heart is full of Betty and I can hear us singing to her: (to the tune of Hallelujah Chorus) Betty Hoffmann, Betty Hoffmann.....etc. **Pam Vellutini**

~ Loved her humor and always remember my falling into her carrot patch. I also think of her when I make her rhubarb pie. **Jody Kerchner**

~ Betty was very kind to us from Japan, and we were welcomed with her home made zucchini pan cake when we visited the conference every year. She was so great lady and I never forget her. Rest in peace, please. **Yuriko Ishikawa**

~ I will always remember walking into Betty's kitchen for a breakfast of homemade rolls the first time I met her. Mary Opland Springer, Signe Cook and I journeyed to Stratford with her. It was the first ETM course for Signe and for me. I'll always remember staying at her lake place. Beloved Betty! **Martha Wheeler**

~ Betty was an amazing person, one of my all-time favorite people in this world, and very dear to my heart. I feel so lucky to have known her and shared in her laughter and joy of life. She was one of the very best. **Suzanne Schrift**

~ Oh, how I loved that lady! I met her at an MMEA conference. She recruited me to the ETM classes in Bozeman MT. For me, ETM opened up a whole new way of learning and fun. **Joni Bell**

~ Betty was my mentor and guide in my early years of teaching. I valued knowing she was a mere 40 miles away and would be there at a moments notice if I needed her. The days we spent exploring Southwest Montana with Betty, Dennis, John, Harley, and Stephen were magical and are memories I hold very dear. **Marilyn Winter**

Goodbye dear friend. Perhaps someday we'll be all together again, singing, "All together again, we're here, we're here!" You will remain forever in our hearts.

Looby Loo Scores and Scrambles

Playful Teaching - Vibrant Learning! What an inspirational tagline! Yet we easily fall into 'habitual teaching' where we take the same route to achieve a specific learning goal.

This group of lessons, which I would have presented at our SWEA 2020 Conference, is suggested as a pathway to vibrant learning. The pacing of each segment is critical to the success and engagement for the learners. Only you can determine how long to stay on a task, can decide which steps are no longer needed for a group of students, and know which challenges might be appropriate for a specific class.

The following lessons suggest several experiences for students to build song analysis skills through whole group, small group and partner tasks. The ultimate goal is to be skillful in reading and musical in performing several different scores for "Looby Loo."

Teacher dialog is in quotations. Teacher suggestions, things to think about or to prepare ahead of time have no added punctuation



Terolle Turnham, MN

Looby Loo

Chorus

Here we go loo - by loo. Here we go loo - by light.

Fine

Here we go loo - by loo, all on a Sat - ur - day night. I

The image shows two lines of musical notation for the song 'Looby Loo'. The first line is labeled 'Chorus' and contains two phrases: 'Here we go loo - by loo.' and 'Here we go loo - by light.' The second line is labeled 'Fine' and contains the phrase 'Here we go loo - by loo, all on a Sat - ur - day night. I'. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 8/8. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Lessons for Singing and Reading Scores

Rhythmic Study

"You have probably noticed that sometimes I present a Secret Song by simply showing you the movement that we know. That is a score for the song. It is a concrete presentation of the song that may stimulate your mind to recall what the sound is."

The example below recalls arm gestures that rise to the right for the first and third phrases of the chorus for Looby Loo. Gestures for the second phrase descend to the left. The cadence phrase looks like a cowboy lassoing with one hand, the other hand rests at the hip, and both hands land on the thighs with the word "night."

“Here is an example from our shared history.” Teacher demonstrates the movement students developed for “Looby Loo” silently singing the song in her mind.

“What song came to mind as you watched the movement score unfold?”

Have students sing aloud all the songs that they suggest and then have them silently check as the teacher does the “Secret Song” gestures once again.

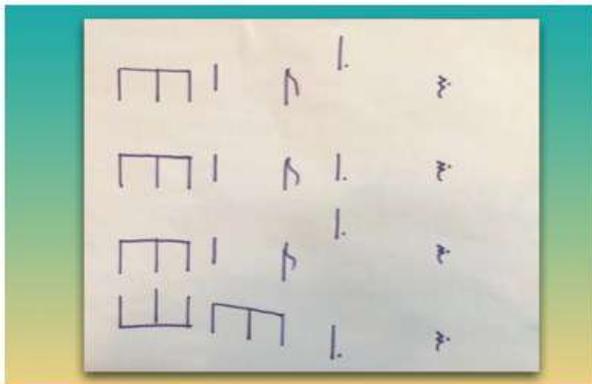
“Now that you have identified “Looby Loo” and we’ve sung it together and antiphoned several times, here is your task: Antiphon with your study buddy taking turns as leader, singing the text and tapping.”

