

Music Curriculum Development Day

Thursday 14th March 2024

Teacher Handout



Warming Up

Here are some fun ways of getting children ready to sing.

I Don't Want to Sing Today

Speak this chant first and then sing (and march to the pulse), to the famous army marching tune:

I don't want to sing today

But I will sing anyway

And if what I sing sounds good

Then I'm singing as I should

1 2 3 4

Stand up straight and look at the floor

5 6 7 8 9

Looking good and feeling fine!

Rubber Chicken

- Hold right hand up in the air and shake it to the count of eight
- Repeat with left hand, right leg and left leg
- Do the whole pattern to the count of four, then two, then one and shout 'rubber chicken!' at the end.
- Try it in different languages!

Number Sequences

This is a hugely flexible activity that is great to encourage reluctant singers. It develops confidence, musicianship skills and is fun! It's also good for sequencing work and choir training.

- Sing the following scale (make sure that you always go back to the same note for '1'):
1 121 12321 1234321 123454321, etc... all the way up to 8 (and back down to 1)

- Make sure children are confident singing this before moving on.
- Replace the number 3 with an audible action (eg. hand clap) and try again.
- Replace more numbers with other actions.
- Sing it as a round: each group comes in after the previous group has sung '2'
- Try starting from 8 and work backwards. Do that as a round.
- Ask one group to start from 1 and the other group from 8.
- Invite children to choose a number between 1-8 (make sure all the numbers are covered!) and think of a 'big' action to accompany that number. Try the activity with everyone singing all the numbers and doing their action when they get to their number. Now try it where children only sing their own number, so it's a lot of solos!
- There are so many more variations so make up your own!

Sing for Pleasure Taster Session

Here is a summary of the main points from today's session.

It's good to be as efficient as possible when teaching singing in schools. That way, children remain focused and on task.

1. Demonstrate the song
2. Break it down into smaller, more manageable chunks:
 - Teach one phrase at a time
 - Use My Turn, Your Turn and don't sing when it's the children's turn
 - Use a 'stop' hand gesture to link two phrases together
 - Try pitch patterning to show children the overall shape of the melody (small steps, big intervals, same notes, etc...)
 - Remember not to confuse the signs, so point to the children when it's their turn to sing and point to yourself when it's your turn
3. Sing the whole song a couple of times using pitch patterning then move from pitch patterning to using a steady pulse. Sing the song a couple of times whilst pulsing to make sure the children know it well.
4. Once the song is being sung confidently, mentally split the class into groups. Gesture to the first group to begin singing the round then move on the next group, and so on.
5. Use the 'Finger of Doom' to indicate that you're about to stop.

Try not to sing along. You want to encourage children to be independent singers. Also, the whole of the above process can be done without saying a word. Set up a good pace and teach the song using hand signals and vocal demonstrations. If children start pitch patterning with you, let them!

For more information about Sing for Pleasure, please visit www.singforpleasure.org.uk