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### Developing Musical Understanding and Responsiveness in the Elementary Music Program Through the Playing of Classroom Instruments

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DEVELOPING MUSICAL UNDERSTANDING AND  
RESPONSIVENESS IN THE ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM  
THROUGH THE PLAYING OF CLASSROOM INSTRUMENTS  
(TITLE)

BY

Joy M. Phillips

PLAN B PAPER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
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AND PREPARED IN COURSE

MUSIC 560

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1964  
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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS PLAN B PAPER BE ACCEPTED AS  
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DEPARTMENT HEAD

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to establish effective methods of developing musical understanding and responsiveness in children through experiences in playing the various classroom instruments in the elementary and junior high school general music class. The use of band instruments is outside the scope of this paper.

## INSTRUMENTS IN THE LOWER GRADES

In the elementary music program the child should discover the sounds and uses of simple percussion and melody instruments through experimentation and guided exploration. Of the several phases of the general music program, the playing of instruments is an activity that should not be neglected but done in a variety of ways. The playing of instruments offers concrete experiences through which many concepts of musical learning can be acquired.<sup>1</sup> For example, the understanding of the relationship of intervals can be more clearly grasped through the use of melody instruments.<sup>2</sup> By comparing the sound of different pitches with the written notation the child should develop a better understanding of how to read music.

Instruments of both definite and indefinite pitch have an important place in the music class since they provide ways

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<sup>1</sup>Raymond Elliott, Teaching Music (Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1960), p. 154.

<sup>2</sup>Bjornar Bergethon and Eunice Boardman, Musical Growth in the Elementary School (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1963), p. 248.

of exploring the world of musical expressiveness, developing performance skills, developing creativity, as well as helping the children to become aware of the following musical concepts: form, mood, notation, dynamics, pitch and melody.

### Rhythm Instruments

Rhythm instruments should be carefully selected. They should not be confused with toys, nor should they be considered merely as pre-band or pre-orchestra instruments. These are real instruments which the young child can manipulate with his large muscles; therefore, they make a definite contribution to his musical growth. Later the child may play in a band or orchestra although this is not the primary purpose for the using of rhythm instruments.

#### Objectives for using Rhythm Instruments

Rhythm instruments can:

1. Furnish opportunities to experiment with producing sound
2. Fulfill the child's present needs and desires to make music himself through the playing of several different instruments
3. Help the child to feel at ease through playing
4. Provide more opportunities for discriminative listening to his own and also to others' playing
5. Provide experiences in deciding the appropriateness of various instruments
6. Lead the child to understand rhythmic notation

7. Give the child musical experience, other than singing, in which he can be successful
8. Help the child to develop musical judgments which will aid him in discussing and understanding music
9. Awaken a sense of beauty, imagination, and a deepening of emotions through self-expression
10. Give the child additional opportunities to work with others by playing in small groups
11. Give the child creative experiences and opportunities to improvise.

#### Classifications of Rhythm Instruments

Rhythm instruments have been classified by Maurine Timmerman<sup>1</sup> in the following manner:

(By types of sound)

##### Jingles and rings

Triangles, jingle bells, finger cymbals, jingle clogs, cowbells, tambourines

##### Clicks

Castanets, claves, sticks, temple blocks, wood blocks, tone gourds (struck)

##### Shakers

Maracas, cabacas, pompons

##### Strokers

Sand blocks, guiros, tone gourds (stroked), cabacas (twisted), xylophones (stroked)

##### Drums and tom-toms

##### Gongs and large cymbals

<sup>1</sup>Maurine Timmerman, Let's Teach Music (Evanston: Summy-Birchard Publishing Co., 1958), pp. 44-45.

(By volume)

## Loud

Wood blocks, tone gourds, claves, castanets, temple blocks,  
large cymbals, drums

## Soft

Little jingle bells, triangles, finger cymbals, maracas,  
pompons, sand blocks, small sticks, chopsticks, soft beaters  
on large cymbals, gongs or drums

(By rhythmical pattern)

## Short sounds

Sticks, wood blocks, claves, temple blocks

## Long sounds

Triangles, cymbals, gongs, bells, tambourines (shaken),  
xylophones (stroked)

## Even and uneven rhythms

Most instruments can be played either way, but castanets and maracas are especially adapted to uneven rhythms. Although in the beginning a classification of the effects produced is not important to children, two or three years of work with the instruments should lead them to a summarization of the representative sounds:

## 1. Short, dry sounds can be produced by:

rhythm sticks	skin head drum
tone blocks	coconut shells
sand blocks--short, quick	tambourine--tapped
guiro--quick stroke	castanets

## 2. Sustained, dry sounds are produced by:

maracas--shaken  
sand blocks--rubbed slowly together  
guiro--stroked slowly



3. Sustained tones with greater resonance are produced by:

larger drum with skin head  
 drum with rubber head  
 tambourine--shaken

4. Tinkling sounds, higher in pitch, are produced by:

triangle--tapped  
 cymbal--tapped lightly with hard stick  
 finger cymbals

5. Ringing sounds of longer duration are produced by:

triangle--struck repeatedly and rapidly at one corner  
 (for a louder tone, the striker can be rung repeatedly  
 around the entire inside of the triangle)  
 cymbal--crashed together or struck with a padded mallet  
 and allowed to vibrate freely  
 sleigh bells--shaken for the desired duration  
 gong  
 bells--allowed to vibrate freely.

#### Values of Using Rhythm Instruments

Percussion instruments are probably the oldest of all instruments which may be due to their simplicity. The origin of these instruments dates back to the era when man was making and using his first crude tools. Buchanan states the following:

Bangers, which properly are called percussion instruments, are probably the oldest of all because they were easily made. . . . All primitive people had Bangers. They clapped pieces of wood together. They struck wood against stone. They beat hollow logs with clubs. They made rattles of dried gourds and pebbles. These different kinds of sounds were the beginning of music. They pleased the tribesman and helped him to express feelings he could express in no other way.

One day man discovered that striking a tightly stretched dried skin gave him another kind of sound. He began to invent drums. . . . The drum was his great invention. He probably began by covering a hollow stump with a stretched skin. Some accident must have given him this idea. How it

really happened may only be guessed. Drums as large as hollow stumps and as small as toys are older than man's oldest records.<sup>1</sup>

Since children are fascinated by various sounds, their enthusiasm for instruments is understandable. Their natural desire and curiosity to make different sounds should be fulfilled. Children of all ages seem eager to play drums. This instrument provides an excellent opportunity for learning to play the metric beat, accented and unaccented beats, and various rhythmic patterns. Singing and sound-making go hand-in-hand; therefore, they can occur simultaneously. If the music teacher understands the place of these instruments in the music class, he should be able to teach songs and encourage participation through playing.

Teachers can help the children form concepts needed in order that they might better understand the structure of music. Rhythm instruments can be helpful in realizing the following concepts: musical form (phrasing--like and contrasting sections), the development of a sense of meter or takt, differences in dynamics (degrees of loud and soft; accented and unaccented beats), and rhythm patterns (appropriate instrumentation for different compositions). Some teachers, however, will need to make changes in their methodology, for rote learning and drill are not conducive to the learning of the above concepts. This learning occurs only if the individual discovers and absorbs them on a personal basis.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fannie R. Buchanan, How Man Made Music (Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1952), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Eunice Boardman, "To Play's the Thing," Illinois Music Educator, Vol. XXIII, No. 5 (April, 1963), p. 5.