Teacher leads antiphoning, gesturing to herself to sing “dudadi dudadi du” at the cadence. Teacher invites students to try that cadence on their own, looking at the teacher when they have perfected the cluster. Students could antiphon with partners again, using the text or a one syllable sound (zip, ping, bop) until reaching the cadence to sing the rhythm syllables.

“Listen as I sing the rhythm syllables for the whole song. Join in as you are able.”

“Sing the rhythm syllables without me. John and Susan will be listening to check which phrases you articulate with the greatest clarity.” Following the singing, John and Susan describe what they heard.

“Prepare to song dot at the board by dotting the rhythm from your left shoulder to your wrist and singing the rhythm syllables.”



Once several students have song dotted the score at the board and others have read what was written, show this score.

“What do you notice about this score?”

“Does anything surprise you or cause you to be curious?”

“What will you sing as you track the score?”

“Could you tap lines 1 & 3 on your lap, lines 2 & 4 on your hands?”

“What performance challenge would you suggest?”

“Could you sing and tap this in a round?”

Tonal Study

Another day, recall “Looby Loo” asking students to tongue the tune. Removing the text and using one vowel sound helps students hear the tones more clearly. Challenge them to show the contour of the phrases. The arm gestures that were used in the “Secret Song” activity align with the contour of each phrase so that may come out as they are given this challenge.

“Where does your voice sing the same pitch three times?” “here we go...”

“Sing that cluster using “Do Do Do” with “too” as the tonguing sound for the rest of the song.”

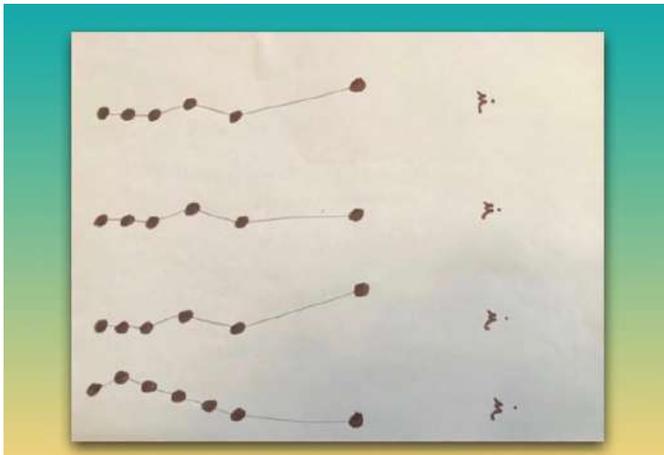
Add this to the cadence: "SLSFMRD." Invite students to practice it on their own 3 times.

If scale patterns are new, try "all on a FMRD."

"We're going to use the cadence solfa as an ostinato. This half of the class will repeat the cadence solfa over and over while the other half sings "DDD looby loo. DDD looby light. DDD looby loo SLSFMRD." Once that is accomplished, the groups exchange parts.

Guide students to identify that phrase 1 and 3 have the same tonal pattern - DDDMDS while the second has DDDMDR.

Another day, show and study the following two scores.



These dots are not in a straight line across the page. What reasons come to mind to explain.

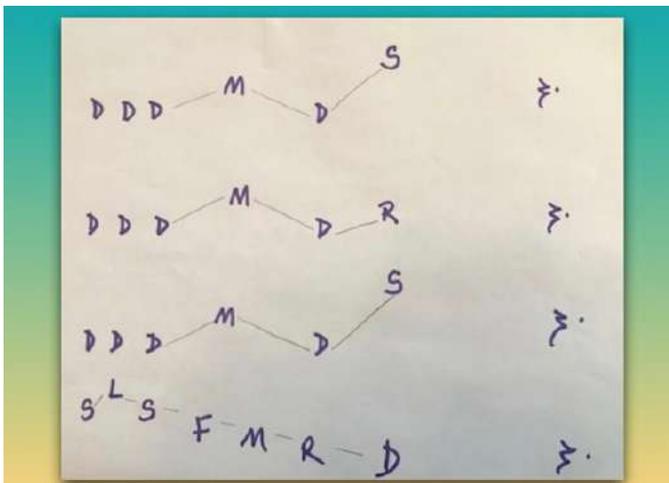
Guide the study by drawing out of the students what they recognize.

Where is the DDD cluster?

Where is the leap up?

Students can sing rhythm syllables, "too" or the text as they track the song.

"What has changed on this score?"



"What will you sing?"

"Who will guide us at the score?"

"Try singing and using your pentahand. Pinkie, ring finger and middle finger touch each other for the DRM cluster. A gap is kept open between middle and pointer fingers. The pointer and thumb are on top as SL. Point with your other hand touching each spot as the tune suggests"

"Find a partner. Play the song on your partners pentahand as you both sing the solfa." "Try the same task with your eyes closed." Older students love this!

