

1957

A Collection of Original Musical Settings to Selected Children's Poetry for Use in the Elementary Singing Program

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A COLLECTION OF ORIGINAL MUSICAL SETTINGS
TO SELECTED CHILDREN'S POETRY
FOR USE IN THE
ELEMENTARY SINGING PROGRAM

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington College of Education

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
John W. Gallemore
August 1957

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following:

Mrs. Pearl Spencer, Big Piney Elementary School, Big Piney, Wyoming; Miss Gladys Hunter, Seattle University, Seattle, Washington; and Miss Frances Shuck, formerly of Central Washington College of Education, Ellensburg, Washington, for their valuable assistance in the selection of poetry to be used in this document.

Miss Margaret Scruggs, formerly of Central Washington College of Education, Ellensburg, Washington; and Miss Winifred Knox, Washington State College, Pullman, Washington, for the valuable criticism and assistance regarding elementary song literature.

Dr. E. E. Samuelson and Mr. Herbert Bird, both of Central Washington College of Education, Ellensburg, Washington, for their invaluable assistance as committee members of this project. And especially, my thanks and appreciation to Mr. Bird who served as chairman of this committee. Without his valuable criticism and guidance this work could not have become a reality.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

In the cultural aspect of music much emphasis is being placed upon the contemporary style. This type of music is becoming widely spread through the performance media and highly accepted as a definite phase of musical art. Because of this acceptance, demands are placed upon the music education program to develop the cultural attitudes of students toward a greater appreciation of this style. These desirable attitudes can be developed through the use of new materials in the learning experiences of the student. Music education must be constantly alert in the selection of new methods and supplementary materials for use in the music program. If the tools of learning are to be more effective, it is necessary to reinforce them with suitable materials that are applicable to the various phases of the music program.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this document (1) to present original compositions as musical settings for selected children's poetry that can be used as suitable material to supplement the singing activities

of the elementary grades; (2) to assist, through the use of these original compositions, in developing more desirable attitudes toward the appreciation of new sounds and ideas found in modern and contemporary music; and (3) to stimulate a greater appreciation of children's poetry through the examples used in this study.

Importance of the study. "A program planned to promote musical growth will consist of a wide and varied range of learning experiences."¹ It is evident from this statement that an understanding of contemporary music is classified as a learning experience. Materials of a varied nature must be available in order to afford a broad learning experience. The practicality of this document is its presentation of original compositions involving contemporary techniques, thus affording elementary children with new learning experiences.

Because of the lack of usable materials, the average classroom teacher, as well as the trained music teacher, has avoided acquainting the students with music that might introduce modern harmonies, thereby continuing to use music written in a traditional diatonic style. The radio,

¹James L. Mursell, MUSIC EDUCATION, Its Principles and Programs (New York: Silver Burdett Company, 1956), p. 107.

the concert stage, and institutions of higher learning are offering the public numerous performances of contemporary music. It is through these concentrated efforts that contemporary music is becoming widely heard. If the student of today is to participate in the musical offerings of the future, either actively or passively, he must be educated to an understanding of contemporary music.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Tonality. If music is composed so that its component sounds fall into a definite physical scale-pattern or key relationship, it is said to be tonal in nature.² Tonality will be spoken of as a combination of sounds in relation to a fixed key or scale-pattern.

Harmony. Harmony is a combination of tones so arranged as to produce concordant or discordant sounds. Harmony denotes the chordal (or vertical) structure of musical composition.³

Contemporary or modern music. The terms will be used interchangeably throughout this work. The terms

²Willi Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1955), p. 752.

³Ibid., p. 322.

will imply the use of accepted modern techniques in the harmonies, structural form and rhythmic patterns; characteristics of contemporary music as employed in the writing of the original music presented in this document.

Musical setting. To arrive at a clear definition of this term it will be well to define the term "song." A song is a short composition for solo voice, usually accompanied, based on a poetic text.⁴ Therefore, the term "musical setting" will imply a song.

⁴Ibid., p. 698.

CHAPTER II

THE STUDY IN RELATIONSHIP TO SONG MATERIALS

I. VALUES OF SONG LITERATURE

One of the aims in the use of song material in music instruction is to assist in developing an understanding of desired musical skills. Some of the important skills of the music education program are: (1) the development of aural pitch recognition and ear training; (2) the acquisition of proficiency in sight reading; (3) the concept of a musical phrase and the interpretation of music in regard to its simplicity or complexity of form. Although none of these skills is attained through an isolated teaching situation, each of them should be an outgrowth of the use of song materials. A further look at each of these musical developments will establish a better understanding of the use of song literature as instructional material.

Aural pitch recognition and ear training. In the elementary stages of music education it is necessary to develop within the child a concept of pitch relationships. Since the awareness of musical beauty and expression is dependent upon the training of the ear, much song material is available for this development. Ear training aims to

develop a precise and sensitive perception of and a response to the tonal elements in musical beauty.⁵ This phase of the music education program should not be considered as an isolated study involving the acquisition of a certain skill in hearing tonal patterns, but as a musical experience evolving out of the use of enjoyable song literature.⁶ Through the use of many meaningful and enjoyable training materials which are readily available, students learn to recognize numerous combinations of pitch relationships. To perceive the tonal elements of contemporary music it is necessary to include suitable contemporary music literature.

The development of sight reading ability. The development of a concept and capacity in the reading of music is consistent with the basic purpose of promoting the use and enjoyment of music as widely as possible.⁷ To develop a high degree of note reading the student must be subjected to intensive training. One of the important

⁵James L. Mursell, Psychology of School Music Teaching (Boston: Silver Burdett Company, 1931), p. 141.

⁶B. Marian Brooks and Harry A. Brown, Music Education in the Elementary School (New York: American Book Company, 1946), p. 171.

