Music in Early Childhood
Waldorf Education
A New Look; A New Curriculum

Nancy Wight
31 Blueberry Lane
Wilton, NH 03086
(603) 654-6474
wight@newview.org
www.musicalchild.org

May 7, 2012

Approved_________________________________________ Date____________________________

Project Reader

Approved_________________________________________ Date____________________________

Second Reader
Contents

ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................... 4

INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................... 5

CHAPTER 1. THE BENEFITS OF MUSIC IN EDUCATION ................................................. 8

CHAPTER 2. MUSIC DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN ........................................ 13

   THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FIRST YEARS ................................................................. 13
   THE HUMAN CONNECTION IN LEARNING TO SING ................................................ 18
   LEARNING THROUGH PLAY ......................................................................................... 19

CHAPTER 3. ELEMENTS OF A MUSIC CURRICULUM FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD ......... 23

   TONAL ELEMENTS ..................................................................................................... 24
      Variety of Tonalities .................................................................................................. 24
      Pentatonic and Mood of the Fifth ........................................................................... 26
      Songs Without Words ............................................................................................. 28

   RHYTHM AND MOVEMENT ..................................................................................... 30
      Levels of Beat ......................................................................................................... 36
      Meter ....................................................................................................................... 38
      Free Movement and Dance .................................................................................... 39
      Rhythm Chants ....................................................................................................... 41
      Therapeutic Movement ......................................................................................... 42

CHAPTER 4. WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS SURVEY RESULTS .......... 43

   TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND MUSICAL BACKGROUND OF TEACHERS .......... 43
   TEACHER’S EASE WITH LEARNING AND TEACHING MUSICAL ELEMENTS .... 43
   FREQUENCY OF MUSICAL ELEMENTS .................................................................... 45
   PREFERRED METHODS FOR LEARNING NEW SONGS ........................................... 49

CHAPTER 5. MUSIC AND MOVEMENT TEACHING TECHNIQUES ............................ 50

   RHYTHM AND MOVEMENT ..................................................................................... 50
   RHYTHM INSTRUMENTS ........................................................................................... 50
   TONALITY AND SINGING ......................................................................................... 52
   MUSIC CIRCLE LESSON PLAN ................................................................................. 55
      Sample Lesson Plan Template ............................................................................... 57

CHAPTER 6. MUSIC AND MOVEMENT CURRICULUM FOR WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD ................................................................. 58

   GOOD MORNING, DEAR CHILDREN ......................................................................... 60
   SKIPPING THROUGH THE FOREST .......................................................................... 62
   SEEDS ......................................................................................................................... 65
   RAISINS AND ALMONDS ......................................................................................... 67
   JOHN THE RABBIT .................................................................................................... 69
   HEY YA NA ............................................................................................................... 71
   OLD BRASS WAGON .................................................................................................. 74
   CANOE SONG ........................................................................................................... 77
   THE ORCHARD .......................................................................................................... 79
CONCLUSION ........................................................................................................................................ 115

APPENDIX A: MUSIC DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES ................................................................. 118
  TONAL DEVELOPMENT ................................................................................................................. 118
  RHYTHM DEVELOPMENT .............................................................................................................. 119

REFERENCE LIST ............................................................................................................................ 120
Abstract

The musical development of children in Western cultures is currently at risk, due primarily to the proliferation of electronic media and the subsequent lack of live music-making in the home. This live music-making with children under the age of seven is critical to their musical development and the lack of it is impacting their ability to participate in making music for the rest of their lives. These times call for a re-evaluation of the pedagogical practices being used in early childhood classrooms, as the task of providing the necessary musical environment falls more and more on the child’s earliest teachers.

In this action research project, I seek to answer the following questions:

• Why is the ability to participate in music-making so important?
• What are the necessary elements of an early childhood music curriculum?
• What is currently being done in Waldorf early childhood classrooms to contribute to the musical development of young children?

There has been a significant body of research on the subject of how children learn to assimilate the language of music in the last thirty years. In this paper, I synthesize this research with what Rudolf Steiner had to say on this topic, as well as with my own experience as an early childhood music educator. Included in this project are the results of a survey I took of early childhood Waldorf teachers across the U.S., and the results of interviews of a few experienced Waldorf early childhood teachers. These surveys and interviews give us a picture of the musical practices currently being done in their classes. I also provide a sample curriculum of music and movement that is designed to be used in Waldorf nursery and kindergarten classrooms and a DVD showing teaching techniques for some of these activities.
Introduction

“Music is the Universal Language of Mankind.” This quote from H.W. Longfellow (1835, p. 232) came to my consciousness when I was a teenager, and has stayed with me ever since. The power of music to connect human beings from all over the globe cannot be denied. It is one of those gifts bestowed upon us that assists us in our becoming truly human. Though this gift is freely given to humanity, in order for it to bear fruit, it must be nurtured and cultivated. Every human being is born with some capacity to participate in music. It is true that some are born with more capacity than others, but the fact remains that making music is a birthright of all human beings, and every person can learn to sing in tune if given the proper musical environment from the time they were born. We, in the Western cultures, must begin to change our thinking from the notion that only a select few are born with the capacity for music making. This thinking lulls us into complacency when we think about how to educate our children, because we tend to focus mostly on those who show obvious musical aptitude, and ignore the rest.

In Western cultures, we have tended to focus music education on children when they enter grade school. However, there is a growing body of research pointing to the importance of providing the child with a rich musical environment from the time they are born. Before the advent of electronically-produced music, this musical environment happened more often in the home. Family members and friends would get together and sing or play instruments for entertainment and enjoyment, and the children of all ages were surrounded
by active, live music-making. But today, with the prevalence of electronically-produced music, this live music making has taken a back seat, if not disappeared altogether, in most homes. Because of this lack of live music-making in the home, musical behavior is no longer modeled for the young children by their primary caregivers. If we as a culture want to preserve this birthright of all people to participate in the making of music, we must create other opportunities for our young children to experience music in a living way, through listening and participating with others, and it now falls largely upon our preschools and kindergartens to provide these opportunities. Some Waldorf schools do a better job than many in this regard, but still, there is much more that can be done to assure that the musical element in every child is nurtured in such a way that they will be able to participate fully in musical activities for the rest of their lives.

There has been a significant body of research on the subject of how children learn to assimilate the language of music in the last thirty years. In this paper, I will be using this research to help answer the following questions:

- Why is nurturing the child’s inborn potential to make music so important?
- Why are the early childhood years crucial to the child’s musical development?

In addition, I am using interviews with and surveys of Waldorf Early childhood teachers to help answer the following questions:
• What is currently being done musically in Waldorf early childhood classrooms?

• What are the reasons behind current practices in Waldorf early childhood classrooms, and what is the research behind it?

In this paper, I synthesize the research being done outside the Waldorf community with what Rudolf Steiner had to say on this topic, as well as with my own experience as an early childhood music educator and the experience of other Waldorf teachers. I also provide a sample curriculum of music and movement that is designed to be used in Waldorf nursery and kindergarten classes.
Chapter 1. The Benefits of Music in Education

Why is music important? It is not readily apparent to parents and educators in the western world why much importance should be put on making sure that every person’s musical potential is nurtured. The benefits of music for every individual human being are many and an elaboration of them could easily constitute an entire thesis paper, so I will point out just a few of them in order to provide a foundation for discussing the importance of early childhood music education.

Rudolf Steiner (1965) tells us that when we sing, we

set the spiritual free. The spiritual, with which the limbs are full to overflowing, is released. This is a real process that takes place in the child. We draw away the spiritual, we call it forth. And then, when the child stops [singing], the spiritual that we have called forth is, so to speak, waiting to be used.... We have, you see, ‘spiritualized’ the child. Through doing gymnastics or eurhythm or singing, he has become a different being; he has in him so much more of the spiritual. And this spiritual element in him wants to be established, wants to remain with him (p. 4-5).