This must be based on self-discovery growing out of independent exploration and experimentation. Because concepts are formed in this manner, the opportunity to play simple instruments of indefinite and definite pitch, including the autoharp, recorder, tonette or flutophone, ukulele, melody bells and resonator bells may become a valuable and fruitful source of musical learning.

This is quite different from the manner in which these instruments were previously used. In years past they were considered only for kindergarten and first grade. The establishing of rhythm bands with the children dressed in their capes and caps and performing like circus animals at given signals was often the sole purpose of this group. Some areas even went as far as having county contests. Today instruments have a much greater and more important function in the music curriculum than the frivolous, "cute" demonstration by small children. Boardman has the following to say concerning the use of instruments in the teaching of musical concepts.

With the acceptance of the importance of learning through concept formation, instruments take a new and exceedingly fundamental position in the music program. No longer can they be relegated to the kindergarten shelves, nor can they be seen as dessert--rather, they have become the meat and potatoes of our musical diet, leading to an apprehension of all of the elements of music--melody, rhythm and harmony--as well as to an awareness of form, expression and style as aspects of musical organization.

A brief survey of what the educational psychologists have taught us of the way concepts are formed is enough to support the above declaration. Concept formation proceeds from the concrete to the abstract. The implications of this principle are immediately apparent for the use of

classroom instruments. Discovery of basic concepts must be couched in experiences dealing with concrete objects: instruments. So many of the concepts of music are so abstract and obtuse that the importance of this learning principle for the teaching of music cannot be overemphasized. To add to the difficulty of comprehension, we borrow terminology and defining characteristics from other conceptual categories (such as space and time). Reading specialists, in studying the problems of conceptual development in reading observe that polysemantic words are a constant source of confusion for children. Music has many of these trouble makers: note, measure, bar, beat, high, low, etc. Such words also create problems in grasping musical structure and give an additional reason for taking care that children are given the opportunity to first develop musical concepts aurally, through concrete experiences, associating terms directly with the sound patterns for which they stand.<sup>1</sup>

After the child has become acquainted with musical sound it is easier for him to associate these sounds with the visual symbols and terminology. The terms bar, measure, beat, and high-low pitch will be more meaningful instead of being isolated words of little meaning.

In the playing of different rhythm instruments the student should be encouraged to listen to the sounds that the instruments make, thereby helping him to decide which instruments are appropriate for different kinds of music. It would be well for the students to learn that instruments such as triangles and finger cymbals are effective for soft light music. Drums, sticks, and large cymbals are a few of the instruments that could be played for a strongly rhythmical composition designed for marching.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

Teachers should not feel that each child must produce an entire composition every time he plays. It is best for only a few students to participate with instruments at one time while the remainder of the class listens or sings. The next time a different group of children should be selected to play. These playing experiences are an important part of the music program and should not be neglected in the lower, intermediate, or junior high grades. During the child's school years the playing of these instruments would serve melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic functions.<sup>1</sup>

In using instruments the child should be fully aware of the musical appropriateness and the legitimate ways of playing.<sup>2</sup> After he gains some skill in handling them they may be employed to accompany dances providing an enjoyable, as well as a worthwhile experience.

#### Basic Rhythm Instruments

A teacher who plans to use rhythm instruments may begin with a few basic ones and accumulate more instruments as funds are available. In acquiring these instruments their durability is of utmost concern. It is usually less expensive to purchase better instruments because they will give satisfactory service for a longer period of time. Some homemade instruments can be used if the tone quality is musically satisfying.

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<sup>1</sup>Alfred Ellison, Music With Children (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), p. 124.

<sup>2</sup>Parks Grant, Music For Elementary Teachers (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960), p. 290.

The following is a suggested list of basic instruments.

Drums: At least one drum should be available and preferably two or more of different sizes. A fourteen-inch tunable modern dance drum would be sufficient. If more than one drum is available the second could be a primitive one with a skin head similar to the Indian tom-tom. This kind of drum has a good tone and is durable but is also quite expensive.

Rhythm sticks: These are one of the first instruments the child should learn to play. They are inexpensive and if handled correctly are quite lasting. Four or five pairs of sticks could be purchased.

Triangle: The five inch triangle with striker is adequate. Possibly three or more triangles are necessary for bell and tinkling effects. The triangle must be suspended by a short piece of string so that the tone will ring freely.

Sand blocks: Two or three pairs of sand blocks should be sufficient. These may be purchased or easily made. The commercial ones that are available are usually too small and not durable. Long-lasting sand blocks can be made by covering wood blocks with emery cloth. These require little time and material to construct; the sound is excellent.

Sleigh bells: Medium-size bells that are fastened to a handle are usually the best. Three or four should be purchased.

Coconut shells: For the sound of galloping and trotting horses these are ideal and can be made at home or perhaps in the school shop.

Cymbals: Usually cymbals are considered in the basic list of instruments. The tone quality of these may be less-pleasing

than the other instruments, but one small seven inch pair can be used.

A greater selection of instruments than previously mentioned would be desirable. However, rhythmical activities may be pursued even though the number of instruments is limited. When funds are available others may be purchased such as the following:

Tone blocks: Since the lower grades study clocks, tone blocks are especially useful for clock-like sounds. For dramatizations and rhythmic patterns this instrument is an interesting one to include.

Tambourine: Two seven inch, good quality tambourines would be sufficient.

Finger cymbals: Two pairs will provide special effects. These might be preferred to the noisy, less-musical cymbals. However, the finger cymbals could be used in addition to the cymbals.

Maracas: One pair of a better quality is recommended. The cheaper maracas are not economical as the handles often come off.

Castanets: One pair of castanets is sufficient and these should be orchestral castanets on a handle.

Claves: One or two pairs of claves might be included in this list. As these are resonant wooden sticks used in symphony orchestras or in a Latin-American orchestra, their usage would be recommended.

Guiro (gourd rasp): For special purposes one of these could be included. A light stick is rhythmically stroked over the

notched area of the guiro. It is possible to make one of these by using a large dried gourd and filing notches in the side and then shellacking the instrument.

Bells: Several different kinds of small bells are useful.<sup>1</sup>

One must keep in mind that the purpose of playing experiences is to further musical learning and understanding and to participate in a musical performance. Bergethon and Boardman<sup>2</sup> stressed that only a few instruments should be used at a time. They feel that ten or twenty students playing together does not contribute to the musical sensitivity; however, a single tambourine or a pair of sticks may be very effective.

In selecting instruments for use in the kindergarten and first grade, the teacher should carefully consider the ages of these children, their muscular coordination and the suitability of the instruments that are adaptable to their capabilities. Often the child has difficulty coordinating his finger and hand movements. His arm movements are ordinarily easier to coordinate. This is the reason that children in this age group are given large paint brushes for painting because they have better control of their arm muscles than finger muscles. It should be kept in mind that this also holds true for the playing of instruments.

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<sup>1</sup>Bessie R. Swanson, Music in the Education of Children (San Francisco: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1961), pp. 52-55.

<sup>2</sup>Bergethon and Boardman, op. cit., p. 249.