⁷James L. Mursell, Music in American Schools (New York: Silver Burdett Company, 1943), p. 234.

requirements of material used in training note reading is favoring a rapid, progressive eye-movement and a confident grasp of large units of meaning.⁸ In a single eye-movement the student must be able to grasp several related ideas from the symbols. An expert at note reading can apprehend an entire musical phrase at one glance; notes, rhythm and musical expression. The selected training material must aid in developing this type of perceptive note reading.

The phrase and structural form in music. Teaching the concept of the music phrase is another responsibility of all song materials. Although consideration of the phrase is a part of ear training and sight reading approaches, much additional instruction time must be given to its specific development. Through the use of meaningful song literature, the student becomes aware of the importance of the phrase in its relationship to musical form. Through the use of good song literature, the student soon learns to recognize repeated phrases, contrasting phrases, and simple structural development.

Rhythmic patterns and notation. The ability to perform rhythm patterns and understand rhythmic notation is

⁸Ibid., p. 239.

developed through the use of well selected training materials. While learning a song, the child is taught the basic rhythm patterns involved. He not only learns how to perform the particular patterns, but also gains greater insight into their concept as he views them in the printed form. The recurrence of the basic rhythmic patterns in the selected material will facilitate the student's ability to grasp these patterns readily.

Although instructional materials provide for the development of the basic processes which have been discussed, other values are gained from them. The concept of subject integration used in the schools is apparent in training materials. Many songs are available in all series and collections of elementary song literature that integrate music with the social studies program, the history program and the various other programs carried on within the school. This phase is of great assistance in developing a greater desire for music appreciation within the mind of the student.

Materials for listening are found in many basic texts that are used as training material. Biographical data concerning a musician or a musical composition can be found in detail in many of the training texts used in the school program. Suggested record lists and outlined

themes are two additional aids provided by many of the basic singing books. Each of these adds much toward a better understanding of music of all types.

The previous discussion has considered some of the goals of song literature as it is used in the elementary singing program. Since it is the prime concern of this document to focus its attention upon the elementary singing program, the fact that training material encompasses the entire music program in a like manner must not be overlooked.

II. IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

General implications. The emphasis of this thesis is placed upon the development of aesthetic or appreciative attitudes toward contemporary or modern music through singing experiences. It is the writer's contention that these attitudes can be formulated, to a certain degree, through the use of the original music written for this document. It is not intended that this music supplant or take the place of any available training material, but rather supplement the material used in the elementary singing program.

According to Dr. Mursell, the music of contemporary composers, and more specifically music in the "modern

idiom," should be included in the elementary music program.⁹ He also stated that young people will hear such music in any case.¹⁰ If this type of music is ignored in the classroom, students will be completely unaware of the capabilities of musical expression as found in modern music.

In order to develop desirable attitudes toward the appreciation of modern music, students must become acquainted with modern music. This acquaintance is not attained through listening experiences alone. The actual performance of music by the student motivates an attitude towards the music. Therefore, the more singing experiences the student has in actual performance of modern music, the greater will be his means for developing an attitude toward it. Appreciation can easily arise during a student's own individual or group performance.¹¹

What is meant by appreciation? Morrison, an authority of appreciation as an educational value, defines it as "a recognition of worth and an acceptance of value."¹² The

⁹Mursell, Music in American Schools, op. cit., p. 112.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Brooks and Brown, op. cit., p. 194.

¹²Henry C. Morrison, The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School (Revised Edition) (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931), p. 343.

definition implies that appreciation is an individual or personal attribute. Yet, personal likes and dislikes can be changed through learning.¹³ Understanding and new insight into attitudes of music appreciation can be, to some extent, formulated into the thinking of the student through guidance and direction of the teacher. Moreover, Mursell suggests that young people are very ready to accept what adults tend to think is novelty.¹⁴ Children are very willing to accept something completely different because they are not bound by tradition as much as adults.

In order to develop attitudes toward appreciation students must understand modern music. It is not necessary that a formal course in form and analysis be given the student in order that he understand modern music. It is desirable, however, that students should know something of the background of modern music and its composers. If students understand what is expected of them in listening and performing, favorable attitudes toward contemporary music will be formed.

The composing techniques employed in the music presented are not new. Through the varied use of these techniques melodic lines and piano accompaniments have been

¹³Mursell, *Music in American Schools*, op. cit., p. 107.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 112.

created. The compositions are simple but genuinely modern in their style. They have been written in this manner in order to offer a greater opportunity for their use. This music is intended to offer an elementary approach to a student's experiences in modern music.

A final objective of this document is to stimulate greater appreciation of children's poetry. An authority in the field of children's poetry feels that aesthetic satisfaction comes to a small child as well as to an adult, but the development of his taste depends not only upon his initial capacities but also upon what material he encounters and upon how that material is presented.¹⁵ The child's appreciation for poetry becomes stimulated when a poem excites his curiosity. A poem creates the sense of realism regardless of what the topic of the poem may be. The child creates, through his imagination, every thing he hears in a poem into a state of reality.

The presentation of the poem should precede the learning of the song. The students and teacher should discuss the poetic meaning in terms of its impression upon the students. The reading of these poems should be in a musical style, giving vocal inflection to the rise

¹⁵May Hill Arbuthnot, Children and Books (New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1947), p. 9.

and fall of the poetic phrase. Children gain genuine satisfaction from learning a song based upon a poem made familiar to them in this manner.

A suggested teaching procedure. The pieces in this study could be subjected to a period of trial and evaluation. It is suggested that the following procedure might be undertaken. In order to present a concise plan of action, it will be necessary to draw up several related assumptions. It will be assumed that a fourth grade singing class is about to learn the song "Mud." It will be further assumed that one of the main objectives of the fourth grade singing class is to study the fundamental processes encountered in learning to sight read music. The final assumption is that this song has been selected to help train the ear to hear the open interval of a fourth; one of the common harmonic intervals used in composing contemporary music.