I am sure that most of us have had an experience on some level of what he is saying here. Music transforms us, takes us out of the ordinary mundane consciousness, and gives us a window into the divine. When my daughter was ten years old, she said to me on one of our hour-long rides to her violin lesson, “Mom, I can’t imagine what my life would be without music!” While inwardly I
smiled, I began to seek the answer to the question, what is it about music that would cause a ten-year-old to say something like that? In our materialistic culture, music does not provide her with things, money, or even social status. There is something very profound and a little mysterious about the gifts that music brings to us as human beings, and although these gifts are described differently by different people, we cannot deny that music has a powerful effect on us. Perhaps she was experiencing that window into the divine, and how music effects her soul. Steiner (1983) tells us,

> The musician hears the pulse of the divine will that flows through the world; he hears how this will expresses itself in tones. The musician thus stands closer to the heart of the world than all other artists; in him lives the faculty of representing the world will...Since music flows nearer the heart of the world and is a direct expression of its surging and swelling, it also directly affects the human soul. It streams into the soul like the divine in its different forms. Hence, it is understandable that the effects of music on the human soul are so direct, so powerful, so elemental (p. 13).

This is most apparent to some people as they listen to music, but many people, for various reasons which will be explored later, never get beyond the listening phase. The experience of actually making music can take us even deeper. Steiner (1983), describes the orchestra as “an image of man”... “The wind instruments prove that the head of man experiences music. The string instruments are living proof that music is experienced in the chest, primarily
expressed in the arms. All percussion instruments….are evidence of how the musical element is expressed in the third part of man’s nature, the limb system…” (p. 74). The next time you have the good fortune to be able to sing, especially with others, or play and instrument in an ensemble, observe the following: what happens to your body – does it feel different while making music (pay particular attention to the area of the heart); afterwards? Does it change your mood? Does it perhaps bring up a memory? If we can pay attention to the effects that making music has on us, we will begin to become more conscious of the benefits it has for humanity.

One of these benefits is that music, as do the other arts, helps to develop our moral sense. In Practical Advice to Teachers, Steiner quotes Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*:

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov’d with the concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, strategems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And affections dark as Erebus;
Let no such man be trusted.

This is a fundamental truth and, for this reason, no effort should be spared in bringing the musical element even to those children who are considered at first to be unmusical. (Steiner, 2000, p. 40).

There is also a growing body of research that shows how making music benefits the brain and our cognitive development. In his book, *Healing at the*
Speed of Sound (2011), D. Campbell, author of “The Mozart Effect” and A. Doman assert the following:

Music as an activity engages nearly all sectors of the brain...Learning and performing music strengthens the synapses between brain cells, positively impacting the sensory and perceptual systems, cognitive abilities, fine and gross muscle action and coordination, the motivational or pleasure system and learning memory. Group music activities encourage social awareness, and learning and remembering a song’s nuances or memorizing a piece for a performance engages memory. ...music performs all of these tasks in an atmosphere of enjoyment, enthusiasm, creativity, and participation – the four essential elements for optimal early educational development. (p. 76)

In addition, there are some impressive statistics that point to the benefits of learning to engage in musical activities:

- Music students score higher on their SAT tests – 52 points higher on verbal, 37 points higher on math.
- Learning to control tempo and rhythm during group music-making activities has been shown to help students improve their performance of routine activities that adolescents typically neglect.
- Surveys show that secondary students who participate in band or orchestra report lower current and lifetime use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs.
• Medical school graduates who play a musical instrument have been shown to score higher on practical medical tests than those with no musical training. (p. 93).

In other studies, music majors have been shown to score highest in reading among all majors, including English; to be most likely of all college graduates, including biochemistry majors, to be admitted to medical school; and to be emotionally healthier than their non-musician counterparts, feeling more confident in test-taking situations and reporting fewer emotional concerns and alcohol-related problems. (Campbell & Doman, 2011).

Perhaps the most obvious benefits that come from participation in musical activities can be seen in the cultural/social realm. Music is one of the things that distinguishes one culture from another, and being able to sing the songs of one's culture, or to play its music on an instrument allows one to participate more fully and deeply in their culture. Most important rituals contain some element of music – weddings, funerals, visiting heads of state, etc. because as stated before, music transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary and brings the element of the divine into the everyday experiences of life. Music is used to express the deepest of human emotions and feelings, and one who has learned to make music has a whole world of expressive possibilities that do not exist for the non-musician.
Chapter 2. Music Development in Young Children

The Importance of the First Years

What makes it possible for one to develop the necessary capacities to participate in the music-making of their own culture? It has been a long held belief that in order to be a musician, one must inherit the musical genes from their ancestors, and that those who do not come from musical family will be doomed to limited musical participation. While it is true that heredity has an important part in determining musical potential, and that some people are born with more aptitude for making music, it has been shown by several researchers that every child can, if provided a rich musical environment and the proper guidance from the very beginning, learn to sing in tune and move with correct rhythm (which will be referred to henceforth as “basic music competence”). It turns out that musical aptitude is normally distributed across the population. Sixty eight percent of the population is born with average musical aptitude, 12 percent is above average and 12 percent is below average. (Gordon, 2003, p. 14). Even those born with below average musical aptitude can attain basic music competence. (Guilmartin and Levinowitz, 1989, p. 17).

If we consider how children learn language, we quickly see that there is much similarity between the learning of the sounds of speech and the sounds of music. Through listening to their mother’s voice before birth, children’s ears are already attuned to the sounds of their native language before they are born. After they are born, not only do they hear their parents speaking, but they hear the sounds of the language everywhere they go – from both live sources and
also electronic sources such as radio, TV, etc.. They assimilate these sounds and are able to begin to imitate them. It is well known that this process happens very early, and if a child has not been exposed to live speech at all before the age of three, which is nearly unimaginable (but has happened in rare cases), it will be very difficult if not impossible, for that child to learn to speak its native language without some kind of impediment. It is also well known that if an adult tries to learn a foreign language that has very different sounds and syntax from his native tongue, it can be nearly impossible to learn to reproduce those sounds of that language correctly because he was not exposed to them as a young child. The window for learning language, when the brain is fully receptive, is generally before the age of six years.

The same is true of music. Music has a syntax and structure that is very different from language, but the process of assimilating these elements is similar to that of speech (Campbell & Doman, 2011). The years from birth to age six are “critical for young children to unscramble the aural images of music and to develop the mental representation to organize the music of their culture” (Levinowitz, 1998, p.2). Just as adults can follow the speech development in young children, taking note of certain predictable milestones, so can they follow the musical development of the child through a predictable sequence of milestones. But this will happen only if the child is exposed to the musical sounds of its culture from birth, just as he is exposed to the sounds of his language from birth. It would be considered preposterous for any healthy parent to not speak to their infant/young child, yet many parents don’t even consider singing to their child, (and often the child is exposed only to
electronically produced music) so the child never hears the live sounds of music, and therefore his music development is greatly stunted and never reaches the music potential he was born with. According to Ed Gordon (2003), who has been conducting research on music development with children from birth to age three for over twenty-five years:

We cannot correct for children’s loss of opportunity during the time the foundation for learning is being established, because we can offer only compensatory, not remedial, instruction when they are older. Remedial instruction is not possible, because what children did not develop early in life cannot be developed in later life to the extent it could have been developed earlier. What is lost cannot be recaptured (p.1)…. Although compensatory instruction is possible, a teacher can only assist children in progressing to the extent that their early learning foundation will allow. Given two children born with similar capabilities and motivation, the one who is guided in acquiring a foundation for learning at a later age will never learn as much as the other who is given similar guidance at an early age (p. 2).