"Looking at the score once again, people on my left will sing lines 1 & 3. People on my right will sing line 2. All students will sing line 4 together." Students use hand sings as rehearsed

"Think of another way to divide the tasks. Is there a part that we will do in our inner hearing? Who will teach us their plan?"

“You are ready. I will be listening for clarity and accuracy on the tone names.” Give feedback about what you hear.

If more practice is needed, add variety to the task by inviting four people to a group. Students will need to decide how to reach one another, who will ‘play’ my hand and whose hand will I ‘play.’

On another day: “This score gives us more conventional notation information.”

“What do you know?”

“Come to point to the symbol and name it.”

“Sing the solfa syllables.”

“Use your hand staff with D on your ring finger.”

“Which finger will be M...S...?”

“Where is L...F... R?”

“Play your hand staff and sing the solfa.”



On another day: **Score Scramble**



Preparation for the study:

1. Prior to this lesson, duplicate enough copies of each score (from the scores in this article) so that you will have enough for your largest class.
2. Cut the scores into strips.
3. Place four different score strips in an envelope. Example: one strip shows rhythm, another song dots, others conventional staff.

Decide which of the following game and study versions is best suited to your class.

GAME 1 - Reading and Constructing Scores

Preparation: all lines of the song will be present in each envelope but there will be a variety of symbol systems included. (stick notation, song dot score showing melodic contour, solfa score showing contour, and conventional score)

Each student will be in a group of four. Each group will receive an envelope with strips of paper inside. Each strip shows a different line of the song, though some may duplicate a line.

Each student takes one paper strip. The student studies her strip to decide what line of the song it is- 1, 2, 3 or 4. She scurries to find classmates from other groups who have the same type of score parts for the rest of the song, i.e., if her strip is a solfa score, she finds others with solfa scores. (Game 1) These new groups of students arrange themselves according to their song strips to match the order in the song.

Performance:

Each group sings through their score to make certain that it is arranged to match the song.

Students are assigned the task of singing the song in two different ways. Choose from the following: song dots (too, too), rhythm syllables, solfa syllables.

Game 2 - Creating, Performing and Assessing

Preparation: the envelope will NOT include all lines of the song and will have a variety of symbol systems. When making a group, it is NOT necessary to have symbol systems that match.

Each group can add expression, form and texture. Students can generate lists of musical terms for expression such as crescendo, decrescendo, forte, pianissimo; for texture - rounds and ostinati; for form - introductions or codas. Students must remember what they create and perform it. The teacher will make a video recording of each group performing their version in the "recording studio" which might be a corner of the room or a closet. The audience can listen with their eyes closed, imagining the score that they are hearing. They open their eyes to find out if they saw it correctly.

Performance:

Each group sings through their score to make certain that it is arranged to match the song.

Students are assigned the task of singing the song in two different ways. Choose from the following: song dots (too, too), rhythm syllables, solfa syllables.

Assessment activities

1. To assess recognition of compositional techniques, students (individually or in partners) can identify and list all of the elements used in each performance they view.

2. To assess the performances, classes could watch videos of each group, identifying from a list those qualities that are present in the performance such as: clear diction, singing in tune, remembering their variation with a solid performance, singing the decrescendo evenly, giving breath for the entire phrase, producing the note at the end of the phrase with support and accuracy, etc.)

This experience offers the students the chance to synthesize learning from the various lessons described in this article. It is playful and vibrant! Students use their knowledge to gather in groups, to use their decoding skills, to make musical choices, to rehearse, and finally to perform.

This article was developed with the aid of feedback from Anna Langness and Marilyn Winter.

A Round for Earth Day

This year is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, a day set apart to raise awareness of ecological issues and our place in the world. Organized by congresspeople and environmental activists, the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970 saw 20 million Americans gather to protest environmental degradation and was the start of contemporary environmental awareness. (Information from earthday.org)

In my classroom, I've found that I use a lot of nature themed songs in the spring to get my students thinking about going outside and learning about the environment. I didn't intend to do this when I started teaching, but songs with outdoor themes just always seemed right for this time of year. My Kindergarteners seem to spend a lot of time on the farm in April and May, and my Third graders always sing "This Pretty Planet." This round is a beautiful piece of music that offers a wonderful mixture of round singing, movement opportunities, and discussion possibilities. I loved this song as a kid, and so it feels extra special to share it with my students.



Anna Shelow, OH

This Pretty Planet

(ASCAP)

Tom Chapin and John Forster

Part One

This pre - tty pla - net spin - ning through space, You're a
gar - den, You're a har - bor, You're a ho - ly place.