The first step recommended is the presentation of the poem to the children. Since this particular poem describes the sense of feeling, "Mud is very nice to feel, all squishy-squash between the toes . . . ," a guided discussion should center around other sensory perceptions enjoyed by children. From this discussion evolves the reading of several more poems written about the sensory

perceptions of children. This poetry should be read aloud, building greater interest and enjoyment toward the new song that they are about to learn.

The presentation of the original poem and related poetry should lead toward a listening experience of children's contemporary music. This music could be directly related to sensory perception, or to the specific problem of interval relationship as found in the new song. The listening experience should be guided (purposeful listening) to some particular goal whichever suggestion is followed. If the children listen to a particular composition dealing with sensory perception, their listening should be guided to a mental portrayal of the music in accord with the sensory perception it is trying to achieve. It is recommended that several short compositions be presented to the class.

The listening experiences offer background for the actual learning of the song. The classroom teacher should perform the song in its entirety for the children. After this introduction, discussion can be directed to specific characteristics of the song, such as tonal patterns, phrasing, and rhythm. Although the primary importance of each song in this collection is to offer a genuine musical experience, several specific proficiencies of musical

learning can be accomplished through the use of each. It was assumed that the song "Mud" was to be learned in order to facilitate the understanding of the interval of the fourth, by ear as well as by sight. Therefore, special attention should be given to the explanation of the interval of the fourth. After the children have been taught the structure of this interval, they should be able to find such an interval in this song. The song should be sung many times during the learning process. Children should learn to identify the phrases of the song as to number and similarity. As the class becomes aware of the use of the interval of the fourth in "Mud," they should be directed to analyze other songs that they have learned which also make predominant use of this interval. Through this type of an association, the class soon learns, through seeing and hearing, the qualities of the interval of the fourth.

The plan presented in this hypothetical situation is simple in its make-up. It can be used extensively in teaching any song that appears in this collection. Upon analysis of the plan one can see the many learning experiences involved. Each song in the collection possesses several characteristics pertinent to several necessary musical proficiencies. Not only the singing experience

is presented through a plan of this kind, but also the listening experience and poetic stimulation are considered. It is through the use of a plan of this nature that the learning experiences of children become more meaningful.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Many children's songs are available for use in the elementary singing program. These songs can be found in song collection form or in the basic singing texts. Yet of all the available material, very little of it offers any singing experiences employing the use of modern harmonies. This chapter will attempt to review the modern literature which the writer found available while preparing this study.

I. MODERN SONG COLLECTIONS

If teachers make extensive use of the supplementary song collections found in the elementary music program, the students have an opportunity to experience a greater number of songs than they would were a basic singing series book used as the sole source for song literature. It is the purpose of song collections to offer material of artistic quality which will appeal to several grade levels of the music program.

H. Fraser-Simson, an English composer, has composed musical settings for fourteen children's songs and presented them in the form of a song collection. In this

work he has used fourteen of the poems from the collection, WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG, written by A. A. Milne.¹⁶ The imagination of the young singer has been captured by making the songs simple, yet very musical. The music is written in a romantic style with a touch of modern harmonies in various places to produce a desired effect.

The vocal line, or melody, stays well within the key tonality of each individual piece. The melodies are simple in structure yet interesting and tuneful. The rhythm poses no major difficulty because it follows the text very closely. The phrases found in these songs are natural and effective. Again, they follow the dictates of the poetic text.

The degree of difficulty found in the piano accompaniments of several of the songs can readily pose as a problem to the average classroom teacher. Consider the piano accompaniment found in "The Three Foxes."¹⁷ It is written in the key of F Major which is quite a natural key in which to play in the consideration of the relative hand position. The rapidity required in playing the left-hand or bass melodies will prove difficult for an unskilled

¹⁶H. Fraser-Simson, Fourteen Songs from When We Were Very Young, A. A. Milne (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1925).

¹⁷Ibid., p. 18.

piano player. Also some of the changes in the harmonies of the accompaniment will be a problem in playing this particular song. Several similar instances can be found upon a more detailed analysis of the songs.

The poetic text is an integral part of any children's song. The texts found in this collection are of the finest artistic quality for children. In considering the text of "Halfway Down," one finds "Halfway up the stairs isn't really up, and isn't down It really isn't anywhere! It's somewhere else instead!"¹⁹ This example shows the freshness and cleverness of lyrics that will appeal to all ages. Milne is well known for his children's poetry and the poetic texts that he has employed fulfill the criteria used in appraising children's poetry.

Benjamin Britten, a well-known contemporary British composer, has written musical settings to twelve songs, using the poems of various poets. This work, Friday Afternoons, appears in two volumes.²⁰ This collection is written in a more contemporary style than the work of Fraser-Simson. The songs are more difficult for the average classroom situation. A brief review of this work will

¹⁹Ibid., p. 8.

²⁰Benjamin Britten, Friday Afternoons, 2 vols. (Boosey and Hawkes, Ltd., 1936).

illustrate this fact.

Several of the melodies found in this collection are difficult for children to sing because of the use of foreign or unrelated tones to the original key signature. Children will find the interval relationship not only difficult to hear, but difficult to perform. "The Jazz-Man" illustrates the use of many unrelated tones in the melody.²¹ A great amount of work would be necessary in teaching this song to the children. The rhythmic structure of the same song is difficult for children to comprehend. This difficulty can be attributed to the many changes of rhythm; the piece begins with a pulsation of two beats per measure and changes to a triple meter of three beats to each measure.

