

Ice Skates and Snowflakes

Embodying, Encoding, and Decoding Sound

Skating by Vince Guaraldi

Original pathway created by Kathy Cartwright, MN

Engage

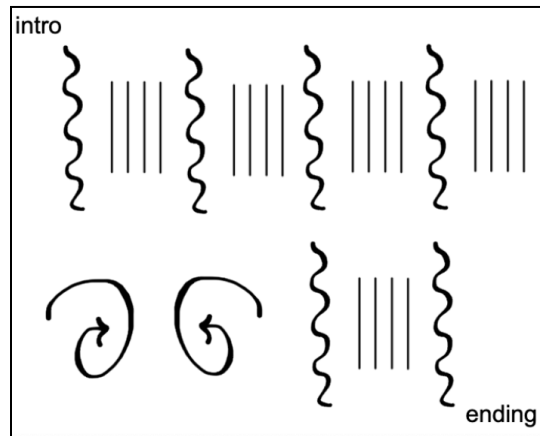
- Show Peanuts skating picture.
- Are there characters you recognize? What are they doing? Is there anything surprising?
- Vince Guaraldi wrote some special music to go with this skating scene...

Embody

- Movement is a visual symbol of the clusters of sound within the song.
- Imagination and movement provide playful repetition, allowing students to embody the sound as they respond to what they are hearing.
- Pretend to put on cold weather clothes
- Wiggle snow fingers down
- Brush hands together: “Let’s_ go_ skat_ ing_”
- Do a fancy skate turn

Encode and Decode

- The ideograph (picture score) represents the clusters of sound within the song (as well as the movement!).
- These simple symbols and lines can be created (encoded) in real time, as the music is heard. The reading (decoding) of the score provides more opportunities to connect the visual to the aural.



Extensions

- Watch short [video clip](#) from *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. We hear *Skating*, but what are the children *actually* doing?
- Improvisation: Do your own skating moves during the jazz improv section, and be ready for the ice skates and snowflakes to return at the end!
- Compare Vince Guaraldi’s version of *Skating* to [Christophe Beck’s version](#). Does the picture score work for both versions? What instruments do you hear?

Little Snowflake by Troy McDonald and Devon Thagard

Engage Listening and Movement

- Listen for words that start with “S” in the song. (snowflake, sky)
- Create actions for key words. (snowflake, little, falling)
- Brainstorm other places the snowflake could land. (eyelash, knee, dog, car)

Invitation Game

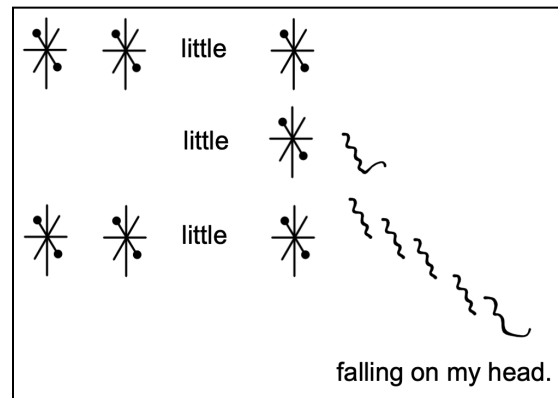
- One student moves around the student circle while doing the actions. On the final cadence, the student stops behind the closest classmate, touches their shoulders and asks: “Would you like to come with me?” or “Would you like a turn?”

Guessing Game

- Students secretly pass a little snowflake around the circle during the song. At the end of the song, the guesser opens their eyes, chooses a student, and asks (singing), “Is it in your hand?” Student answers (singing), “It’s not in my hand” or “Yes, it’s in my hand!”

Symbolizing Sound

- Remember: Movement is a symbol!
- Embodying the sound allows score reading (decoding) to be satisfying and successful.
- This blended picture/line score is arranged so the repeating words are stacked, allowing patterns to stand out clearly.
- This layout is similar to the way poetry sometimes appears.
- What do you notice? Are there parts that repeat? Follow the score with your finger as you sing.



Melody Study

- Change the snowflake actions to **So Mi** solfa hand signs.
- Find the hand signs on the solfa ladder and name them.
- Sing the song, replacing the snowflake lyrics with So Mi.
- Replace the final words of the half and final cadence with Re and Do: “Falling from the **Re**” and “Falling on my **Do**.”
- Play the solfa notes on xylophones or recorders, and sing the rest of the lyrics.

