03:361 Computers

Orff and Kodály

Elementary Music Methods

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Orff and Kodály in Action: A Happy Grade 2 Music Class
When teaching elementary music classes, several philosophies and programs help direct teachers in each class. The most popular methods are Orff and Kodály. Orff is a philosophy that teachers apply in their everyday life, whereas Kodály provides a learning sequence for the music curriculum. Teachers may choose to implement none, only one, or aspects of both. However, completely combining both Orff and Kodály is not recommended, as trying to order Orff destroys its philosophy and Kodály is pointless without its sequence. Educators should examine Orff, Kodály, and the other programs, like Dalcroze Eurhythmics, choose what aspects suit them best, and see if it works in the classroom.

The German composer, Carl Orff, is mainly known for designing his instrumentarium, which is used in his Orff-Schulwerk courses. More importantly, Carl Orff developed the technique behind music education during the 1920's and 1930's. The Orff philosophy became extremely popular in the 1960's. A basic understanding for music, as outlined by Orff, can be established from a child's inherent abilities for melody and rhythm. In addition, the Orff method is closely linked to a child's world of play and allows students to explore musical aspects, naturally leading to a more complex understanding of music. This carefully planned program reflects a child's natural development and discourages adult influence. Children acquire a musical
understanding by infusing the use of instruments with improvisation. Orff recommends beginning with non-pitched percussion and progressing to pitched instruments, such as recorders. The Orff system advances through speech patterns, moving rhythmically, simple tunes, pentatonic melody, and concludes with major/minor scales. Each step of the technique also follows a process: imitation, exploration, improvisation and literacy. Overall, the main premise of the Orff Method is for children to have opportunities to explore before literacy is studied.

**Kodály**

**Philosophy**

Zoltan Kodály was a composer and educator who collected authentic Hungarian folk songs with Béla Bartók in the early 20th century. He generated principles to use in music education. These principles include:

1. Beginning music education as early as possible
2. Using the highest quality music possible
3. That music is for everyone, not just the elite
4. Music programs should begin with their culture’s folk songs
5. The voice should be the foundation of music learning
6. Literacy is the primary key for vocal independence
7. Experience a topic before introducing notation
8. The learning sequence should be child-centered
**Tools and Techniques**

The Kodály system uses songs from students’ own cultures. The original Hungarian curriculum uses many folk songs that Kodály collected and composed. Authentic classical music of superior quality is also used, but in higher-level classes. Kodály uses the Curwen Hand Signs with the Dalcroze solfege symbols to teach relationships between pitches, and eventually melody and sight singing. This program moves through sol-fa in a specific sequence beginning with so, me, la, and then progressing through do, re, and the remaining tones. Kodály also employs the Chêvé rhythm syllables of ta, ti-ti, and to-o to teach note values. Singing is critical to this philosophy and instruments are not introduced until students have a solid understanding of music by way of vocalization. Like Orff, when teaching via the Kodály method, there is a four-step process to follow: preparation, awareness, reinforcement, evaluation. There is a learning progression for students as well; hear/perform – infer/derive – hear/construct/notate – read – create. Kodály is sequential in all areas of teaching music yet emphasizes opening the beauty of music to children. The Kodály method is easy to implement and can provide structure in a curriculum that lacks it.
### A Kodály Sequence for Melody in Grade One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Prepare</th>
<th>Make Conscious</th>
<th>Reinforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Higher and Lower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>So-Mi</td>
<td>Higher and Lower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>La-So-Mi</td>
<td>Highest and Lowest</td>
<td>Higher and Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>La-So-Mi</td>
<td>So-Mi on staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>La-So-Mi Staff</td>
<td>Higher and Lower Staff, hand signs</td>
<td>So-Mi on staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>So-Mi-So -(So)-Mi</td>
<td>Full Staff</td>
<td>C,F,G do on staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>S-L-S-M; SSLLSSMM</td>
<td>La on staff; hand sign</td>
<td>SMS(S)M staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>SMLSM; SSMLSSM</td>
<td>Mi-La</td>
<td>SLSM; SSLLSSMM on staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Do, Re</td>
<td></td>
<td>M-L on staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Orff and Kodály have greatly affected the way music is taught. Orff encourages a free-flowing application of his philosophy. Kodály is structured and very strict about his sequences. Aspects of both methods can be related to teaching elementary music, however trying to use Orff and Kodály in totality is not recommended. If this is the case, it will be to the detriment of either Orff or Kodály, and possibly both. It is suggested that teachers review both methods and decide what facets suit them best.
References