The piano accompaniments are written for a skilled accompanist. These accompaniments are a vital asset to these songs. They add musical richness in their use of harmonies and rhythms. Many of the rhythms found in the melodies of the songs do not correspond to the rhythms found in the accompaniments. This contrapuntal rhythmic style is quite difficult for children to understand. The accompaniment as found in the "Fishing Song" uses many ornamental devices of composition which make it difficult

²¹Ibid., II, p. 8.

for an average pianist to perform.²² Several notes appear on each beat of the measure, which adds to the difficulty that is encountered by an untrained accompanist; and many large skips are found in the bass-line of this particular song. Therefore, considering the ability of the average classroom teacher in regard to piano playing, it must be concluded that the accompaniments will be extremely difficult.

The poetic text of this collection has a definite appeal. There is much contrast of thematic material that will interest the children. The poetic text of the collection ranges from the gallant life of the fisherman to the trivialities of the monkey. The texts are very descriptive and will readily form a visual image that can be easily perceived by the children.

Another collection of children's songs is worth of consideration. KOOKOOROOKOO And Other Songs is a collection based upon the poetry of Christina Rosetti in which several English composers have contributed musical settings.²³ Thirteen composers have furnished musical settings for twenty-six charming, yet simple, poems by Christina Rosetti. This collection is a part of a two-

²²Ibid., II, p. 4.

²³Christina Rosetti and others, KOOKOOROOKOO And Other Songs (London: A. & C. Black Ltd., 1916), 48 pp.

volume series, the other one entitled KIKIRIKEE And Other Songs.

In general, the melodies of these songs are of an average difficulty and musically charming. Most of the songs employ the use of the repeated phrase which makes for greater simplicity in singing. The foreign tones used in these melodies are simple to hear, as well as to sing, because they follow the natural tendencies of key modulation. In the melodic analysis of "Kookoorookoo! Kookoorookoo!"²⁴ is found an example of simple phrase technique. The second and the fourth phrases of the song are very similar; the first and third phrases differ in the sequential note patterns involved. The songs will be relatively easy to learn with use of similar phrase groupings.

In most of the songs the piano accompaniments are above average difficulty. Many of them are written with rich, interesting chords which places demands of finger dexterity upon the accompanist in shifting from one chord to another. In the song "The Wind Has Such a Rainy Sound"²⁵ the accompaniment offers much finger movement in both the right and left hand parts. The unskilled accompanist will not be able to do this easily. But in order to convey the central thought of rain in this particular song it is

²⁴Ibid., p. 4.

²⁵Ibid., p. 36.

necessary to employ the use of light, rapid patterns in the piano accompaniment.

The majority of these poems will be known to many of the elementary children. They are of a high artistic quality that will appeal to them. Such an inquisitive, yet expressive, thought of a child can be found in the text "Is The Moon Tired?"²⁶ All of the poems in this collection will stimulate their interest.

In summary, of the song collections reviewed, several elements are common to each of them. First, each collection has been composed in a modern style specifically for children. The poetic texts used for the songs in each collection are of high artistic value. The final trait found in each collection is the difficulty of the piano accompaniments. These accompaniments enhance the musical quality of the songs and serve a very integral part of each song. Yet, they are too difficult for the average teacher to perform. The need arises, then, for songs of equal artistic quality and less difficulty to present to the children of the elementary music program.

²⁶Ibid., p. 30.

II. THE REVIEW OF MODERN SONG LITERATURE FOUND IN THE BASIC SINGING SERIES

In many schools the only source of singing material is found in the texts of the basic singing series. In many instances funds are not provided to equip the music classroom with desired supplementary materials. If such materials are to be used, it is usually the responsibility of the teacher to use his own personal copy and present the material by the rote method. With this consideration in mind, the writer felt the need to include in this review the existing contemporary songs found in the basic singing series. Four basic singing series have been considered for this review: (1) NEW MUSIC HORIZONS²⁷ and MUSIC FOR LIVING;²⁸ (2) OUR SINGING WORLD;²⁹ (3) A SINGING SCHOOL;³⁰ and (4) THE AMERICAN SINGER.³¹ These series are representa-

²⁷McConathy and others, New Music Horizons (Morristown, N. J.: Silver Burdett Company, 1949), 6 vols.

²⁸Mursell, Tipton and others, Music for Living (Morristown, N. J.: Silver Burdett Company, 1956), 6 vols.

²⁹Pitts, Glenn and Watters, Our Singing World (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1952), 8 vols.

³⁰Dykema and others, A Singing School (Boston: C. C. Birchard and Company, 1944), 8 vols.

³¹Beattie, Wolverton and others, The American Singer (New York: American Book Company, 1947), 8 vols.

tive of the music books used in most of today's music classrooms.

Upon analysis it was found that these series included the greater part of their contemporary song literature in the fourth year book. Therefore, the fourth and fifth year books in each of the series were analyzed and will be presented in this section. In consideration of this study only contemporary songs by contemporary composers were given analysis. It should be stated that many songs in the series were found to be modernized versions of folk-tune melodies, but the primary concern of the writer was placed upon original contemporary songs appearing in the series. It was found in the study of these series that many contemporary composers contributed to the material used, but much of their work was in the traditional diatonic style, rather than in a modern style.

The song literature that appears in any series is very selective. Numerous contributions of song material are analyzed and evaluated; the choice material being selected for use in the series. The New Music Horizons, Book Four, includes a song written by Paul Hindemith.³² The song, "A Rain Song," has a relatively easy melody line

³²McConathy and others, op. cit., IV (Teacher's Book), p. 151.

and lies easily within the range of the child's voice. The use of modern techniques in formulating a melodic line strongly outlines the contemporary style. The piano accompaniment is quite easily played. Although it requires some finger movement in the right hand, it is kept within easy patterns. One of the characteristics of the contemporary style is quite evident in this piece: the use of the uneven phrase line. The first phrase of the piece is one of four measures in length, whereas the second phrase is a three-measure phrase. The style of the song readily conveys the mood of the poetic text.