Fine muscle coordination will usually not develop until after large muscle coordination has developed, although in some children smaller muscle coordinations do develop before some of the large muscle coordinations.<sup>1</sup>

Simple percussion instruments have undeniable value for rhythmic activities in the lower grade music curriculum. In the percussion section of the symphony orchestra, we find that a number of these instruments such as tambourine, triangle, castanets, drums of various kinds, cymbals, gong, maracas, claves, and others are standard equipment. For children small copies of these have been adapted.<sup>2</sup>

Free exploration of a limited number of instruments should occur in the kindergarten and first grade. This should be a teacher guided experience so that complete chaos does not take place. Drums could possibly be the first instruments made available for the children to explore. Through suggestions by the teacher enthusiastic experimentation by the students should follow. At a later date other instruments may be presented and called to their attention. Through the vivid imaginations of the children, many surprising ideas will come forth. This age group also derives much pleasure in using both hands and feet for sound effects of particular songs. Rhythm sticks could be presented after the drums. A few pairs of sticks could be lightly and rapidly tapped suggesting rain-on-the-roof effects, or they could be played slowly for walking.

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<sup>1</sup>Ellison, op. cit., p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>Swanson, op. cit., p. 52.

Some children could walk to the tapping of the sticks. Sand-blocks may be used to make train sounds (played slowly, then gradually faster and faster). This, providing movement in rhythm, is exciting to youngsters.

Sometimes a song has short rhythmic patterns that are repeated, while another may be long lined and more smooth-flowing in character.<sup>1</sup> With experiences designed to emphasize varying relationships of melody, rhythm and metric beat, the children will more readily understand rhythmic notation. Because they are easy to play and have contrasting sounds, these instruments are ideal for this study. In the first grade music class the playing and singing are by rote. One element at a time (the metric beat or the melody rhythm) is emphasized. The experience of the children and the nature of the composition that is used are the determining factors in deciding which element should be presented first (metric beat or melody rhythm).<sup>2</sup>

Each child does not need an instrument if a desirable learning situation is to exist; however, all children should be given equal opportunity to play. With three or four playing in a small group, all would have a chance to participate within the period of a few days. This does have a psychological effect that the teacher should realize: (1) all want to get their hands on an instrument and see what really happens, (2) they are eager

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

and anxious to participate, (3) if one child plays then the others feel that they should play. It is important that the teacher remembers who has played so that others may have an opportunity at the next music period. More enthusiasm will exist on the part of the students and the teacher will not be showing any partiality.

The teacher should give the name of each instrument as she presents it and demonstrates the correct method of playing. A simple way of introducing the instrument is in connection with a song about it.<sup>1</sup> By this manner of presentation a more meaningful understanding can be realized. A marching song like "Yankee Doodle" is suitable for the beginning instrumental response. In this selection the metric beat should be stressed either by drumbeat or the use of rhythm sticks. When the drum plays 1-2, 1-2, it follows the rhythm of the marcher's feet. (Example is given on the following page with the drum playing on 1-2).

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<sup>1</sup>Ann E. Pierce, Teaching Music in the Elementary Schools (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1960), p. 81.

YANKEE DOODLE<sup>1</sup>

Yan-kee DOO-dle Went to town a-riding on a  
po-ny, He stuck a feath-er in his hat and  
called it mac-a-ro-ni.

If drums of contrasting sound quality are available they could be used and discussed. Lower grade children seem fascinated by instruments of different tonal color. They will discover that one drum has a low, booming sound, while another has a softer, higher sound. Another day the teacher might select the sticks for the playing of the melody in "Yankee Doodle." While two or three children play the sticks, the others could softly clap the melody pattern with their hands. Then the sound of the sticks could be compared to the sound of the drum. The children should be encouraged to develop sensitivity to different tone colors and qualities in instrumental sound and to establish basic concepts of pitch, dynamics, and duration

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<sup>1</sup>Swanson, op. cit., p. 59.

of tone.<sup>1</sup> This can take place only when opportunities for experimentation with the instruments are provided. Through the playing of different instruments children will discover the following differences:

1. Instruments such as the drum, have a booming sound, while the triangle has a tinkling, bell-like sound.
2. The drum has a low tone and the triangle has a high tone.
3. Some drums have lower tones than others.
4. The tones of triangles, cymbals, and drums resound for a longer period of time than the tone of the rhythm sticks.
5. Instruments may<sup>2</sup> be played in more than one way with varied effects.

Sometimes the melody is the easiest and most meaningful response after it is learned. By listening for short melody patterns, an awareness develops which is an early beginning in the discovery of musical form. Instruments should be used not only as a means of developing rhythmic responses but as ear-training devices too. The using of instruments for short melodic patterns should be considered one of the early experiences. An example of this (suggested for sticks) in the folk song, "Chickama Craney Crow" follows on the next page.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

CHICKAMA CRANEY CROW<sup>1</sup>

Chick-a-ma, Chick-a-ma, Crane-y Crow, I  
 went to the well to-wash my toe;  
 When I came home-one chick-en was gone! Oh,  
 Chick-a-ma, Chick-a-ma Crane-y Crow!

Many ways can be devised to use percussion instruments for musical learning and enjoyment. As the children in the lower grades become more adept in the handling and the understanding of the instruments, some may be chosen to play different patterns at different times in the following manner: one or two students could play the melody notes, one could play the measure beats, another might play the strong beats, while another child plays the weak beats. This would furnish an interesting way of discovering the progress and understanding of rhythms and instruments. Perhaps this would be suitable for third and fourth grades. An example of this is given on the following page.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 59-60.

Example<sup>1</sup>

Songs should be carefully chosen for rhythm study. An art song or a lullaby would be inappropriate to use, but marches and dance tunes are best. Teachers need to remember that music is expressive and that it should be studied in ways that will help the children feel its message.<sup>2</sup>

Song-chants, such as the early American Indian used, may be presented as studies in the relationship of metric beat and word rhythm patterns. Drums and rattles are suitable for this purpose. In the third grade a study of Indians is often made; therefore, primitive chants and dances could be learned. Pictures of Indians dressed for their ceremonial dances might be shown which would be meaningful to the boys and girls. Some students could bring Indian instruments from home which they acquired while on a vacation. Perhaps they could tell the class about Indian dances they saw performed while visiting in the western states. All of these experiences have meaning and

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<sup>1</sup>Pierce, op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>2</sup>Swanson, op. cit., p. 62.

purpose and lead to a better understanding for the child. In the playing of Indian music the children can readily establish a feeling for the heavy accented beat 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4. One child may play this on the tom-tom, accenting the first beat while another walks to the rhythm, stepping heavier on the first beat. This experience helps the child become acquainted with accent without a detailed explanation. Recordings of primitive chants are available from: The Columbia World Library of Folk and Primitive Music, and also from Folkways.<sup>1</sup>

For a better understanding of accent, it is advisable to work from the metric beat. In many song series for lower grades "The Bridge of Avignon" is available. Two children can play the metric beat on the sticks, counting with the beat, "one-two, one-two," while the others sing. One child could play the drum on the "ones." The children playing instruments can count aloud, then if no difficulty arises the counting aloud may be discontinued. "The Bridge of Avignon" is copied below and is marked for the playing of the metric beat.<sup>2</sup>

#### THE BRIDGE OF AVIGNON

*On the bridge of Avignon, All are dancing, gai-ly dancing*

*On the bridge of Avignon, All are dancing, in a ring.*

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 63.



### Instruments of Definite Pitch

Besides using instruments of indefinite pitch for rhythmic activities, instruments of definite pitch also have an important place in the music curriculum. The possibilities for the furthering of music fundamentals through the playing of instruments of definite pitch are almost limitless.

The following are objectives for the use of instruments of definite pitch. These instruments may also contribute to the objectives previously listed concerning rhythm instruments.