J.C Pearce (1993) says something similar in his writing about the development of the child’s multiple intelligences. He states, “Nature’s imperative is...that no intelligence or ability will unfold until or unless given the appropriate model environment” (p.20).

In the writings and lectures we have from Rudolf Steiner, he did not say much about the teaching of music to children, and most what he did say
pertains to children over the age of seven. He did say that teachers should start
music and singing lessons as soon as the child comes to school (meaning first
grade) and that teachers should “see to it that [the child] really comes to
possess all these things as an inward treasure.” (Steiner, 1995, p.99). In order
for teachers to fulfill this mandate, it is very important that they become
educated as to how to make sure that every child comes to possess the musical
abilities that make its fulfillment possible. The guidance necessary for this
begins long before first grade.

Sadly, this guidance is not being given to children, for the most part,
either by their parents or by their teachers. I have been teaching music for the
better part of twenty-five years, and my colleagues agree with my observation
that children, both in Waldorf schools and mainstream education, entering first
grade are less and less able to either find their singing voices, sing in tune, or
move to a steady beat. It would be an interesting study to find out if, in fact,
Waldorf students are more able to do these things than children in mainstream
education, but the observation of music teachers from Waldorf and non-
Waldorf schools seem to agree that children, in general, are less able than they
were a quarter of a century ago. Ed Gordon (2003) exclaims in the preface to
his book:

The foremost problem underlying the distressing state of music
education is one that has been almost totally ignored by professionals
and the public at large...it is the lack of readiness of school-age
children to be taught music when they enter kindergarten or first
grade. Children are ill-equipped to learn what most music teachers are attempting to teach them. Without the same kind of acculturation in music that young children receive in language by their parents and caregivers during the five or so years (the first eighteen months being the most important) before they enter school, it would seem that there is little hope for ameliorating the situation in which music education finds itself (p. vi).

Parents and caregivers are by far the most important teachers in the young child’s life, but parents are much more capable of guiding their child’s language development and academic skills, such as reading and arithmetic, than they are of guiding the music development of their child. This is because most parents did not receive guidance in the understanding of music when they were young. And so the situation perpetuates itself. “Adults in a society instill in their young what they consider to be of value. Adults who have not developed musical understanding are not in the position to place the value on music that it deserves. Parents tend to teach their children the way they were taught as children, and thus, share with their successors what they as adults like and seemingly understand.” (Gordon, 2003, p. 10). Therefore, the task of making sure that children will be able to participate fully in the music of their culture falls upon their teachers, or others with whom the child has formed an emotional bond (Campbell & Doman, 2011). Because parents are not taking this up, the task of laying a musical foundation for the child falls upon the child’s earliest teachers. Many early childhood teachers do not have any training in music, let alone early childhood music. Thirty-seven percent of the
Waldorf early childhood teachers in my survey (see Chapter 4) responded that they have had no formal musical training, and seventy-five percent report having fewer than five years of musical training. While there are many songbooks available for early childhood teachers, it can be time consuming for those teachers with limited music-reading skills to learn those songs. Only five percent of those surveyed use reading music as their primary way to learn new songs. In addition, most of the songbooks do not contain information about how to work musically with young children in a developmentally-appropriate manner.

The Human Connection in Learning to Sing

In order to develop an appropriate curriculum for early childhood music, and to be effective at providing a rich musical environment for the children, it is necessary to have at least a basic understanding of how children learn to sing. This subject could easily comprise another entire thesis, but I will attempt to outline briefly the knowledge that has been gained in the last thirty or so years on this subject.

Babies learn to use their voices by listening to the voices of those around them within a certain critical time period of their development. According to Dr. Alfred Tomatis, an otolaryngologist specializing in voice and hearing disorders who wrote and lectured extensively on the topic of the central role of the mother’s voice in awakening communication within the newborn,

As their loved ones sing, (read and talk to them), babies have the opportunity to study the adults faces and expressions, to see and
hear how they form sounds and words. They attend not only to the words themselves but also to the pitch, vibration, rhythm, tone, emphasis, emotion, and context in which these messages are delivered. The information conveyed causes neurons to fire in the brain of the listening child, creating new neuronal connections, expanding neural networks, and thus moving the child forward in his or her mental, physiological, and emotional development. The voice can only experience and express the information that he or she has received and internalized from others with whom he or she has an emotional bond (Campbell & Doman, 2011, p. 59).

This emotional connection between the baby and the singer creates the optimal learning environment that cannot be created through electronic means. Television, radio, DVD’s etc. simply cannot take the place of a live singer. It is interesting to note that recent studies have shown that babies cannot learn language from DVDs or other electronic media, just as they cannot learn to sing from electronic media (Bronson, 2009).

**Learning Through Play**

As the child is continually exposed to a variety of musical experiences, he experiments with these through play. Just as children learn about the rest of the world, they discover for themselves the elements of music through imitating what they see and hear, and by playing with different expressions of music. For example, an infant may play with his voice, making different sounds of varying lengths and dynamics. A two year old may take a drum and turn it upside
down and put the mallet inside of it, or she may put it on her head. A three year old may tap the drum with different objects and listen to the sound it makes, or he may be listening very intently on the music that is around him and playing a steady beat on the drum that may or may not match the beat of the music. A four year old may be experimenting with singing parts of the song. The important element in all of this activity is that the child is left alone to experience the music and to experiment with it in her own way and to unlock it’s mysteries at her own developmental timetable. It is not helpful when adults attempt to get the child to clap their hands to the beat, for example, by taking their hands and clapping them, or by pointing out their own marching and insisting the children the march to the same beat as the teacher. The movement and play must originate from within the child.

If the musical play and movement must originate from the child, then what is the role of the parent or teacher? In an article entitled, Music Learning and Child’s Play, Littleton (1998) describes the role of the parents/teachers in this way:

Young children’s music play and music instruction are flip sides of the same learning coin, reciprocally child-directed and adult-directed. Consequently, the relevant question we must ask is: When and how shall we connect developmentally-appropriate, child-connected music-play opportunities with developmentally-appropriate, teacher-directed music instruction opportunities in a comprehensive model of young children’s music learning (p. 8).
In early childhood, these “teacher-directed music instruction opportunities” are none other than providing the children with the proper musical “toys” to play with. Musical toys are not necessarily things. They consist of all of the elements of music – pitch, beat, rhythm, meter, dynamics, movement, etc. The teacher need only provide this musical environment and then model musical behavior for the children and gently encourage them to participate.

As the child experiments with these musical elements, he gradually begins to be able to audiate, or think music. “Audiation takes place when one hears and comprehends music silently, the sound of the music no longer being or never having been physically present. Audiation is to music what thought is to language.” (Gordon, 2003, pg. 26). If you can imagine the song Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star and “sing” it in your head without physically singing it, you will have a good idea about what audiation is. The ability to audiate is critical to the child’s ability to understand the music of his culture. It is easy to confuse audiation with imitation, because a child can learn to imitate a song without audiating (but a child must first learn to imitate music before it can audiate). Just as a child can copy the sounds of someone speaking in another language without knowing the meaning of what they are saying, they can also learn by rote to sing a song without comprehending anything about its musical organization. The process of audiation happens unconsciously. Through repeated exposure and experimentation with musical elements, the child begins to make sense of the syntax of music, organizing its sounds into patterns to make meaningful communication. For example, If, while creating
music, a child is continuously audiating its tonality (major, minor, etc.) or its meter (duple, triple, etc.), that child is “audiating syntactic characteristics that will help them make sense of the music.” (Gordon, 2003, p. 30).
Chapter 3. Elements of a Music Curriculum for Early Childhood

The elements required to provide children with the musical tools they will need to participate fully in the music of their culture are relatively simple. Just as with language, they need to be surrounded by many varieties of melodies, harmonies and rhythms so that they can develop a musical vocabulary they will be able to use later on. Also, the child must have a teacher to imitate -- ideally, one with a clear singing voice who can sing in tune. However, if a teacher cannot sing in tune, it is still better that they sing, because this helps give the child the disposition to be musical - by having a model for imitation, and the child can learn to compensate for the out-of-tune notes by hearing others sing - especially if the parents are singing the same songs at home with the child. This same kind of compensation happens with children who, for example, move to the U.S. from a non-English speaking country when they are very young and their parents speak English with a heavy accent. The children usually learn to speak English with no hint of an accent, because they also hear the language spoken by many others, and they learn to compensate for the difference in the sounds they hear from their parents and the sounds they hear from the majority of those around them outside their families.