From the same book in this particular series is a song contributed by the French contemporary composer, Darius Milhaud.³³ Definite appeal comes from the song "Not So Big." The movement in the melody line is rather slight; that is, no large skips are employed. It is very scale-wise in its structure. The piano accompaniment uses many accidental notes (the piece does not employ a key signature), but keeps to a very definite pattern. The right hand plays the melody line while the left hand follows a pattern which employs identical repetition for several measures. The song is very musical and not

³³Ibid., p. 162.

difficult in any respect.

In a new series published by this company, Music For Living, many contemporary composers have contributed modern songs. Norman Dello Joie, a contemporary American composer, has contributed several songs to this new series. His song, "Africa," is a good example of his exquisite musical style.³⁴ In this particular composition, Mr. Dello Joie uses a steady unchanging rhythmic flow and much repetition of phrases to create a simplicity of the song. The accompaniment is relatively easy. It employs the use of the melody line in the right hand and a slow, repeated chordal structure in the left.

A few other contemporary songs can be found in this series. It should be noted from this particular series (Music For Living) that emphasis is being placed upon modern songs for children. The series not only includes more contemporary songs than the New Music Horizons, but also more suggestions of modern compositions for the listening program.

Upon analysis of the other basic series (A Singing School, The American Singer, and Our Singing World) the writer found no existence of contemporary song literature.

³⁴Mursell, Tipton and others, op. cit., IV (Teacher's Book), p. 79.

However, these series included traditional song literature written by contemporary composers. The lack of the modern songs in these texts can be justified by means of several criteria. The series were primarily based upon the presentation of folk song materials that could be used for integration purposes. Each of these series was written during the period when folk music of all nations became very important in the music education program of this country. This great awareness to the importance of folk-song materials came about during the five-year period following the second world war.

III. MISCELLANEOUS CONTEMPORARY MUSIC LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN

One of two other sources of contemporary songs for children are worthy of consideration. "The Children" is a song cycle consisting of nine children's songs written by Theodore Chandler. This work was published in 1956 by G. Schirmer, Incorporated. A similar collection of songs, but written for an adult performer, can be found in the song cycle "I Hate Music." This is a collection of five songs written by Leonard Bernstein. In this cycle he has depicted the ideas of a ten year old in regard to music.³⁵

³⁵Leonard Bernstein, I Hate Music (New York: M. Witmark & Sons, 1953).

It is written for soprano voice of an advanced musical knowledge.

Related literature shows some interesting contemporary music for children in media other than singing. "Dies Piezas Simples" (Ten Simple Pieces) has been written for piano by the Argentine composer, Juan Orrega Salas. This work can provide a valuable listening experience of music in the contemporary style. Many children are undoubtedly familiar with the pieces, "For Children," written by Bela Bartok. These pieces have been used extensively in the teaching of private piano lessons. Other contemporary works for the piano include "Ten Children's Pieces, Op. 27" by Dmitri Kabalevsky. These pieces have been published by the Leeds Publishing Corporation of New York.

Lockrem Johnson has devoted some of his contemporary musical compositions to fill the performing needs of children. "Six Easy Pieces for Violin and Piano" is a contribution of this type. The collection consists of six pieces which are simple and quite contemporary in style. The piano accompaniments to these pieces are kept simple, yet modern and effective.

Through the use of modern music of all types the student can learn to acquire attitudes toward modern music.

The area of contemporary music for children has need for great expansion. From the viewpoint of the writer in his survey of contemporary literature this expansion is evidenced by a greater source of available modern music within the understanding of children's capabilities.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY

I. THE SELECTION OF THE POETRY

Careful consideration was given to the selection of poetry used in this study. The poetry used had to meet musical standards as well as poetic standards; therefore, the poetry used must be the type that could be adapted to a musical setting.

The writer selected several books of children's poetry from which to prepare a tentative list of poems which were adaptable to an over-all musical pattern. The musical and poetic criteria for the selection of the poetry will be presented later in this chapter. The tentative list was comprised of thirty poems of which fifteen were to be selected as the basis for this document.

The professional panel. This tentative list was presented to a professional panel for their consideration and final selection of the fifteen poems to be used. The panel consisted of teachers who were well qualified in the field of children's poetry. Three teachers--Pearl Spencer, Big Piney Elementary School, Big Piney, Wyoming; Frances Shuck, College Elementary School, Ellensburg, Washington;

and Gladys Hunter, Seattle University, Seattle, Washington
--served as members of the professional panel.

A rating sheet was devised for the selection of the
poetry and was sent to each member of the panel. On the
following page is a copy of the rating submitted to the
panel members.