#### Objectives for using Instruments of Definite Pitch

The use of definite pitched instruments should:

1. Guide the child in tonal discrimination, both in pitch and tone color, or timbre
2. Further develop the ability of the child to hear harmony
3. Create an interest in the child toward the science of sound, leading to experimentation
4. Help to develop the manipulative powers of the child's fingers through use
5. Provide the child with a means of developing ability to read musical notation
6. Encourage the child in learning to play instruments in band and orchestra, as well as individually.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Timmerman, op. cit., p. 55.

## Classifications of Instruments of Definite Pitch

## (Melody type)

Melody bells or song bells

Resonator bells

Xylophone

Chimes

Tonette, song flute, flutophone, recorder

Ocarina

Harmonica

Melodica

Psaltery

Piano

Organ (electric)

## (Accompaniment type)

Autoharp

Harmolin

Ukulele

Guitar

Piano

Harmonica

Melodica

### Explanation of Instruments of Definite Pitch

Melody or Song Bells, Resonator Bells, Xylophone: These are of the keyboard type and may be used for the playing of a melody or for chording. A mallet is used for striking the bar. The bells and xylophone are suitable for the lower grades because they require only simple muscular reactions to produce the tones. The resonator bells may be played in order (according to the degrees of the scale), or distributed among the children in small groups for various types of melodic or harmonic playing.

The bells are a musical instrument with good tone quality that may be used in the lower primary grades. Eunice Boardman has the following to say concerning the using of bells.

There is nothing inherently "high" or "low" in pitched sounds until one learns to attribute that quality to a specific sound pattern. Instruments which picture spatial relationships must be freely available with which the young child may develop this relationship. Step bells, where sight and sound can be immediately correlated, provide the kind of concrete circumstances in which beginners can learn to group sound patterns into specific categories.<sup>1</sup>

Through the playing of bells, children have a better understanding of pitch by seeing and hearing what they are playing.<sup>2</sup> For early playing experiences with the song bells, choosing songs in the key of C would be advisable so that the children are not confused by the black keys. The general procedure at

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<sup>1</sup>Boardman, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Bergethon and Boardman, op. cit., p. 249.

first is to learn a song well by rote before attempting to play it (listen, sing, then play). Before children understand music notation the teacher guides them in playing by ear and by numeral notation. The song "Mary Had a Little Lamb" could be learned by numerical notation as follows: 3 2 1 2 3 3 3 - 2 2 2 - 3 3 3 - 3 2 1 2 3 3 3 3 2 2 3 2 1 - - -.

For the first playing experience the key of C would seem advisable as it acquaints the child with whole and half steps. Then other keys could be presented which employ the use of the black keys. Robert Evans Nye states the following concerning numerals and notation:

Only the earliest songs would be played by numerical notation, then gradually they would be looking at the notation that includes the numerals written below or above the notes. The next step would be the disappearing of the numerals except at the beginning note of each measure, then only with the beginning note of each phrase, and finally they are abandoned because the children have made the transition from numerals to the notes on the staff.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the basic song series encourage the playing of bells, as it helps the child to enjoy "picking out tunes" which they can see, feel and hear the interval relationship of tones. Nye states, "This can lead to a real comprehension of the meaning of the notes on the staff--a comprehension frequently lacking in children whose musical experience has been restricted to a singing approach."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Robert E. Nye and Vernice T. Nye, Music in the Elementary School (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1960), p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

The primary grades should have a set of bells in each room and the children should be encouraged to play them before school, at noon and during the school day if it does not interrupt the rest of the class. Some teachers have discovered that selecting a "song of the week" creates interest and enthusiasm.

Maurine Timmerman gives this idea on the "high" and "low" pitch understanding for children.

Some teachers approach the problem by standing the melody bells on end with the small bars up. In this way children learn to associate high pitch with high position and the short bars, and low pitch with low position and the long bars.<sup>1</sup>

The scale concept can be developed by having the children place "scrambled" resonator bells in the proper order. The children should be encouraged to play familiar melodies on the bells by ear.<sup>2</sup> By placing in front of them only the resonator bells that are needed, the children can more readily discover melodies for playing. Bells may be used in many different ways such as introductions, descants, codas, melodies, harmonies and in other ways.

Song Flute, Flutophone, Tonette, Recorder: There are many instruments of the melody type available. However, the most common are the song flute, flutophone, and the tonette which are similar instruments that are made of plastic and are quite inexpensive. If it is impossible for the school to secure

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<sup>1</sup>Timmerman, op. cit., p. 57.

<sup>2</sup>Bergethon and Boardman, op. cit., p. 249.

a sufficient number of these for the group, perhaps the child could be encouraged to purchase his own. For reasons of health and sanitation it is necessary that each child has his own instrument. Of this group of instruments, the recorder which is available in four keys, is more difficult to play and also is quite expensive. Possibly the school could purchase a few recorders to be used in the intermediate and upper grades. Some of the more common melody instruments are: tonette, song flute, symphonette and the melody flute.

#### Objectives for the Use of Melody Instruments

Melody instruments should:

1. Give the child his first experience with melodic instruments.
2. Create enthusiasm for playing band and orchestra instruments
3. Aid the child in learning to read music
4. Provide a happy group activity<sup>1</sup>
5. Provide another interesting and new experience in music

Today there are several inexpensive instruments made of plastic material that are played in lower grades. The tonette, symphonette and melody flute are a few of the available melodic instruments that are often used in the third or fourth grades. If one of these is selected the same kind should be used in the entire room. Each child should have his own instrument and it should be plainly marked so that he may easily find his own. The value of reading music should be

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<sup>1</sup>Carl O. Thompson and Harriet Nordholm, Keys To Teaching Elementary School Music (Minneapolis, Minn.: Paul A. Schmitt Music Company, 1954), p. 134.

stressed and the correct names of the notes and theory terms should be used in the playing of these instruments.

Nye states the following concerning two melody instruments:

The tonette and song flute are constructed so that the children's fingers fall naturally in place on the finger-holes, which are set in a curved line, while the flutophone has finger-holes that are set in a straight line.<sup>1</sup>

The book that is chosen for instruction should include many well known songs that the children can both play and sing. Several part songs should be included also. The book, Melody Fun that is distributed by Lyons Band Instrument Company, Chicago, Illinois, is one of the recently published tonette books. Melody Fun recommends "that playing should supplement singing, not dominate it."<sup>2</sup>

The teacher should emphasize the importance of playing these instruments because they provide listening, note reading, sight singing, part singing, as well as playing experiences. If these instruments are used effectively much enjoyment can also be derived; therefore, the learning experience may provide worthwhile recreational activities that may be enjoyed outside of the classroom at camp, parties, 4-H Club, Scout groups and at church. To discover this carry-over of instrumental playing outside the classroom is a rewarding and encouraging

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<sup>1</sup>Nye, op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

experience for the teacher. This is preparation for the future life of the individual after school days have ceased.

Ocarina: This is an instrument that is often called the "sweet potato." It is made of plastic and is inexpensive to purchase. Built on the same principle as the tonette, it is held horizontally when it is played.

Chromatic Harmonica: Many music educators consider the chromatic harmonica as the most practical. The harmonica can be played by notes, numbers, or "by ear." It ranges in price from the inexpensive to the expensive. Intermediate and junior high children are sometimes encouraged to play this instrument. Boys especially like this type of instrument.