In general, children under the age of seven should not be taught music formally (of course, there are always exceptions to this rule and one could argue that the curriculum developed by Dr. Suzuki follows the developmental model for teaching younger children). No attempt should be made to teach them the abstract concepts of written notes, meters, etc. They only require
informal guidance, which is characterized by exposing the child to musical elements and encouraging them to absorb it. It is important that teacher does not call attention to the child’s performance, nor should he insist that the child imitate the teacher correctly.

These musical elements fall into two broad categories: tonal and rhythm. Children develop their tonal and rhythm capacities separately, and according to different timetables. While it is more common for children to develop accurate rhythm before they are able to sing in tune, many children develop their tonal abilities first. (See Appendix A for a list of observable musical milestones in early childhood music development).

**Tonal Elements**

**Variety of Tonalities**

For their tonal development, it is important that children be exposed to as many tonalities as possible. This means that teachers need to take care to sing songs that are not only pentatonic, but are also in the major, minor, and modal (such as Dorian, Mixolydian, etc.). For their rhythmic development, we need to provide children with a variety of meters – not just duple (songs that are felt to be in groups of two or four beats) and triple songs felt to be in groups of 3 beats), which are the most prevalent in Western cultures. Gordon (2003) writes:

The more varied the tonalities and meters children listen to, the better they will eventually learn to audiate any one tonality and any one
meter, because when children listen to tonalities such as Mixolydian and Dorian, and to meters such as unusual paired and unusual unpaired, that actually increases their potential for audiating other tonalities and meters more familiar to them. Contrary to what might be expected, if children listen to songs in only major and harmonic minor tonalities and in only usual duple and usual triple meters, their audiation skills develop to a much lesser extent, even in those tonalities and meters, than if they had listened to songs in a variety of tonalities and meters, because the more opportunities children have to make comparison between tonalities and meters, the more and the better they will learn (p. 42).

A 1981 study by Carolyn Jarjisian, a researcher at Temple University, supports what Gordon is saying here. In her study, children in the first grade were divided into three groups: In the first group, children were taught songs written solely using the pentatonic scale. In the second group, children were taught songs written in major and minor keys, but not pentatonic. In the third group, the children were taught using major, minor and pentatonic scales. The results of this study were that the third group of children “receiving a combination of diatonic and pentatonic pitch pattern instruction performed both diatonic and pentatonic songs significantly better than did those receiving either of the other types of instruction.” (p.45). What I find most interesting about this study is that the third group of children were able to sing songs in pentatonic keys more in tune than the group of children who were taught only pentatonic songs. These findings support the current thinking that one of the
things that helps children learn what something *is*, is by learning what it is *not*. When a child has different tonalities to “compare” to one another, it helps him organize the syntax of these different tonalities, and aids in his audiation.

**Pentatonic and Mood of the Fifth**

The current practice of Waldorf early childhood classes focusing on songs that are written only in the pentatonic scale seems to be contrary to the findings of researchers outside the Waldorf community. There are other reasons, from an Anthroposophical point of view, that support singing pentatonic songs with young children, but I found no writings that support the *exclusive* use of the pentatonic (Wight, 2011). If we look a little deeper, we find that a comprehensive early childhood music curriculum should contain both pentatonic songs and songs of other tonalities.

One of the reasons why many Waldorf early childhood classes use the pentatonic scale almost exclusively comes from an indication given to us by Steiner that we should create in the classroom what he calls, “the mood of the fifth”. To understand what he means by this, it is helpful to study Steiner’s works concerning the evolution of mankind and its relationship to the musical element. Steiner (1983) tells us that human development recapitulates the development of mankind over the ages. The Egyptian Epoch (2907 BC to 747 BC) is the stage in the cultural development of man which corresponds to the birth of our children today on our earth. During this epoch, man slowly lost his natural relationship to the spiritual world and gradually became capable of consciously comprehending the earthly world through his senses. In
experiencing the fifth, man reaches down and experiences the earthly world, but there is still a shadowy sense of the spiritual above him. The experience of the fifth is this in-between-ness, neither one with the spiritual world, nor firmly planted with our feet on the ground. Steiner says of the experience of the fifth, “The angel in my being is beginning to play music. The muse in me speaks. ‘I sing’ was not the appropriate expression.” (p. 52). The young child still lives in this mood of the fifth.

From a practical point of view, music written in the mood of the fifth has an open, floating quality, and does not suggest a ground tone or tonic. Music written in the pentatonic scale has typically been used to create this mood of the fifth, but the pentatonic scale and the mood of the fifth are two distinct concepts. There are many pentatonic songs that do not create the mood of the fifth, just as there are diatonic songs that do create this mood. We have to be careful when looking for songs to create the mood of the fifth, and not just assume that any song written in the pentatonic scale will be appropriate.

Additionally, teachers need to ask themselves the following questions, “Did Steiner mean that the mood of the fifth is the only mood to be created by the music we bring to our children? Are there times when, perhaps, a joyful, solemn, or raucous mood might be appropriate? Did Steiner mean that we should not sing songs in other tonalities, which are prevalent in the songs of the music of one’s folk culture?” While Steiner did give indications about creating the mood of the fifth, and the pentatonic scale can be used to create this, nowhere did he state that we should not sing songs with children in other tonalities. He tells us that even though children may not yet have a proper
grasp of major and minor moods, we can introduce them in preparation for what is yet to come. (Steiner, 1983).

From my own observations of my Music Together® classes, there is no doubt in my mind that pentatonic music has a distinct calming effect on both the adults and the children in the room. There is a moment in every class where I take out my pentatonic glockenspiel (my “little golden stars”) and play a little melody over the head of each child in the room, and no matter what was going on previously, the mood instantly shifts – tiny children sit on their parent’s laps and listen, adults stop chatting, and we are now ready for a lullaby. In my work with the kindergarten classes, I have noticed a similar effect using songs in the mood of the fifth, which have a healing, calming effect on the children, and are an essential element in the daily rhythm of a Waldorf kindergarten or nursery class. It is also my own observation that there can be times in the daily or weekly rhythm of the class where songs of varying tonalities and meters can fit perfectly, and create different moods to enliven the moment.

**Songs Without Words**

In addition to singing songs in different tonalities, it is also very helpful for the tonal development of the child if we sing songs without words. Singing songs without words gives the child the opportunity to focus solely on the musical elements of the song. Gordon tells us, “The information or words with music is at the expense of the development of children’s music acculturation.” (2003, p. 50). Because songs often tell a story or have interesting rhymes, a
child will most often focus on the words of the song instead of on the melody. If we take out the words, the child can focus solely on the melody, and have the experience of being carried by the melodic element alone, which is a very different experience. In my own experience, I have discovered that if we are playing rhythm instruments, for example, the youngest children are more likely to sing, and sing in tune, if we sing a song on a single syllable such as “doo” or “bum.” Also, for dancing freely with the children, songs without words work well because the focus can remain on the movement. We do not want to eliminate all songs with words from our classrooms, but current indications from researchers in the field suggest that it would be beneficial to the musical development of young children if their teachers would consider adding a few songs without words to their repertoire (Gordon, 2003). What I notice when I present songs without words is the following: First of all, more children actually pay attention to the actual song (and not just the movements). It’s as if they were saying, “Ahhhh – here is something new!” Secondly, more children actually sing with me. While this singing with me, in and of itself, is not necessarily the point (there must be no pressure for the child to “perform”), the fact that more children sing with me indicates to me that perhaps the child is more comfortable singing songs with no words because it is easier for them to do so, and it helps me, as a teacher, evaluate where the child is in their tonal development. Thirdly, I notice that the children who do sing do so louder and more confidently than they sing other songs with words. I attribute this to the fact that is simpler to sing, at least for children in this age group, when the words are removed – it is less for the child to have to concentrate on. I
encourage teachers to try taking out the words to a song they and the children already know (or learning a new tune) and singing only the melody with a movement, and observe what happens.