SELECTION OF POETRY TO BE USED IN ORIGINAL CHILDREN'S SONGS

TITLE	AUTHOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR
1. MUD	Polly Boyden	_____	_____	_____
2. WATER NOISES	E. M. Roberts	_____	_____	_____
3. APRIL RAIN SONG	L. Hughes	_____	_____	_____
4. THE HENS	E. M. Roberts	_____	_____	_____
5. NEW SHOES	H. S. Watts	_____	_____	_____
6. SEEIN' THINGS	E. Field	_____	_____	_____
7. THE ROAD TO ANY- WHERE	B. L. Taylor	_____	_____	_____
8. THE PIRATE DON DURK OF DOWDEE	M. P. Meigs	_____	_____	_____
9. THE ICE CREAM MAN	R. Field	_____	_____	_____
10. THE DAY OF THE CIRCUS HORSE	T. A. Daly	_____	_____	_____
11. THE DENTIST	R. Fyleman	_____	_____	_____
12. THE WATCHER	M. Widdemer	_____	_____	_____
13. TIRED TIM	W. De La Mare	_____	_____	_____
14. WHAT DOES LITTLE BIRDIE SAY	A. L. Tennyson	_____	_____	_____
15. THE HAIRY DOG	H. Asquith	_____	_____	_____
16. PLAINT OF THE CAMEL	C. E. Carryl	_____	_____	_____
17. THE EAGLE	A. L. Tennyson	_____	_____	_____
18. MICE	R. Fyleman	_____	_____	_____
19. DAWN AND DARK	N. Gale	_____	_____	_____
20. NIGHT	S. Teasdale	_____	_____	_____
21. AFRICAN DANCE	L. Hughes	_____	_____	_____
22. THE STORM	R. Christopher	_____	_____	_____
23. THE NIGHT WILL NEVER STAY	E. Farjeen	_____	_____	_____
24. SNOW	D. Aldis	_____	_____	_____
25. FOG	C. Sandburg	_____	_____	_____
26. ICE	D. Aldis	_____	_____	_____
27. KITE DAYS	M. Sawyer	_____	_____	_____
28. THEME IN YELLOW	C. Sandburg	_____	_____	_____
29. CITY OF FALLING LEAVES	A. Lowell	_____	_____	_____
30. SPLINTER	C. Sandburg	_____	_____	_____

Please select fifteen poems from the above list giving each one a rating according to the chart provided.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS _____

Criteria used in the selection of the poetry. Each panel member received a letter stating the purposes of this thesis inclusive of the request for the selection of poems to be used and five criteria upon which the selection of a children's poem is based. The writer accumulated and summarized the criteria into the following:

1. The poems must be related to familiar experiences of the children.
2. The linguistic and symbolic characteristics of a poem must be within the understanding of the children.
3. The content of a poem must appeal to children.
4. The poem must have, or imply, a musical sense in word repetition and rhythmic pulsation.
5. The poem must show originality and "newness."
6. The poem must display a certain genuineness and sincerity.
7. The length of the poem must stay within the attention span of children.

The panel members agreed that the quality of a poem could be judged by many criteria, but the above-mentioned are essential in selecting a poem for children. It was their opinion that if the poems met these qualifications they would be suitable for use in this project.

The fifteen poems selected by the panel can be found within the music in the appendix of this paper. Each song includes the title of the original poem and the name of the author.

II. COMPOSING THE MUSIC

It was stated in the beginning of this chapter that the selection of each poem was based upon its adaptability to a musical setting. Careful consideration has been given to this aspect. The music must not in any way destroy the meaning or poetic significance of the poems used. It is desired that the music will enhance the poetry and stimulate within the student a greater enjoyment of the poem.

Much time and effort was given to the melodic line as well as the piano accompaniments for each of these musical compositions. Since it is the purpose to present modern elementary songs that can be used at varying stages of musical development, careful attention has been given to the technical problems of the music itself. Consideration is now given to the discussion of the various problems involved.

The melody line. The melody line is the principal tune of a song. This writer believes that each of the melodies presented in this collection should be taught to the children by means of the rote method. From this point of view the melodic lines of these songs have been treated differently than they would have been had the sight-reading method of learning been considered.

The melody lines have been kept within the key in which they are written. In many of the songs, foreign tones (notes that are unrelated to the original key) have only been used at the cadences or endings, either to the phrase or the final ending. Even at the cadence point where such a tone is used, it cannot be considered completely foreign to the original key, but rather tones used to create a special effect in the sound of the music to coincide with a particular thought in the poetic text. In the ninth measure of the song "The Eagle," one of these tones occurs on the third beat of that measure. To this point, the poem has characterized the eagle as one who "clasps the crag with crooked hands" The note C#, a major sixth degree in the key of E Minor, has been used to point emphasis in the F# Minor chord to the words "mountain walls . . ." In the song "African Dance" several foreign tones have been used in the melody line to outline the whole-tone scale pattern. These, and other examples very similar to them, can be found upon examination of the music.

The interval relationships, or skips and steps found between tones, are not difficult to hear. They have been kept simple, yet appealing. The melody line of each song is easily within the range of the average child's voice.

A majority of the songs encompasses an octave range (a span of eight notes from the lowest note in a song to the highest) within the melodic line.

The musical keys in which the music is written are easy keys for singing range. They offer very little, if any, singing difficulty. One or two of the songs have been written without the use of a key signature. In the piece "April Rain Song" this technique has been used. It enables the melody line to convey a feeling of the whole-tone scale pattern. Although many foreign tones are used, an actual musical concept of the key of C Minor conveys itself in this particular song.

The rhythms used in the melodic lines follow this writer's rhythmic feel for the poetic line. The eighth note, quarter note, dotted eighth note and the sixteenth and the triplet eighth note figure are used quite extensively in the songs. The phrase-lines (length) coincide with the length of the poetic phrases.

The piano accompaniments. The combination of tones in the underlying piano accompaniments of each song are essentially designed to enhance the melody line. Each accompaniment has been carefully written to avoid any technical difficulties of performance that might hamper the untrained pianist.

Each accompaniment has its own individuality characterized by the use of a certain unifying technique. As an example, consider the song "Fog." The technique in this particular song involves the use of the open interval of a fourth as an opening motive, and returns to that motive near the end of the song. Another example is found in the song "African Dance." The left hand part in the accompaniment of this song consists of one tone. This tone is used in a rhythmic pattern that exists throughout the entire song to give an effect of a tom-tom. An optional use of this rhythmic accompaniment can be the tom-tom performed by any student in the classroom situation. The use of this technique and similar ones provides an opportunity for musical coherence of the entire accompaniment of a song, and can be discovered in the remaining piano accompaniments.