Psaltery: The psaltery, a plucked stringed instrument, is suitable for playing melodies and is often used in the lower grades. The Meloharp and Harmolette are trade names for modern modifications of the psaltery, which is similar to an ancient instrument.<sup>1</sup>

Melodica: The melodica is a recently developed and inexpensive instrument. It is played by blowing, and it has a good tone quality with a piano type keyboard.

Electric Organ: In the past few years the electric organ has found its way into thousands of homes. They are available at quite a wide range of prices according to the

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<sup>1</sup>Grant, op. cit., p. 307.



size, brand and style. Some of these are making their appearances in schools now. For the teacher with limited playing ability there are chord organs that are rather inexpensive. There is evidence that the electronic organ will be more frequently found in schools in the future.<sup>1</sup>

Piano: The piano is one of the most valuable instruments in the general music class. This instrument is an important audio-visual tool in teaching the understanding of pitch differences, the interval relationship of tones, and music notation.<sup>2</sup> The children should have free access to the piano. This activity will encourage them to "pick out tunes" and in doing so they see, feel and hear the interval relationship of tones.<sup>3</sup> The teaching of piano chording can be a beneficial experience in the music program as it leads to an understanding of elementary theory. The ability to chord on the piano should be encouraged and developed. With the learning of chording there is an excellent opportunity for the teacher to explain that the piano is both a solo and accompaniment instrument. Since the piano is considered one of the most valuable instruments in the general music class each well-equipped classroom should include a piano. Students showing considerable interest in this instrument should be encouraged to take private lessons.

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<sup>1</sup>Elliott, op. cit., p. 161.

<sup>2</sup>Nye, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

## Instruments of the Accompaniment Type

Many music educators advocate the use of accompaniment type instruments since they aid in developing an awareness to harmony. These instruments can provide a worthwhile addition to the music curriculum. In addition to accompaniment these instruments are also excellent solo instruments but this aspect of the instruments will not be considered in the scope of this paper due to the virtuosity involved. The autoharp, guitar, and ukulele will be briefly considered.

### Objectives for the Use of Instruments of the Accompaniment Type

Instruments of accompaniment type should:

1. Aid in the developing of sensitivity to harmony and part singing
2. Furnish opportunities to experiment with multiple sound
3. Provide an accompaniment for singing
4. Aid in the playing and understanding of appropriate rhythmic patterns
5. Create a desire to learn new songs by using the chord markings in the basic music series
6. Create a desire to play songs that are not marked for chording

Autoharp: The autoharp, an instrument of ancient lineage, has become a popular instrument in both the elementary and junior high school music classes. This instrument with a rich harp-like tone quality provides an excellent accompaniment for singing. The autoharp can aid in developing sensitivity to harmony through the playing and listening to the various chord changes. Nye states the following information

concerning the use of the autoharp.

An important reason for the employment of the autoharp by teachers of primary grades is that it can help develop in the children a feeling for harmony, which is part of the preparation for part singing in the intermediate grades.<sup>1</sup>

Any musical experiences that aid in establishing a feeling for harmony should be encouraged and cultivated in the children. Favorable enthusiastic response displayed by the children toward the autoharp and other similar instruments is proof that an eagerness to play and sing part songs exists in most children. By hearing and playing the correct chord at the proper time a valuable means of ear training is further developed. Nye relates the following concerning the autoharp.

These chording instruments can provide valuable listening experiences in identifying common chords. Children can learn to recognize the I-chord as the "home" chord, the V-chord as the "away-from-home" chord, and the IV-chord as the "leaning" or "longing-for-home" chord with folded arms, the "away-from-home" chord with outstretched arms, and the "leaning" chord<sup>2</sup> by raising both arms to the left or to the right.

The autoharp may be purchased with five, twelve, or fifteen bars. A five bar model is sometimes used in the lower grades. If only one autoharp is provided for the school the twelve bar model will be more satisfactory. For the playing of this instrument, the button of the desired chord is pressed

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

down while the other hand strums the strings with a pick. With a sweeping motion of the hand across the strings a harmonious chord is produced. The instrument has tone bars that stop certain strings from vibrating when one of the bars is depressed.<sup>1</sup> Through the playing of this chording instrument rhythmic response is encouraged because the child is capable of manipulating the autoharp with naturalness, ease and freedom. When this instrument is first introduced in the primary grades the teacher often presses the buttons while the children strum the strings. Nye states, "A child who is as yet unable to sing beautifully can make as beautiful music on the autoharp as anyone else."<sup>2</sup> Through this playing experience a sense of accomplishment, which is essential to satisfactory social and emotional growth may be realized.

Autoharp chord markings are included today in many of the music series. Several books are published for this instrument that are suitable for classroom, recreation camps, and parties. In the first songs that are selected for the children to play there should be only one or two chord changes. The names and numbers of the chords should be placed on the blackboard. A child who has a good sense of rhythm should be chosen to play first.

Before the children learn to play the autoharp they

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<sup>1</sup>Ellison, op. cit., p. 159.

<sup>2</sup>Nye, op. cit., p. 62.

should be familiar with the instrument and its sound.

Bergethon suggests the following procedure.

1. Select a familiar song that can be accompanied with only one or two chords.
2. Place on the chalkboard the names and numbers of the chords that are to be used. Example:

F C<sup>7</sup>

I V<sup>7</sup>

3. Choose a child who has a good sense of rhythm to be the first accompanist. Give him the opportunity to practice moving from one chord to another. The class may practice on autoharp charts if they are available.
4. The accompanist should establish the tempo and tonality by strumming the I chord.
5. The members of the class listen as they sing softly, raising their hands when they wish the chord to be changed.
6. Sing through the first phrase; discuss suggested chord changes. In case of a disagreement try both ways and ask the children to decide which seems the most appropriate.
7. As the class decides the accompaniment write the chord names on the board in the order in which they are to be used.<sup>1</sup>

If the above suggestions are followed the students should become well-acquainted with the instrument and skilled in the playing of it. After a considerable amount of playing experience the skill and discrimination of the children will improve; therefore, songs requiring even more than three chords may be used. Bergethon advises that the accompaniment should be determined first by sound; later the chord markings can be

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<sup>1</sup>Bergethon and Boardman, op. cit., p. 255.

used as reference.<sup>1</sup> If the students are encouraged to experiment with different chordal progressions for the same song, then they will become better acquainted with the instrument and more interest in chording instruments may be the result. Often the children will make errors in their selecting of chords, but trial and error are an important part of the learning process. The children should have opportunities to use their initiative in the selecting of rhythmical patterns for different songs. Some will seem to have a natural talent for this while others may need some guidance and help from the teacher.

Guitar: With the current interest in folk music, the guitar has gained much popularity. Due to its popularity with the students, much interest is created when it is used in the general music class. If the students become interested in the guitar, some may express a desire to study it further. Boys especially seem fond of this instrument at the intermediate and junior high level. This interest can be cultivated through classes or private lessons; however, other instruments should not be neglected. Since the guitar is more difficult to play than the ukulele, students are usually not encouraged to learn to play it until about the sixth grade.<sup>2</sup> It is played by pressing the strings on the frets indicated and strumming

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 255.

<sup>2</sup>Elliott, op. cit., p. 160.

the strings with a pick or with the fingers.

Recordings of the guitar that are suitable for the classroom may enrich the music program. Through guided listening and playing of the guitar the students should develop an appreciation of the instrument. The teacher could begin with a country style music and then advance to the classical guitar compositions. A better understanding of music may result from class discussion of the instrument, styles of playing, and compositions suitable for the guitar. This may prove to be an effective means of motivation in the furtherance of musical knowledge at the junior high level.