**Rhythm and Movement**

Rhythm and movement are the other elements that need to be considered when thinking about how we bring music to young children. These two elements go together, because, when we look at the definition of rhythm, as the “flow of events over time,” the very word “flow” denotes movement. There is no rhythm without movement. Therefore, when we sing with children, it is always accompanied by some kind of movement. Sometimes the movement is related to the picture or story that the words of the song are creating, and are not necessarily related to the beat of the music. At other times, it is important that we move to the beat or the steady pulse of the music so that the child can learn to incorporate the beat into their physical bodies. In addition, moving to the beat of the music gives the children a visual and kinesthetic experience of the beat of the music, as well as an auditory one.

There are some pedagogical practices regarding rhythm and movement in Waldorf early childhood that seem to be contrary to what the research outside the Waldorf community suggests. One of those is the practice of *avoiding* moving to a steady beat, or in rhythm to a song (see below for distinction between *beat* and *rhythm*). In the kindergarten and nursery classes I have observed, there is very little moving to, or emphasis on, the beat or rhythm of a
song being sung. Instead, the movements tend to be more floating, arrhythmic ones that have more to do with the words of the song than the music.

I interviewed several experienced Waldorf early childhood teachers to find out what the reasons behind this practice might be. What I found was that there are basically two divergent ways of thinking about these teachers.

In the first camp are the teachers who embrace working with rhythm and beat in their classes. What these teachers told me is that the children are doing this on their own anyway. They take sticks and tap on trees, they drum on the table, march as soldiers, etc. Children in some communities attend drum circles with their parents, and they bring this rhythm play into the classroom. When the teacher models rhythmic movement, she is embracing what the children are already bringing, and, as one teacher put it, “turning chaos into form.”

The use of tasteful rhythm instruments is also embraced by the teachers in this first camp. It brings the children delight and joy when they have the experience of hearing themselves play together, as one. It helps the children with space and time orientation, order and sequence, making patterns and facilitates listening. One teacher told me she feels playing rhythm instruments helps them develop their will - to know when to stop playing (as in Eurhythm we model the short, short, long – during that long beat they must hold back their movement). She uses the playing of rhythm instruments as a way to observe the child and answer the following questions: Can the child match the beat of the teacher? Is the child purposely playing a different beat? Does the
child even notice the steady beat, or are they still in their own world? This helps her in gaining an overall picture of a child. She also feels that doing different kinds of movement to the beat is therapeutic for children, especially those older children who need to incarnate more fully.

In the second camp, are the teachers who feel we should not emphasize the rhythm or beat when singing. One of these teachers told me that she wants the child to find the beat on their own, without being forced to imitate moving to the beat. She feels that moving to a beat or in rhythm to a song can be “too compelling” for young children, and this teacher even went so far as to purposefully move to a different beat than the one of the song being sung in the moment with her class. What I found so interesting was, she said, “a general guideline in Waldorf education is that we want to nourish capacities by allowing them to develop out of an inward readiness in the child.” This is exactly what I am proposing (see below)!

Another point the teachers in this “second camp” mentioned is that the teacher strives to create a mood, or, as one teacher put it “a spell” that she wants to keep the children in. It was my impression that these teachers felt that moving to the beat, or, in particular, using rhythm instruments would somehow break this spell. When I asked one of these teachers where this thinking came from, she told me that she had done her thesis on Steiner and music, and nowhere in her research did she find any lectures of his that support this practice of avoiding moving to the beat. She said that she suspects that this thought or belief came from a person who was just doing their work,
and out of that person’s own study, they had an “aha!” of their own and came to a conclusion about it. When they passed it along, it was interpreted by the people who listened to it and received it as fact, and became a common practice that no one questioned.

After doing some more research on my own, I also could not find anything in the lectures or writing of Steiner that would support this practice. On the contrary, he specifically states in Practical Advice to Teachers (2000):

> The musical element—which is inherently an element of the will that carries life—lives in us from birth and, as I said earlier, is expressed especially during the third and fourth years as an inclination to dance....(p. 39). We are born into the world in a way that makes us want to join the world with our own bodily nature in a musical rhythm and relationship; this inner musical capacity is strongest in the children during their third and fourth years (p. 12).

In this quote, Steiner uses the term “dance”, which is defined as “to engage in a series of rhythmic and patterned bodily movements, usually performed to music” (Webster, 1980), or in noun form “a series of movements that match the speed and rhythm of a piece of music.” (www.dictionary.com). Would Steiner have used the term “dance” here if he did not mean to suggest moving to the beat or the rhythm of the music? What does Steiner mean here when he says that we want to, “join the world with our own bodily nature in a musical rhythm and relationship” if he does not mean to move to the beat or the rhythm of the music?
In A Child’s Changing Consciousness (1996), Steiner connects the rhythmic movements of the arms and legs to speech development and the imitation of sounds:

To learn to walk is to learn to experience the principles of statics and dynamics in one’s own inner being and to relate these to the entire universe. Better still, to learn to walk is to meet the forces of statics and dynamics both in body and soul and to relate these experiences to the whole cosmos. This is what learning to walk is all about. But through the fact that the movements of arms and hands have become emancipated from those of the legs and feet, something else has happened. A basis has been created for attaining a purely human development. Thus, the child who is learning to walk adapts itself outwardly to the external, visible world with its own rhythms and beat, as well as inwardly with its entire inner being. (p. 27).

When you look at how this is all interconnected and belongs together, when you see how in the process of sentence formation the legs are working upwards into speech, and how the content, the meaning of words, enters into the process of sound production--that is, into the inner experience of the structure of the sentences--you have an impression of how the beat-like, rhythmical element of the moving legs works upon the more musical-thematic and inward element of the moving arms and hands...Through the movement of the legs, the child learns to form correct sentences...likewise, if a child does not
learn to move its arms harmoniously, its speech will become rasping and unmelodious. (p. 28).

As the sounds are perceived by the child in whom the characteristic relationship between the movements of the legs and arms is deeply rooted, it learns intuitively to make sense of the sounds that it imitates. (p. 29).

If, as Steiner states here, rhythmic movement is necessary for the development of speech and comprehensive faculties, why would teachers want to restrict this? Is it too far of a leap to suggest that the end of this last quote (“...it learns intuitively to make sense of the sounds that it imitates”) pertains to the sounds of music as well as the sounds of speech?

This argument from some Waldorf early childhood teachers that moving to the beat of the music is “too awakening” seems to stem from the thinking that music is an academic subject, and that demonstrating moving to a steady beat to the children is equivalent to instructing them in music. However, music is an art form, like watercolor painting. When painting with our children, we use our artistic sense to model pleasing color combinations, and to create a certain soul mood. We don't just put all the colors out and say to the children, “go at it!” Imagine the mess that would be created! We model reverence for, and the proper technique for using the brush, create imaginations for painting, etc. so that the child can imitate us and learn to create something of beauty. In the same way with music, we model using our human voices to sing the correct pitches, and our bodies to move to the steady beat or the correct rhythm. If we
don’t model musical behavior for our children, and we know that children learn through imitation and play, how do we expect their capacities to develop?