Like the melody lines, the accompaniments have been written in keys which present little technical difficulty in their performance. The majority of the keys involved employ the use of one flat or one sharp in their key signature. Many more foreign tones are used in the accompaniment of the songs than in the melodic line. There is a reason for this type of musical writing. The musical sounds of the piano accompaniments are very vital to

enhancing the songs. The contemporary style can be created within the use of foreign tones in the piano accompaniments. The foreign tones of these accompaniments have been used in a logical manner. Most of them are approached within a simple progression; strictly adhering to the fact that the accompaniments must be kept simple if average classroom teachers are expected to play them.

In summing up the discussion of the techniques employed in writing these pieces, one or two suggestions in the use of the study are offered. The desirability of acquainting the student with each poem in its original setting before work on the song has commenced has already been suggested. It is important for the child to use imagery; he should create a scene of the poem within his own mind before the singing experience takes place. If this is done the poem will be much more meaningful. Each song should be carefully taught without the use of the piano accompaniment. The child must have a clear musical concept of the melody within his ear in order to enjoy a musical experience when the piano accompaniments, with altered tones, are used. It is highly recommended, therefore, that the piano accompaniment be added after the melody has been thoroughly learned. In this manner, the student will be prepared to grasp the meaning of the song and formulate his own opinions or attitudes towards its appreciation.

CHAPTER V

THE SUMMARY

The values in song materials can be found in the results gained through their use. These materials are valuable in developing the elementary fundamental techniques necessary in music education. A vast amount of song literature material is available to aid in developing the many phases of the music education program. But the learning skills obtained through the use of song materials are not enough to develop the "whole" individual. The student must acquire desirable attitudes to parallel his tools of learning if he is to be a successful individual in the modern society.

Desirable attitudes that motivate a student to listen intellectually to all types of music can be acquired through his training in the elementary school program. The prime concern of this project has been to assist in developing appreciative attitudes toward contemporary listening and singing. The writer feels that the need for more musical experiences in this idiom is great. Many schools have excellent music appreciation classes included in their program. Most of these classes are based upon listening to the traditional idiom and some study of music

history. But this is not enough upon which to build aesthetic attitudes. The actual musical experience gained from singing or playing modern music is going to mold a stronger attitude towards its acceptance or rejection. If the student has many enjoyable musical experiences from the singing program in modern music, then it is quite possible that desirable attitudes will be created.

The means by which modern music is presented to the student may readily become the difference between the acquisition of desirable or undesirable attitudes toward music appreciation. The well-prepared teacher will present the material in a clear, interesting manner, hoping to formulate the best impression possible. If the preparation and presentation herein suggested are followed with some regularity, the student will become aware of the values of modern sounds and it is probable that favorable attitudes will result.

The review of related literature shows the need for more contemporary song literature within the level of ability for both student and teacher alike. It is through consistent use of this type of song material that the values of contemporary music become a part of the listening attitudes of children. Many people think of modern music as something very technical and advanced, beyond the

capabilities of children; yet the simpler techniques of modern music can be used successfully in the classroom.

The poetry used in this document has been carefully selected. The criteria upon which the selections were made have been presented. The professional panel has helped the writer provide this project with poetry that would appeal to all elementary ages. Emphasis has been placed upon the necessity of an understanding of each poem before the song has been presented to the student. This background in the preparation of each song will contribute to the development of an appreciation of children's poetry.

Careful study has been given to the musical contributions made in this document. Simplicity has never distracted from beauty. The beauty of the music is still present in spite of the simplicity of its musical creativity. The more simple the music, the greater the opportunity for more children to sing it. The modern style has been used in the melody lines and accompaniments to offer a foundation that fulfills the purpose of this document. Various techniques of musical composition have been employed to make each song more coherent and pleasing.

It is hoped that these songs can help provide a basis for the development of appreciative attitudes toward modern music. The contemporary idiom must be understood by the

teacher. Great opportunities of musical enjoyment await each of us in modern music. An informed teacher, a sincere and convincing presentation of the subject matter will enrich the learning experiences of all students.

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APPENDIX

WATER NOISES

Poem by E. M. Roberts

Moderately

When I am play-ing all by my-self, and all the boys are

Not a-round, then I can hear the wa-ter go; It makes a lit-tle

talk-ing sound; A-long the rocks be-low the tree, I see a rip-ple up and sink and

I can hear it say-ing on, and do you think? and do you think.

MUD

poem by P.C. Boyaen

Gaily

Mud is ve-ry nice to feel — All savish-y savash be-

MF

tween the toes — I'd ra-ther wade in wig-gly mud than

Smell a yel-low rose! — No body else but the rose-bush knows how

SOFTER

nice mud feels be-tween the toes!

SLOWER MP

SEEN THINGS

Lyrics by [unclear]

convincingly

I aint a - feared uv snakes, or toads, or bugs, or worms, or

F.

mice

an' things 'at girls are skeered uv, I think are

aw-ful nice. I'm pret-ty brave, I guess; an' yet,

BROADLY

I hate to go to bad, for when I'm tucked up warm an'

A Tempo

snug. An' when my prayers are said Mo — ther

tells me "Hap-py Dreams!" and takes a-way the light

an' leaves me ly - in' all a - lone an' see - in'

SLOWER

things at night!

SOFTER

Lento

CITY OF FALLING LEAVES

Music by [unclear]

Very passively

leaves fall Brown leaves yellow leaves streaked with brown

MP *LITTLE FASTER*

This system contains the first four measures of the piece. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked *Lento* and the performance style is *Very passively*. The piano part includes dynamic markings *MP* and *LITTLE FASTER*. The lyrics are: "leaves fall", "Brown leaves", "yellow leaves", and "streaked with brown".

they fall flut-ter fall a - gain

RIT. *P*

This system contains the next four measures. The piano part includes dynamic markings *RIT.* and *P*. The lyrics are: "they fall", "flut-ter", and "fall a - gain".