The study of this instrument provides an excellent ear training device which can aid in the developing of sensitivity to harmony. Music teachers should constantly strive for opportunities and methods of developing an awareness of harmony. Nye states the following concerning the guitar, "Chording on the steel guitar has been declared by one experienced music supervisor to be more fascinating and satisfying than chording on any of the instruments."<sup>1</sup> Hearing the chord changes and learning to play the correct chord at the proper time are reasons for including this instrument in the music class. An awareness of chording, harmony, and part singing may be improved by playing instruments of the accompaniment type.

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<sup>1</sup>Nye, op. cit., p. 63.

Ukulele: The ukulele is another instrument that has considerable value for youngsters. It can be used in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade music classes for accompanying songs. Both the standard size and the baritone uke are smaller instruments than the guitar; therefore, they are easier to handle and the chording is not as complex. The ukulele is available in a wide range of prices, thus more students can afford one. The baritone uke is larger than the standard size and has a tone quality comparable to the guitar. Through practice the player becomes more aware of harmony and able to determine the correct chords that are necessary for the different compositions. It is played by pressing the strings on the frets indicated and strumming the string with a pick or the fingers.<sup>1</sup> Usually some skill is developed in the playing of this instrument within a short period of time. Much learning and enjoyment can be derived by including this playing experience in the music program of the school.

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<sup>1</sup>Elliott, op. cit., p. 159.



## Rhythm Games

Rhythm games encourage interest and enthusiasm in music. Much can be learned pertaining to music through enjoyment and pleasure fostered by these games. Eunice Boardman<sup>1</sup> suggests a guessing game with one child tapping a group of heavy and light beats on the sticks or tambourine while the class guesses whether his "tune" is moving in two's, three's, or maybe even five's. Interest can be maintained by approaching the same problem in many different ways until the children are ready to determine, through their own explorations, that "music is governed by a continuing, steady beat which is organized into groups of heavy and light beats."<sup>2</sup>

Ellison<sup>3</sup> suggests another game which could be played by one person playing the rhythm of some song that is well known to the group. The others listen and try to determine the song from the rhythm they hear. Through the guidance of the music teacher, the classroom teacher could use this game in the class as a musical experience. This would provide both listening and playing activities and also create interesting and beneficial experiences for both pupils and teacher. Some children would

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<sup>1</sup>Boardman, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Ellison, op. cit., p. 141.

readily grasp the idea of this game while others would understand more slowly the motion of the melodic rhythm. Perhaps a few of the students would be unable to reproduce the rhythm of the songs while others could perform this task with considerable accuracy. In the first grade the teacher would need to give most of the examples; however, some of the children would understand the idea and be able to tap out the rhythm. Ellison relates the following procedure for this game.

1. A child taps out the rhythm of the melody of a familiar song.
2. Those who recognize it raise their hands.
3. The first child calls on someone.
4. The child called on makes his response.
5. Assuming he is right, the entire class sings the song, then claps the melodic rhythm, while the child who answered correctly conducts.
6. He taps out the rhythm of another song, or calls on another child to do so.<sup>1</sup>

Another interesting rhythmic game could be played as follows. Someone starts a rhythmic pattern and plays until he comes to the end of his statement. Then another person plays, using his own ideas and changing the rhythm to suit him. Others in turn then play according to their own feelings.<sup>2</sup> In using this idea for the first few times the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 155.

teacher should begin the game. When the game is learned a child may start the rhythm story. Sometimes this is called the continuous rhythm story. Ellison states the following, "The rhythm itself seems to take over. His body senses the previous rhythm and continues that rhythm without an actual interposition of specific intellectual planning; it becomes a feeling thing."<sup>1</sup>

Many different rhythm games can be used satisfactorily which will create much interest in music and yet be fun for children. The word "game" seems to hold a magic spell for most children; therefore, when it is possible, the use of a game as a teaching tool often proves to be very effective. Ellison<sup>2</sup> related another interesting game that is appealing to students which he calls "jam session" or "rhythmic improvisation." It begins in the same manner as the continuous rhythm story, with one person playing a very distinctive rhythmic pattern. Instead of the first person stopping when the second begins to play, he continues. A few of the others in the group join in the playing when they feel that the time is right for them to play. They may enter

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 157

whenever they feel they want to play, perhaps with others or separately, as there is no preplanning of who will play or when he will play. This provides a wonderful means of creativity and also the teacher can gain a better understanding of the child's natural ability and originality of ideas. It seems that few occasions arise when students are permitted to use their initiative. These rhythm games may provide the motivation for the further developing of their initiative.

### Summary

Teachers should keep objectives constantly in mind. The various methods and techniques at their disposal should lead to the accomplishment of these goals. Many music educators today feel that rhythm instruments are an important part of the music program. Pierce states the following concerning these instruments:

The ability to play various types, singly and in small groups of three or four, with various types of music and in various ways (measure beats, strong beats, weak beats; melodic rhythm; loudly for loud music, softly for soft music; at cadences; and at the climax) are important to the musician. Music fundamentals may be learned through the use of rhythm instruments such as an awareness of accent, tempo, dynamics, phrase and form.<sup>1</sup>

In the early beginning the experiences with rhythm instruments are by ear. As the music symbols are learned that represent rhythm the approach is gradually shifted to the interpretation of them as they are met in the musical material.<sup>2</sup> Boardman<sup>3</sup> states that when this occurs the students are becoming independent music makers. This is the goal which music educators are striving to reach. Through previously learned musical knowledge and newly acquired experiences a better

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<sup>1</sup>Pierce, op. cit., p. 85.

<sup>2</sup>Swanson, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>3</sup>Boardman, op. cit., p. 7.

musician will develop. It is necessary for the children to have as many varied musical experiences as can be provided, thus creating and holding their interest and attention. The playing of these instruments encourages the learning of music by promoting an enthusiastic responsiveness which seems to awaken much interest and creative ability of the students. When the learning of new experiences in music appears pleasurable and exciting, then an atmosphere for learning exists that is favorable and inspirational to both students and teachers. Through the playing of these instruments much learning can occur. Listed below are some of the music fundamentals that can be realized.

1. Meter: an understanding of measure beats and note values
2. Accent: an understanding of strong and weak beats
3. Dynamics: loud and soft phrases
4. Phrase and form: developing an early understanding of phrase and line; also the recognition of different themes
5. Rhythm: ability to play rhythm patterns
6. Instrumentation: an understanding of the instruments that are adapted to various rhythm patterns; triangle for a light tinkling effect, drum for playing the accent or a heavier effect.
7. Tempo: an awareness of fast and slow tempo
8. Melody instruments and instruments of the accompaniment type:  
(A) provide valuable ear training experiences, (B) provide the opportunity for learning to read and play the melody line,

(C) provide the opportunity for learning to read and play part songs, thus developing a sensitivity to harmony.

9. Melody and accompaniment type instruments: both of these types of instruments encourage the developing of note reading and less rote learning.

## INSTRUMENTS IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

Most music method books stress the playing of instruments in the lower grades rather than in the intermediate and junior high. Many times, however, they may be used effectively at the intermediate and junior high levels. The teacher should not neglect the values and purposes of these instruments whenever the opportunity arises for including them in the music program. Intermediate children are often capable of presenting clever and fascinating rhythm patterns which younger children could not manipulate. A keener awareness may exist with these older children as they often have more opportunities to attend concerts and performances than younger children; therefore, their musical knowledge should be broader and their discussion of performances more thorough.