With painting, some children will not notice the teacher, or at least not demonstrate that they notice what the teacher is doing, and will put all of the colors on their paper and create a mess, just as some children will not imitate the teacher’s movement to the steady beat because they are not in a place in their own development to do so. The point is that we must nourish the child’s musical capacities by providing a model of what is true and good and beautiful. This includes moving to the beat or the rhythm of the music because this is an integral part of the musical experience. The child is free to imitate or not based on his own developmental timetable. There may be other reasons why Waldorf early childhood teachers avoid moving to the beat, but for the purposes of the child’s musical development, based on the research that is available to us today, this is not a sound practice.

I realize that for some Waldorf teachers, moving purposely to the beat of the music and playing rhythm instruments is a radical idea. Perhaps if more teachers were willing to introduce some rhythmic moving into their music making, they would discover that there are ways to incorporate this into their music that don’t necessarily ”break the spell” they have cast.

Levels of Beat

When working with children, it is helpful to recognize the distinction between the concept of beat and the concept of rhythm. The beat of the music is the framework into which we place the rhythm, or pattern of notes. We need
to be able to express a steady beat before we express a pattern because the pattern itself has no meaning without the framework of the steady beat. An example of these two concepts would be: marching with your feet (the beat) and clapping the rhythm (or pattern) to a song or chant. It is this steady beat that we focus primarily on when moving with young children.

There are different levels of the beat. The *macrobeat* is the “consensus beat”, or the beat that most adults want to walk to. The *microbeat* divides the macrobeat in two or three equal parts. The *diminution* divides the microbeat, usually into two or three equal parts, and the *elongation* lengthens the macrobeat – usually double or triple its length (Music Together ®, 2011). Because children have a faster heartbeat than adults, they often naturally move to the microbeat of the song. It is most helpful if we can provide the children with movements to these different levels of beats, especially since some children more easily attune themselves to the macrobeat, while others find it easier to attune to the microbeat. Working with the elongations and diminutions require a certain amount of awakeness on the part of the child, but some of them are ready for this by age six. In any case, it is most helpful if the movements are sustained and continuous.

Only through sustained continuous movement will the consistent placement of microbeats and macrobeats be best understood by the child. ..Perhaps the most important outcome of sustained continuous movement is that children naturally accommodate their breathing to their movement. Children can then assimilate the concepts of time
and space as these relate to rhythm, because unless their breathing
and movement are supported by the weight and flow of their bodies,
children will feel themselves rushing and slowing and improperly
estimating space in their performance of microbeats .....and
macrobeats.... (Gordon, 2003, p. 101).

**Meter**

The *meter* to a song is simply the measurement of the flow of beats
through time. The beats are grouped by placing accents on different beats. In
western cultures, these groupings are most often found in groups of threes and
fours, and our folk music reflects this. However, in oriental and eastern
European cultures, to name a few, it is common to find songs written in meters
that group the beats in groups of five, seven, nine or ten beats. By bringing
some of these songs to children, we are adding to the richness of the musical
vocabulary that they are exposed to. It is important that we include songs with
many varying types of rhythms and meters for the same reasons we need to
provide them with many different tonalities. I have found in the trainings I give
to Music Together® teachers that those ”irregular” or “mixed” meters are very
difficult for them to be able to move to, because they had simply not been
exposed to them. I was able to overcome this difficulty myself by working very
diligently with songs from around the world, and practicing over and over
different movements to these foreign meters. But children who listen and move
to these songs from the beginning do not have this difficulty because these
meters become part of their music and movement vocabulary.
Free Movement and Dance

In addition to working with the different levels of beat, it is important that we provide opportunities for children to imitate a kind of free movement, or dance. Children are born movers, and naturally respond to rhythm with free-flowing movement from the time they are very young. This free-flowing movement begins as an uncoordinated series of gestures in an inconsistent tempo that does not yet correspond with the beat or rhythm of the song (see Appendix A: R1). As the child develops musically, his movements become more regular and steady, and he begins to move with a more consistent tempo, even though the movements do not yet coordinate to the beat or rhythm of the song. Eventually, the child discovers on his own that he can coordinate his movements to the steady beat of the music, and he begins to move with the music. This movement to the music comes from within the child, is freely chosen, and can take an infinite number of forms. It is precisely this element of free movement or dance that has been largely neglected in early childhood education, in both Waldorf schools and others. In Lecture 1 of Practical Advice to Teachers, Steiner (2000) tells us:

If people were sufficiently agile they would dance with all little children, they would move in some way with all little children. Man is born into the world in a way that makes him want to join his own bodily nature in a musical rhythm and relationship with the world; and this inner musical capacity is the most strongly present in children in their third and fourth years. Parents could do a
tremendous amount, if they would only notice this, by starting not so much from external musicality but from the attunement of the physical body and from the element of the dance (p. 12).


Children naturally begin to respond to rhythm with flexible and free-flowing movement at a very early age. Unfortunately, many of them do not persist in that endeavor...because their parents are so anxious to have them unnecessarily walk before their time, and that engenders rigidity. Without proper informal guidance in music, children develop only limited ability to move in a flexible and free flowing manner by the time they begin formal music instruction in school (p. 8).

Sadly, the element of dance has been removed from our everyday lives even more than the element of music. Adults in our culture are either too busy, too self-conscious, or don’t see the point of engaging in this kind of movement modeling for their young children. Even early childhood teachers, both in and outside the Waldorf movement, are not generally taught the value of dancing with the children in their classes. In my survey of Waldorf Early Childhood teachers, 37% of them responded that they dance with their children less than once per month, and 15% reported that they never dance with their children. One of the reasons teachers do not dance with their children might be the lack of recorded music in Waldorf schools to be used as accompaniment. In addition, 83% of teachers surveyed rarely or never accompany their singing or movement with an instrument. This suggests that teachers have to be fairly
confident in their singing voices to sing a good dancing tune. However, there are many songs with simple melodies and an appropriate dancing beat and tempo that can easily sung by the teacher, or played on a recorder or guitar, that are appropriate for this kind of free dancing. A beautiful melody sung without words can work well as an accompaniment (See Chapter 6: Curriculum). Another reason why teachers do not engage in free dancing is the fear that the class will get silly and spin “out of control.” This can happen if the children become self-conscious about their moving. One of the best ways to mitigate this silly behavior is by giving the children an imagination. For example, I use rainbow-colored dancing scarves, which can be our leaves that have fallen on the ground. We pick up our leaves and Mr. North Wind blows them up into the sky and we catch them again (we toss the scarf in the air and blow on it, then catch it again, etc.). Then we end the dance with an imagination (“and all of the leaves fell silently, softly to the ground”, etc.) or other kind of focus song (pentatonic could work well here) to bring the children back into themselves. When I give the children an imagination in a dancing song, I sing the imagination in the tune and rhythm of the song to keep the experience musical.