MICE

Lyrics by I. Friedman

I think mice are ra-ther nice their tails are long, their

BROADLY *FASTER*

This system contains the first four measures of the song. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The tempo markings 'BROADLY' and 'FASTER' are placed below the piano part.

fa-cies small, they have -n't a-ny chins at all, their ears are pink, their

AND FASTER *GAILY*

This system contains the next four measures. The tempo marking 'AND FASTER' is at the beginning, and 'GAILY' is at the end.

teeth are white, they run a-bout the house at night, they nib-ble things they

This system contains the next four measures. The piano accompaniment features some chords with natural signs over the notes.

should-n't touch and no-one seems to like them much, but I think

Rall.

This system contains the final four measures. The tempo marking 'Rall.' is at the end.

mice are nice!

ca-na-ry birds feed on Su-gar and Seed par-rots have crack-ers to

MF

crunch and as for the pood-les, they tell me the noo-dles have

chick-en and Cream for their lunch —. But there's ne-ver a ques-tion a-

bout my di-ges-tion an-y thing does for me!

Molto Rit.

Macstoso

THE EAGLE

Composed by [illegible]

He clasps the crag with crook-ed hands; close to the sun in

lone-ly lands, ringed with the a-zure world, he stands. — The

Rubato

wrink-led sea be-neath him crawls; He watch-es from his mount-ain walls —

accel poco et poco cresc.

and like a thun-der bolt he falls.

ff rall. p molto Rit. pp

Andante

The night will ne-ver stay the night will soon go by though

mf *legato*

with a mil-lion stars, you pin it to the sky though you

cresc *f*

bind it with the blow-ing wind and buck-le it with the moon and

dolce *little faster* *a temp*

night will slip a-way like the sor-row of a tune

rit. *p*

Mysteriously

37 The

p *marcato* *mp*

This system contains measures 37, 38, and 39. The vocal line begins with a rest in measure 37, followed by a melodic line in measure 38, and ends with a note in measure 39. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in measure 37 and a bass line in measure 38. Dynamic markings include *p* *marcato* and *mp*. The tempo marking "Mysteriously" is at the top left.

fog comes on lit-tle cat feet

This system contains measures 40, 41, and 42. The vocal line has a triplet in measure 40 and a long note in measure 41. The piano accompaniment features chords and a bass line. A fermata is placed over the final note of the vocal line in measure 42.

And sits look-ing o-ver har-bor and ci-ty

This system contains measures 43, 44, and 45. The vocal line features triplets in measures 43 and 44. The piano accompaniment includes triplets and chords. A fermata is placed over the final note of the vocal line in measure 45.

on si-lent haunch-es and then moves on

Rubato

This system contains measures 46, 47, and 48. The vocal line has a long note in measure 46. The piano accompaniment includes a *Rubato* marking and a fermata in measure 47. A large double-headed arrow is drawn below the piano part in measure 48.

Handwritten musical score for the first system. The system consists of three staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a single note. The middle staff is a piano part with a treble clef, marked "Rall.", containing a melodic line with slurs and accidentals. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one flat and a dynamic marking of "ff". The system concludes with a double bar line.

LENTO
Expressively

stars over snow and in the vesta planet

p Smoothly

swing-ing be-low a star look for a love-ly

mp cresc. *dim.*

thing and you will find it it is not far it ne-ver

cresc

will be far.

broadly *f*

Andante

THE STORM

Poem by K. Christopher

we were wait-ing for the storm

mp legato

mp

in the morn-ing it was warm but the sky be-came so dark that the tall trees in the park

accel.

grew a-fraid, and star-ted trem-bl-ing cloud up-on cloud be-gan as-sem-

expressively

agitato

bling. in the mid-dle of the day night came down and came to stay

rubato

thun-der rum-bled like a drum and we won-dered what had come! all at

distantly

quicken gradually

once we don't know why some-thing hap-pened in the sky dark-ness

accelerando

cresc.

fled and it was light all the clouds blew out of sight and the

little by little

f

Sun was seen be-hind "God," said Father "changed His mind!"

broadly

dim. rit. mp

moderately
1945

SPRING RAIN SONG

Copyright 1945

Let the rain kiss you Let the rain beat upon your head

with sil-ver li-uid drops Let the rain

Dolce

Sing you a lul-la-bye

rit.

AFRICAN DANCE

Poem by L. Hughes

Slowly
Recitative

The low beat-ing of the tom-toms
slow beat-ing of the

p *MARCATO*

tom-toms low slow low

slow stirs your blood Dance!

CRES. *ff*

while the tom-toms beat!

Dim *f*

* OPTIONAL: Tom-toms can replace left hand rhythm of accompaniment

Andante

Plaintively

THEME IN YELLOW

Poem by C. Swain

I Spot the hills with yellow balls in au-tumn I

MF

light the prai-rie corn-fields in orange and tan-ny clus-

accel. slightly SLOWER

ters and I am called pump-Kins on the last of oc-

cresc. f

to-ber when dusk is fall-en chil-dren join hands and cir-cle

accel.

round me sing-ing ghost songs to the har-vest moon

cres. *f.*

I am a Jack-o-lan-tern with ter-ri-ble teeth and

MARKEDLY

- 3 -

Chil-dren know I'm fool-ing.

Rall. *Rit.* *mp.*

RATHER SLOWLY
PEACEFULLY

STEINLEIN

Waltzing Matron

The Voice of the last crick-et a-cross the first frost is

mf

one kind of good-bye it is so thin a splin-ter of sing-ing

cres. *dim.* *rit.* *p*