Intermediate children have many ideas concerning rhythm patterns. Many are capable of writing blank notation for the patterns which they may play. Then others in the room may play the patterns too. Different rhythmic patterns could be written for the same song and these could be played at the same time by dividing the class into groups. Children of this age are



more independent than lower grade and can play their part independently without the guidance and self-explanations of the teacher. From time to time the teacher should call to the attention of the students the concepts that were mentioned earlier concerning musical form, differences in dynamics, rhythm patterns, and suitable instrumentation for different compositions. During these grades an awareness of band and orchestral instruments develops. As many of the children are playing instruments this is also a means of further exploration, experimentation, and a further development of sensitivity toward harmony. Every opportunity for the furthering of musical interest and enthusiasm should be sought that will provide a stepping stone to the future of the child. This requires much thought and preparation on the part of the teacher if the existing challenge is to be met.

Folk songs from Italy, Spain and central Europe make interesting uses of rhythm, and these may be studied to good advantage in the intermediate grades because of the children's ability to perform more difficult rhythmic patterns. Since these boys and girls are studying about Europe in their social studies, this is an appropriate time to study European music. In the lower grades the children studied about folk music from their own country. Now it would be interesting to briefly study about music from other countries. Songs from Latin America are filled with interesting rhythm patterns as they contain

uneven dotted rhythm patterns of the habanera and the syncopated patterns of the tango.<sup>1</sup> With the Calypso song from West Indies and many of the Latin American songs an opportunity to play the bongo and conga drums, claves and maracas arises as the song is learned. Swanson suggests the following ways of accompanying the song, "TINGA LAYO" which is a Calypso song from the West Indies.

At first the claves might be played on the metric beat and the conga drum on the accent. As the melody becomes familiar, bongos and maracas may play the melody rhythm with maracas sustaining the half notes with a shake. After this is successfully carried out, the teacher should help the children discover and isolate the typical rhythm patterns. These may be placed on flannel board or chalkboard for observation. The particular characteristics of the rhythm patterns are brought out by playing them against the metric beat, which is sounded on another instrument.<sup>2</sup>

The children will be fascinated with rhythm patterns in songs such as these. Many interesting and different patterns will be discovered by the students that will be appropriate for the same song. This is an excellent opportunity for the teacher to encourage creativeness. Rhythm responses at this level become more meaningful and accurate; muscular coordination is good and the concepts previously developed in the lower grades can be utilized now in the various dance forms which many of the music texts suggest for these grades.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Swanson, op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>3</sup>Thompson and Nordholm, op. cit., p. 169.

At one time it was believed that percussion instruments or the "rhythm band" as it was called belonged to the primary grades only.<sup>1</sup> Beyond the third grade these instruments were not used. Today good quality percussion instruments are used at every grade level and they are considered an important part of the music program. Even at this age level the children should be encouraged to experiment with the different instruments so that they may decide which ways are best to produce the most musical sound.<sup>2</sup> These instruments add much enrichment to the singing program. For this age group the songs should be carefully selected so that interest and enthusiasm will be maintained by the students. Swanson states the following concerning the use of instruments.

The use of instruments in the singing program should lead to a study of the basic elements of rhythm. In addition to the metric beat and the melody rhythm, the accent and special rhythm patterns can be discovered and studied by older children.<sup>3</sup>

These basic fundamentals (metric beat, melody rhythm, accent and special rhythm patterns) should be reviewed from time to time so that a firm foundation exists for the addition of new musical knowledge. Teachers should keep in mind the following statements by Swanson.

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<sup>1</sup>Bergethon and Boardman, op. cit., p. 249.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>3</sup>Swanson, op. cit., p. 61.

an opportunity for presenting the various instruments that are native to these countries creates additional interest and enthusiasm. Instead of rhythm sticks the claves, which are an authentic Cuban instrument, may be substituted. Swanson says, "Prestige is given this work when such instruments are used."<sup>1</sup> Interesting class discussion should be encouraged concerning the different instruments from other countries. Children today have opportunities to see and hear performances on television of music from other countries, such as the Latin American concert that was presented by Leonard Bernstein in his children's concerts during the past year. If the dates of these performances are brought to the attention of the children many of them will anxiously look forward to viewing these special programs.

After the children have acquired considerable experience with rhythm patterns, they may wish to create their own interesting rhythm combinations by using two, three, or four different instruments. Simple 2/4 or 3/4 meter should be used for the earlier experiences. Then other combinations may be created that are more advanced such as the following as suggested by Swanson: (1) establish the metric beat with the claves, (2) add a habanera rhythm with the maracas, (3) furnish an accent with the conga drum, and (4) top it all with a lively bongo pattern.<sup>2</sup> Learning to improvise by

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

adding instruments one at a time is a worthwhile experiment that leads to the discovery of satisfactory combinations. Often times notation can be written for this; thus, skills grow, both in responding freely to rhythm and in understanding rhythmic notation.<sup>1</sup> This is a rewarding and justifiable reason for including the playing of instruments of indefinite pitch in the intermediate grades.

#### Musical Form and Instrumentation

Listening is one of the phases of music education that is stressed throughout the study of music. This appears to be one aspect that requires continued practice if one is to improve his listening skill. By listening, children learn to analyze compositions, thereby determining the instruments that are better adapted for various compositions. Through listening for contrasting sections and changes in the recorded instrumentation, the students will decide the changes that seem feasible in the rhythmic orchestration. Since this advanced work is based upon the firm foundation of musical knowledge that was developed through an understanding of the tone quality of different instruments, skill in playing them, and skill in responding to the elements of rhythm, a thorough background that includes many experiences in the different

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

phases of music is a necessity. Form in music may be determined in an outline that is placed on the chalkboard or flannel board enabling the entire class to visualize a composition as it is heard. To construct this outline of the form, it is necessary that the pupils and teacher listen to the recording, discuss it, with experimentation following in the developing of this outline for the entire class to see. Then it is necessary to listen again to decide the best orchestration that may be obtained through the playing of instruments. It may be advisable to hear the selection a number of times in order that the students may analyze the music carefully. In their listening to the composition the children should become aware that the arrangement of the rhythm instrumentation changes with the form. When they have made this discovery they should receive praise and encouragement because an achievement has been made. With this knowledge and understanding of musical form established, other analyses will follow.

Since the understanding of musical form requires a sound background of musical experiences, analysis of music may be effectively used at different grade levels. Simple analysis of music could begin in the lower grades with more advanced compositions presented as the learner is ready. It is difficult to definitely establish when and how analyses

of musical form should be done. The situation at hand would need careful consideration concerning the presenting of this listening and analyzing experience.

### Summary

The use of instruments in the intermediate grades is an important phase of the music program. By this time the students have acquired skill in clapping, tapping, and playing of various rhythmic patterns. Now they are more aware of instruments and instrumentation for different compositions that are presented for listening and playing experiences. Through experimentation the children have discovered that some instruments are more adapted to music of other countries. When Latin American music is presented, the pupils refer to castanets, maracas, claves, bongo and conga drums as appropriate instruments for this type of music. An eagerness to create their own rhythmic patterns has developed through their aural and visual perception of television concerts. This should be encouraged and developed through classroom discussion of these concerts. In social studies the students are studying about many different countries; therefore, the presentation of authentic native instruments kindles a spark of enthusiasm and encourages further investigation. For many children this playing experience is the only one that they will receive since only a small percentage of them will probably participate in the band or orchestra. Both definite and indefinite pitched instruments should be considered an

important part of the music program at the intermediate level. Instruments for chording, such as the ukulele, autoharp, and the guitar may be successfully played in these middle grades. Also, the song flute and other melody instruments may be a part of the music program. A carefully planned program including these instruments can be very effective. With the acquisition of further musical knowledge, more complex rhythm patterns are possible at this age level.