**Rhythm Chants**

Rhythm chants are an important element in a music curriculum for young children. By removing the tonal element, the child is able to focus solely on the rhythm. Most rhythm chants are nursery rhymes presented in a rhythmic way.
**Therapeutic Movement**

In the last twenty years, there has been a flurry of activity around the subject of the therapeutic/developmental aspects of movement with children. While this topic goes beyond the scope of this paper, it makes sense to consider it when we are thinking about music and movement activities to do with children. Since music involves movement anyway, why not include the kinds of movements that can be therapeutic for children? For a source of well-researched movement activities, games, and singing games, Nancy Blanning and Laurie Clark have put together an excellent resource for teachers, “Movement Journeys and Circle Adventures, Movement Enrichment with a Therapeutic Approach for Early Childhood.” In addition to their guided imaginative adventures, many of the movement ideas in their book could be used to accompany other children’s songs in a variety of tonalities and meters.
Chapter 4. Waldorf Early Childhood Teachers Survey Results

My survey of early childhood teachers was sent to 135 Waldorf schools across the United States, including 28 schools with only early childhood. Out of those schools, 75 teachers responded representing more than 60 schools. The survey contained twenty three questions, which were mostly multiple-choice. The results of the survey are grouped into four categories:

1. The teaching experience and musical background of teachers
2. The ease teachers experience with teaching different musical elements
3. The frequency with which different musical elements are brought into the classroom
4. Preferred methods and resources for learning new songs

Teaching Experience and Musical Background of Teachers

Half of the teachers who answered the survey have been teaching for 10-25 years. About 15% have been teaching longer than 25 years, and another 15% have been teaching fewer than 5 years. Regarding musical training, 34% reported having no formal instrumental or vocal training.

Teacher’s Ease with Learning and Teaching Musical Elements

Of the teachers who answered my survey, 42% reported that learning major and minor songs were very easy compared to 32% for pentatonic and 31% for mood of the fifth songs. I found it interesting that the percentages for pentatonic songs and mood of the fifth songs were very similar, and I wonder if
this is due to the number of teachers who feel that pentatonic songs and mood of the fifth songs are one in the same. Twenty percent reported that songs in any tonality were somewhat or very difficult to learn.

The teachers seemed overwhelmingly confident in their ability to lead small and large movement activities with their songs. Somewhat fewer were very confident leading large movement (73%) vs. small movement or fingerplays (80%). Regarding singing in tune, only 23% of the teachers reported that they sing in tune all of the time. When I compared the results of teachers with musical training with the results of those without it, I found that 30% of those with musical training reported singing in tune all of the time compared to only 8% of those without musical training. The majority of teachers (58%) report singing in tune most of the time, and two teachers reported that they rarely sing in tune. These data suggest to me that schools should make sure when they hire early childhood teachers that they can sing in tune, or at least make sure they are given musical training where needed. Regarding the music training they received in their teacher training, 20% of teachers responded that it was inadequate in enabling them to provide appropriate musical experiences for the children in their classroom. Fifty-five percent said their training was adequate, and the rest did not know if their training was adequate, or did not have any teacher training.
Frequency of Musical Elements

While the confidence teachers feel in their ability to lead movement activities is heartening, it is very interesting that even though 73% of those surveyed report being very comfortable leading large movement, when it comes to the frequency that teachers dance with their children, the percentages go way down. It is possible that the large movement that is lead by those teachers could be considered to be more structured than dancing, such as skipping, running, marching, etc. The following chart shows that when asked how often they dance with their classes, the majority of teachers reported that they do so less than once a week, and a full 15% never dance with their children.
Those teachers who had formal musical training were twice as likely to dance with their children than those without.

Fifty-two percent sing between three and six songs per day, not including transition songs. Another 26% report singing more than seven songs per day. Regarding the tonality of these songs, 45% of teachers surveyed said that approximately three-quarters of the songs they sing in the classroom are pentatonic. Thirty-four percent of teachers said that three-quarters of the songs they sang were in what they considered to be the mood of the fifth. The following graphs show the frequency of pentatonic and mood of the fifth songs.
What these data show is that even though there is a high percentage of pentatonic songs, teachers are still bringing other tonalities into the classroom. On the other hand, with such a large proportion of the songs presented being in the pentatonic tonality, there is scarcely room to present even major and minor songs, let alone the other modalities (such as Dorian, Phrygian, etc.) that are part of Western Music.

Regarding the meter of the song, over half of the teachers did not have any idea about what meters the songs they sing are in. This points to the fact that so many Waldorf teachers shy away from any kind of rhythmic movement or dancing (as stated in Chapter 3), they would not need to notice whether the movement is grouped into twos or threes because they are not necessarily moving to the beat.

Over half of all of the teachers rarely or never accompany their singing with any kind of instrument. Of those teachers with no musical training, this number rises to 96%. This would help explain the lack of dancing in the classroom, because we don’t use recorded music, the teacher must rely on her singing voice to accompany the dancing.
Preferred Methods for Learning New Songs

An overwhelming majority (70%) of teachers find it easiest to learn songs by ear. Only 5% of teachers reported that it is easiest for them to learn new songs by reading music, and 16% reported that playing the song on an instrument first was easiest for them. There were a number of people who wrote in their own suggestions to this question, and they seemed to agree that they prefer to attend gatherings and workshops where they can learn new songs in person. Around 70-80% of teachers would use a CD or DVD to learn new songs, if it were made available free or at a reasonable cost. Among the teachers I interviewed, there seems to be general agreement that more resources need to be made available for teachers to be able to learn songs by ear (CDs, DVDs, workshops).
Chapter 5. Music and Movement Teaching Techniques

Rhythm and Movement

For teaching purposes, I have divided the movement activities into small and large movement. Small movement is generally done sitting in a circle, using the arms, hands and fingers. Large movement is generally done standing up, and involves marching, walking, running, stomping, tiptoeing, dancing, kicking, swaying, wiggling, etc., although crawling and slithering on the floor would be considered large movement. In both kinds of movement, start with moving to the steady beat that is the easiest for the children to move to – sometimes it is the macrobeat of the song and sometimes it is the microbeat, depending upon how fast the song goes and the meter of the song. As the song progresses, try changing the level of beat. Some of the children will follow and others will not. Other variations in movement include varying the intensity - from stomping heavily to tiptoeing lightly.

Rhythm Instruments

Working with rhythm instruments provides the children with several different musical experiences. First of all, it is fun! There is an element of magic and delight in shaking something or clapping two sticks together and listening to the sound it produces. There is an endless variety of sounds that can be produced with different materials, which provides the child with the opportunity to explore the world of these materials and the sounds they make.
As stated in Chapter 3, some Waldorf early childhood teachers I interviewed object to the use of rhythm instruments for reasons I already mentioned. One other objection that was raised was that we must protect the hearing of the young children and that the sounds created by these instruments are too harsh or artificial. It is true that many rhythm instruments made for children are made from artificial materials such as plastic because they are presumably easier to disinfect, and some children’s drums are just too loud. However, it is possible to find good quality egg shakers, rhythm sticks and tone blocks made from natural wood or gourds that make pleasing sounds.

The sounds of different metals can be explored in several ways: by using little bells attached to either wooden handles or a loop of nylon webbing (jingle bells), triangles with a metal striker, finger cymbals and resonator bells. (The last are tonal but can be used for rhythm play). Besides playing with beat and rhythm, these rhythm instruments can lend themselves to an infinite number of sound effects for any imagination the teacher creates. The egg shakers become the sound the train makes as we choo choo around the room. The high pitched finger cymbals or triangles are the birds in the trees or the wind, and the tone block is Mr. Woodpecker.

When we use rhythm instruments, we model different levels of the beat (macrobeat, microbeat, etc.), just as we do when we move without instruments. It is best to keep the same level of beat for an entire verse or phrase of a song before changing the level of beat. It often takes awhile for the children to notice that the level of beat has changed (and some never notice it) and we want to
give them the opportunity to change their movements accordingly, without consciously pointing it out to them.

Resonator bells are individual hollowed-out blocks of wood with a metal tone bar across the top – similar to that of a xylophone. It works quite well to have a set tuned to D and a set tuned to A above middle C. Since the key of D is one of the best keys to sing in with young children (see Tonality and Singing, below), this open fifth works well for many songs. It also works perfectly with pentatonic songs. The same kinds of rhythm work can be done with resonator bells as with the other rhythm instruments – different levels of beat, and once in awhile a simple rhythm of long, short short long (in duple meters) or long, short long (in triple meters).

