

AN EXPLANATORY OVERVIEW OF THE "APPENDIX"

Finding clear musical examples for your students' conceptual development can be a big job. Beginning teachers frequently do not know where to begin. The lists in this "Appendix" were compiled to help you as you proceed through the text and to serve as a resource when you teach. Although the lists are not comprehensive, they will be a convenient resource when you need songs and listening examples for class assignments and for bringing music into the lives of your students.

SONG EXAMPLES

The songs in the "Appendix" are grouped K – 2, 2 – 4 and 4 – 6 to correspond to the Sample Conceptual Curriculum. There are two lists for each of the groups: (1) an alphabetized song title list with check-list indications of the broad conceptual category for which the song is exemplary and (2) a conceptual list in which the broad categories are broken into specific teaching aspects with "Descriptive Comments" providing conceptual development information for every song.

The lists could be helpful not only if you teach music or follow up a music teacher's lessons, but if you include music in the study of other curricular subjects. If you see the title of a song appropriate for the study topic, you could then see a conceptual focus that could be the basis for a student activity. You could select a topic-appropriate song from the alphabetical list, see the concept focus in the concept list, go to Chapter 13 and look at the Condensation chart for a performance activity and then read the Chapter 13 text for information on presenting it to your students.

The songs in the Appendix lists were included because they:

1. provide a clear example for the conceptual development indicated;
2. have been known to appeal to children of the indicated grade level(s);
3. are easily aurally accessible.

In this case, being "easily aurally accessible" means that you can hear the songs performed on

1. recordings found in elementary schools, particularly those that accompany basal series books;
2. recorded song collections for children available in libraries and/or inexpensively obtained wherever recordings are sold;
3. the internet.

The quality of the performances always should be considered. The performances on basal series recordings almost always are musically appropriate and well performed with tune and words easy to hear. Often, children are singing them. You can look at the words in the comparable book as you follow the notation for the rhythm and melody. These recordings could be played for your students to help them to learn the song, improve their singing or listen for a specific component.

The quality of performances in song collections varies. Many are excellent; some leave much to be desired. Chances are that you will be able to learn a song by listening to this type of recording and looking at lyrics usually provided. How-

ever, you might not want to share all the recorded performances with your students. Similarly, you might want to change the tempo and/or dynamics in specific songs to make them musically appropriate before singing them to your class.

An online search brings additional factors into making choices. To begin finding a song performance online, search for “the title of the song + song or song performance.” Searching just by song title could yield the text without a performance. In some cases, “kid’s song” will be helpful because there may be adult versions not suitable for classroom use. Also, adding the name of your video service might lead to animated or live performances suitable for sharing with your students.



Most times this initial search will yield several sites with performances. How do you choose? Most likely, you’ll have to watch and listen to several renditions. The quality will vary extremely. Definitely you will find some that are excellent, performed by elementary children who sing in tune with clear diction. Animation accompanies some of the primary grade songs. Songs for intermediate grades could be sung by authentic performers. You’ll even find performances by adult choirs. Sadly, you will hear some performances that are so bad that you cannot determine either the tune or the words. If you can clearly hear the tune but can’t understand the words, do another search for the name of the song with “text” at the end. In yet other cases, the song performance will not be musically appropriate. That is, the tempo and/or dynamics may not be suitable for the conveying the intent of the song. Use your understanding in making decisions.

In using the internet, there is yet another issue. As you listen to different performances, you probably will hear variations in the tune and words of the same song. Do not be alarmed. Most of the Appendix songs are folk songs that have been passed on aurally. Like the “telephone” game in which the sentence that begins the game and the one that ends the game are different, songs change along the way. That’s the way it is with folk songs. However, if you’re going to present the song to your students, you’ll have to choose one tune and one set of words and stick with them. Be alert to contradictions between the “Descriptive Comments” for a song in the “Appendix” and the song you hear. If the two don’t seem to align, most likely the description was based on a song version different from the one you are hearing. In that case, you can change the conceptual focus, find the version that matches the description or move on to another example.

The fact is that finding a song online might not be as easy as you had anticipated. That does not mean that you shouldn’t look. Just know that it could take some time and effort particularly if you are searching for a performance to share with your students.

As you explore resources, you will locate favorite sources and songs. You’ll find some of the songs that continue to be students’ favorites year after year. Other songs might appeal to only certain classes. You’ll find some songs that clearly “make the point” so you’ll want to remember them. As you teach, you’ll modify the “Appendix” lists, asterisking some songs and crossing out others, adding songs you’ve found from other sources and songs for specific occasions. You will build your own lists of songs and maybe put them into resource files. For now, however, this song “Appendix” will give you a starting point.