## INSTRUMENTS IN THE JUNIOR HIGH

The use of instruments is quite often very successfully established in the primary grades. Often this experience is discontinued after the first few grades. The playing of these instruments should be continued in the intermediate and junior high, thereby giving these students the opportunity to further develop their rhythmic skills. A recent article in the Music Journal stated, "Music education should be expanded on all school levels--elementary, high school and college."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it seems advisable that many different musical experiences should be offered. Beatrice and Max Krone relate the following concerning rhythm instruments in the junior high school.

The use of rhythm instruments has been neglected at the junior and secondary level, probably because of the specialization which generally sets in at this point. The rhythmic experiences which began in the elementary grades in the classroom are quite naturally carried on at the secondary level, especially where the general music class is part of the curriculum.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>David Gornston, "The Year in Music Education," Music Journal, (1963 Music Journal Annual), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>Beatrice and Max Krone, Music Participation in Secondary Schools (Chicago, 1952). pp. 46-47.

Many music educators seem to be of the same accord as the Kronos concerning this matter. Only a minority group specializes on band instruments; therefore, the others should have an opportunity to participate in instrumental experiences in the general music curriculum. Pierce has the following to say regarding instruments, "Pupils in the upper grades can use rhythm instruments to advance technical knowledge and skills as well as contribute interesting rhythmic effects to some of the music they play and sing."<sup>1</sup>

Some of the junior high children may resent playing these instruments. If they consider this as "baby stuff," they should be reminded that various types of music call for the use of instruments such as castanets, wood blocks, maracas and the guiro. Indian, Gypsy, and Latin American songs require these special instruments. Radio, television and movies use these for sound effects.<sup>2</sup> This age group may become interested in contrasting rhythms which may be played on two or more different instruments or groups of instruments; thus, combinations of two or more patterns and the rhythm of the meter are possible.<sup>3</sup>

In Bizet's "SPANISH SERENADE" the castanets are the outstanding percussion instrument. Swanson states the

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<sup>1</sup>Pierce, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Nye, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

following about rhythm patterns.

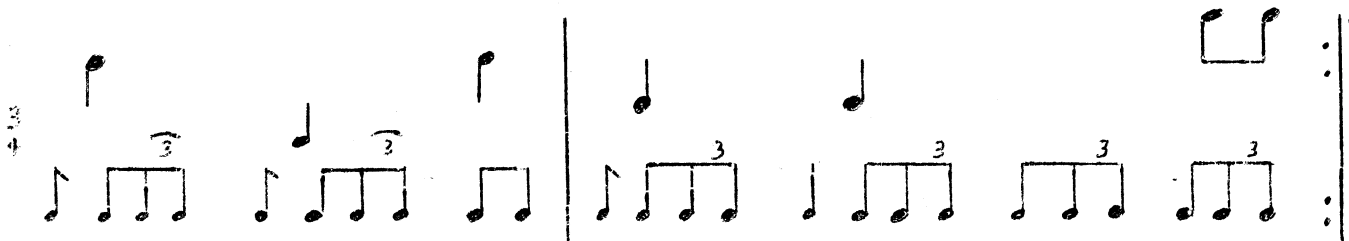
Some composers have made continuous specialized rhythm patterns a basic ingredient in orchestral compositions. Children can play these rhythm patterns with the recorded music even when the development of a rhythm orchestration is not an objective.<sup>1</sup>

The following is a basic rhythm pattern that is heard throughout much of the composition.<sup>2</sup>



Claves could be substituted if castanets are not available or if the student does not have the skill to play the castanets.

Ravel's "BOLERO" is an interesting composition which has the following rhythm patterns which are easily heard.<sup>3</sup>



Swanson<sup>4</sup> suggests playing high and low drums for the upper pattern. As the lower pattern moves very rapidly the bongo drums could be used effectively with both hands playing alternately.

Many compositions are available which permit the children to hear and play the continuous rhythm pattern. The melodic flow and improvisation above the basic rhythm should also be

<sup>1</sup>Swanson, op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

called to the attention of the pupils.<sup>1</sup> By listening to these compositions the students will become acquainted with some of the world's most colorful music. In the junior high these instruments provide a convenient way to point up rhythm in music. If they are to be used successfully, however, they must serve as an enjoyable means of experiencing music. Technical studies should not be overemphasized or the creative expressive factors will be lost. If the teacher encourages the children to suggest and play their rhythm patterns, then much has been gained.

Melody instruments may provide an additional playing experience. Nye advises that the symphonette and the melody flute should not be used below the fifth grade as they are a little more difficult to play.<sup>2</sup>

Of all these simple instruments, the one with the most pleasing tone is the melody flute, which in some parts of the United States is used in the junior high school grades. All of these instruments except the melody flute finger like the saxophone, the flute, and the upper register of the clarinet. The melody flute's fingering is one finger removed from that of the standard instruments. This apparent defect does not seem to bother children who later change to a real flute, clarinet or saxophone, which, for example, fingers G with three fingers while the melody flute fingering for the same note requires only two fingers.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

### Summary

At this age level the students are more aware of the different instruments and the suitable instrumentation that is appropriate for different compositions than earlier in their school life. A continuation of playing definite and indefinite pitched instruments is considered advantageous. Because of their past musical experiences, the junior high children are capable of expressing worthy value judgments concerning the playing of instruments. Many music educators feel that the playing of rhythm instruments should occur throughout junior high and also in high school music classes. These instruments would probably not be played as frequently as in the lower and intermediate grades; however, they are still an important phase of music education. It may be necessary to remind the students that the playing of rhythm instruments is not for the first grade only, but for all grades and all ages. In the orchestra, band, radio, and television programs, both definite and indefinite pitched instruments are employed; consequently, they have an important place in the music curriculum at the junior high level. More advanced rhythmic and melodic patterns are possible in the junior high grades since the students have a background of past musical experiences that are well understood and established. Enjoyment in

participating continues with all age groups, thereby making the playing of rhythm instruments a means of creative expressiveness which can be further developed by means of commendable playing experiences.

## SUMMARY

This paper has been an attempt to investigate the reasons for including the playing of rhythm and melody instruments in the general music program. After considerable research it has been found that many music educators advocate instrumental activities in the primary, intermediate, and junior high grades. This provides an avenue for the further development of musical understanding through self-expression and responsiveness by the individual. These instruments, if properly used, can provide a teaching and learning device for both the pupil and teacher which will prove a satisfactory method of increasing one's musical knowledge.

Playing experiences are necessary in developing the creative ability of children so that they may determine the various rhythm patterns and suitable instrumentation for different compositions.<sup>1</sup> Because this involves thinking, as well as reading, listening, and playing, the concepts of form, mood, notation, dynamics, pitch, melody, and harmony are developed in addition to technical skill. Since the development of these concepts is paramount to the building of musical knowledge, the use of rhythm and melody instruments should be firmly established in the general music program today.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

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