Part Two

Gol - den sun go - ing down, gen - tle blue gi - ant spin us a - round.

Part Three

All through the night, safe 'til the mor - ning light.

Introduction and Discussion

When I first introduce the song, I project the photograph “Earthrise” on my board. The students take a look while I sing and see if they can guess where this picture was taken. Many of the children have trouble believing that this is a real photograph, let alone that it was taken from near the moon! We discuss the history of the first photograph of the Earth from space:

- How does seeing the Earth from far away change your ideas about the Earth?
- Why weren't there any pictures of the Earth from far away before 1968?
- Why doesn't the Earth look like a circle in this picture?

After our discussion, I teach the song through antiphonning, and I project the lyrics on my board. We go through unfamiliar words; usually “harbor,” “holy,” and “til” come up. The first few days we work with this song, we all sing in unison.



Movement

The next step is really nailing all of those words. I've found that it is difficult for students to remember the lyrics and get them in the right order. To help with this, I have the students break into groups and come up with hand or body motions to go along with the song. Be ready for lots of spinning! Then each group shares their ideas and we vote on motions to use as a whole class. This activity allows the students to use another of their senses to internalize the song, while they sing and think through it.

Round Singing

After a few lessons with this song I play Tom Chapin's recording of it from his album *Family Tree*. It is sung once in unison and then in a three-part round. We work on listening and singing along with one part while still hearing the others. The students enjoy breaking up into three teams to try singing with their friends. The groups are almost always uneven, and that gives us a good chance to talk about adjusting our dynamics to the situation. I motivate the students to get it as tight as possible by dangling the carrot of singing for their classroom teacher. We want to make it the best we can be because it is a gift they are sharing with the teacher.

Conclusion

I love this song and teach it for many reasons: it sounds beautiful, has musical flow, opportunities for discussion, movement, round singing, performance practice, and did I mention that it sounds beautiful? For all of the educational opportunities in this piece, it is foremost a wonderful opportunity for your students to feel the joy of singing a beautiful piece of music together. I know that many of us are not seeing our students much these days, but I hope that you can use this piece to connect and enjoy music together even from a distance.

A Note from the Editor:

With the new normal of distance learning in place for all of us, I'd like to offer some ideas for how the activities shared in this month's newsletter could be adapted to your virtual classroom.



Ruthanne Parker, PA

LOOBY LOO

- This song would work well as part of a series of asynchronous video lessons. A lot of activities presented in this article are still accessible for you and your students!
- When you are presenting this lesson in video format don't forget to ask some of the questions suggested in each unfolding and leave a pause for students to answer.
- Whether this is a new song or prior knowledge, students may enjoy moving at home to this song and sharing the movement with their families.
- Score Scramble: If you are able, create graphics for the different phrases of this song and insert them into a text box on Google Slides. Have students click and drag the phrases in order onto the slide.
- If your district is requiring grades or participation documentation, consider an exit ticket. This could be as simple as one or two questions for students to answer based on what you anticipate they would be able to articulate after watching your video.

THIS PRETTY PLANET

- Earth Day doesn't have to be just one day! This song would be great to use all through spring. You can find This Pretty Planet sung as a round on SWEA member Danielle Solan's YouTube channel (below), so students can choose a part to sing along with.
- To set up the song you could post the photo of earth as seen from space on your virtual learning platform the day or week before you plan to share the song and have students share ideas for what the new song may be about.
- Students can still create movements for each section and share with you what they created by submitting video or even just text.
- Do you use the app Acapella? This song would lend itself nicely to that format.

While the teaching landscape and our new role as remote educators looks very different, the need for connection with our students remains the same. As we embark on these last few weeks of school I encourage all of us to keep in mind how we can actively engage our students in Playful Teaching, Vibrant Learning, from our home to theirs.

Check out these resources for online teaching from SongWorks Teachers around the world!



Vicky Suarez, TX
[Vicky's youtube channel](#)



Jeanette Potvin, MN
[Mrs. Potvin's Music Room](#)



Max Mellman, NJ
[Max's youtube channel](#)



Molly Feigal, MN
[Molly's youtube channel](#)



Jake Edward, VA
[Jake's General Music site](#)



Danielle Solan and Laura Lorentzen, Hong Kong
[Danielle and Laura's youtube channel #1](#)
[Danielle and Laura's youtube channel #2](#)

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The password for the secure *Members Access* area of the SWEA website will soon be updated. Members who have renewed their membership within the past year will receive the updated password in an email from the Registrar. In order to keep your membership current, please visit our [Membership Renewal](#) page. If you are uncertain about the date of your last dues payment, or if you have any other questions about your membership, please contact Registrar Alice Nordquist:
registrar@songworkseducators.com.

Thank you for your support of the SongWorks Educators Association!