LISTENING EXAMPLES

The criteria for selecting listening examples provided in this Appendix parallels the factors used in selecting songs. That is, they:

1. provide a clear example for the conceptual development indicated;
2. have been known to appeal to children;
3. are easily accessible.

In addition, the examples are suitable for special listening lessons. Within one group, or suite (*sweet*), of pieces, all the selection criteria have been met.

Carnival of the Animals (Carnaval des animaux) by the French composer, Camille Saint-Saëns, is comprised of 14 program pieces, each describing a different “animal.” The pieces are quite short, ranging in length from less than a minute to approximately three minutes. The pieces were written to be performed by two pianos and a small orchestra comprised of two violins, a viola and a double bass along with a flute and a clarinet as well as percussion limited to a

xylophone and a glockenspiel. The “Finale,” or final piece in the group, was incorporated into Walt Disney’s *Fantasia 2000* in which a group of flamingos play with yo-yos. The poet Ogden Nash wrote a humorous verse to accompany each of the pieces.

Carnival of the Animals is easily accessible online and very inexpensive to purchase. Because the whole suite lasts only about 25 minutes, other works appropriate for elementary children commonly are on the same recording. *Peter and the Wolf*, *Danse Macabre*, and/or *Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra* are typical. Some of the recordings have narration either of Nash’s poems or descriptions of the music. Unless you want that information, choose a performance without narration.

On most recordings, the pieces are performed by the instruments Saint-Saens intended. However, there are arrangements for other combinations of instruments, including full orchestra. The “Appendix” includes references to instruments included in the original piece and might not be applicable to different arrangements. However, references to all other music components still will be pertinent.

The whole work, as well as individual pieces, is available online. Search for “Carnival of the Animals” or “Carnival of the Animals + the name of the specific piece.” For a variety of videos, add the name of your video service, such as “Carnival of the Animals Aviary YouTube.” In some videos, the children can see the orchestra perform and even watch the pianists’ hands. In others, animation is included. Famous paintings are featured in others. All of these versions have benefits. There is benefit, too, in just listening, so do not rush to show a video. Perhaps the video could follow the listening lesson so that the initial presentation could invigorate the children’s imaginations.



If you choose to use individual pieces for special listening lessons, you will have no difficulty finding online performances paired with listening maps or guides. Search for “Carnival of the Animals + name of the piece + listening map or listening guide.” Some are included in basal series too. Of course, you could create your own or have the children draw them.



Also, in several cases the topic of the pieces could be stretched beyond the given title. For instance, the jumpy “Kangaroos” might as easily depict rabbits or even grasshoppers. The gentle, gliding melody of “The Swan” might pertain to ice skaters. The heavy, labored movement in “Tortoises” and “The Elephant” might reflect the movement of any large, heavy animal and the “Wild Donkeys” could be any frantically running animal. Because the xylophone in “Fossils” sounds like bones, this piece could be included with Halloween music. The children should not be declared “wrong” for not using the exact title so long as it reflects perceptive listening.

If you are playing a piece as an example for the children’s conceptual development, the name of the piece or its programmatic features need not be a factor at all. Simply play the piece and focus attention on the component using an activity appropriate for their level of development. The brevity of the pieces is a positive factor for holding the students’ attention.

Two “Appendix” lists for *Carnival of the Animals* are included. The first presents the names of the pieces in both French and English in the order the pieces are performed. The approximate length of each piece is included as well as a programmatic description of the music. The names of the prominent performing instruments appear in the descriptions. Instruments of the orchestra were not included in “The Bare Necessities” because the information is readily available in basal series and online where students can see and hear them. *Carnival of the Animals* could provide an opportunity to introduce the topic. The second “Appendix” list is by broad conceptual categories broken into specific teaching aspects with “Descriptive Comments” providing conceptual development information for each piece in the group.

As with songs, your repertoire of listening selections will grow with experience. As you begin, the individual pieces in this one suite will set you on your way. You and your students will enjoy the short descriptive pieces and will delight in hearing them many times.

With the songs and listening examples identified and categorized in this Appendix, you will be ready to gather materials for sharing the joy of music with your students. You will not have to wonder where to begin. Look at the list and find the songs; look at the list and choose a listening example. The information is at your finger tips. Let the music begin!