One additional benefit of using rhythm instruments is that some of the children who might be shy or self-conscious of their singing become less self-conscious. The instrument gives them something besides their singing to focus on, and they tend to sing more confidently while playing an instrument.

**Tonality and Singing**

While young children exhibit a wide range of speaking and “screeching” tones with their voices, many of them are able to audiate, and thus sing in tune, only a relatively small range of pitches. This range (tessitura) is between D and A above middle C. A child’s tessitura varies from child to child, and also depends upon where a child is in their musical development. This is the range where the child begins to learn to audiate, and the majority of pitches in a song should fit within this range. This relatively narrow tessitura poses a challenge
to teachers when trying to come up with a music curriculum. Many, if not most, folk songs have a wider range of pitches. So do many children’s songs. In most of the songbooks written specifically for Waldorf schools, the tessitura falls well above this range. Many of the songs reach all the way up to high E or F. While there may be valid reasons for singing songs in such a high range, when considering what is best for the musical development of the young child, we must consider lowering the singing range to be within their ability to audiate, which is generally between D and A above middle C, with a few neighboring pitches. Another reason for lowering the tessitura of the songs we sing is that many teachers find it difficult to sing such high pitches, and will often shy away from singing at all because they think the only “right” way to sing with children is to sing very high. Male teachers should sing in their head voice (not falsetto) one octave below the children. (Gordon, 2003).

Another consideration regarding tonality that is not well known, even by music teachers, is the importance of singing the songs in the same key each time they are sung. Until children are musically developed enough to be able to sing at least the resting tone, or tonic of a song, many of them do not recognize a song when it is sung in one key on one occasion and in a different key on another, and “the more often a child is confronted with such a situation and the higher a child’s developmental tonal aptitude, the more confused the child becomes.” (Gordon, 2003, p. 63). This can pose an additional hurdle for the teacher, who must remember what tone she begins the song on and have a lyre, recorder, or glockenspiel handy whenever she begins a song. This may be a daunting proposition for many teachers, but it is possible to develop the
habit of getting the starting pitch. I have found that by putting some consciousness on the starting pitch (I do this by noticing what the tone *feels* like in my larynx when I produce it), we can learn to come close to it each time, if we don’t have another instrument handy. In addition, listening to the first note of a song is a kind of ritual, a gesture of attention and respect, that sets the tone for what is to follow – a gesture that is similar to lighting a candle before we read a story. Once the children have mastered the ability to be able to sing most of the notes of a song in tune, especially the resting tone or tonic, and are able to move to the macrobeat, a song can be introduced in a different key (Gordon, 2003).

What is presented here represents the *ideal* musical environment for the young child, which is something we can strive for, but we must not let this ideal stand in the way of the teacher’s musical spontaneity or creativity. Steiner (1983) cautions us that “Pedantry must never play a role in the artistic.” Just as we must not be pedantic about using only the pentatonic tonality in our classrooms, so we should avoid becoming overly pedantic about creating the perfect musical environment. It is more important for the teacher to sing as much as possible, even when it is not possible to get the exact starting pitch, (for example, outside on a nature walk and she didn’t bring along her recorder, etc.) However, at the very least, it is the teacher’s responsibility to sing in tune, and if she cannot sing in tune, she should use an instrument such as a glockenspiel, which is easy to play, to help with intervals that are difficult to hear.
Music Circle Lesson Plan

There is a wealth of resources available to Waldorf early childhood teachers that contain many circle songs/games/activities. Most of these songs were created to fit into a season or circle theme. The songs and activities listed in the curriculum below are grouped by season and many of them can easily fit into a kindergarten or nursery circle theme. I am proposing, in addition to the usual kindergarten or nursery circle, that time be set aside several times in the week where the focus is simply on music. Similar to the way we include painting and eurhythmmy into our kindergarten classes, we can include a music period lasting anywhere from fifteen to forty minutes. (I have had several kindergarten classes that didn’t want to stop singing and dancing, even after fifty minutes!)

We can create a lesson plan for this music circle that breathes with a rhythm that suits our class, just as we create a rhythm to each day, week, season and year. I begin and end my music circle with the same “ritual” songs. It is helpful to have these ritual songs that are sung every time, because it provides the children with something familiar that brings them warmth and gives them the opportunity to join right in. The first song is a good morning song (see Curriculum below) that brings the children into the circle by having those who choose to (usually the older children or those who are more awake) tell us something they saw this morning that we could sing good morning to (sunshine, dewdrops, flowers, snowflakes, bunnies, etc...)
I will follow the good morning song with a few songs with fingerplays or small movement that provide focus for the children. Next I bring out some rhythm instruments for them to play while we sing a song with or without words, or chant a nursery rhyme or a rhythm chant. For the rhythm instruments, we may do a rhythmic nursery rhyme, a rhythm chant, or a simple song. The rhythm instruments include wooden rhythm sticks, hand drums, gathering drums, egg shakers, jingle bells, triangles, and an assortment of wooden tone blocks. Sometimes at this point the children need to get up and move more, so, before getting out the rhythm instruments, I will stand and sing a few songs with guided large movement or free dance. After the free dance I sing a quiet song, usually a fingerplay that tells a little story, and then one or two songs that could be considered a lullaby, or any song that creates a mood of reverence (pentatonic songs and/or mood of the fifth songs work well here). This lesson plan creates a flow or an arc in mood/energy.

The class starts out with a more quiet/focused mood, the energy builds during the rhythm instrument play, and then the most energetic section is usually the free dance, which usually comes about two-thirds to three-quarters of the way through the class. At the end the energy is brought down with quieter, more focused activity, ending with a ritual song.

The preceding is a template for an ideal lesson plan, but what the children may need on any given day or moment can vary greatly! Once you gain some experience leading this kind of a music and movement circle, you can begin to tailor the song activities to the needs of the children in the moment.
For example, they might need large movement right from the beginning, so you can do, for example, a pony galloping song that gets them moving and breathing, and then the pony lays down to take a rest....Then they can be ready for a focus song.

**Sample Lesson Plan Template**

There are several examples of lesson plans in the curriculum section, but it goes without saying that these are just a starting point, and can easily be modified to fit the needs of a particular class. The following is a basic template for creating a lesson plan:

1. **Ritual welcome song**
2. **Focus song or rhythm chant/fingerplay/small movement**
3. **Song with/without words with rhythm instruments**
4. **Song with rhythm instruments, teacher accompaniment, rhythm game**
5. **Large movement – guided imagery, circle dance, dancing scarves, etc.**
6. **Large movement – free dance with teacher accompaniment/song without words**
7. **Quiet focus song or rhythm chant/fingerplay/small movement**
8. **Lullaby**
9. **Ritual ending song**
Chapter 6. Music and Movement Curriculum for Waldorf Early Childhood

In this chapter, I present a selection of songs, rhythm chants and musical activities that are appropriate for children ages 0-6. These songs can be presented in parent/tot programs, the nursery, as well the kindergarten. They are developed in such a way that the activities can be done with a multi-age class, because the participation of the children is not essential (as it is in, say, a kindergarten circle game that doesn’t work unless everyone participates). However, in a parent-child class, it is essential that the parent participate because they are the most important musical role model for their children, and with the children under three, it is best to have the child sitting with the parent who is singing and doing the musical activities. The children will participate in their own way, depending upon their own readiness. There are a few places where I have noted alternate activities for children younger than kindergarten age, for both nursery and Parent-Child classes.

This selection of songs is meant to be just a sample of the kind of music curriculum that teachers can put together for their own classes. Its purpose is to give teachers ideas, and a “jumping off point,” so that they can take these ideas and use them with other songs that they know. I purposely did not include the pentatonic, seasonal, and circle-time songs that are found in so many other sources available to Waldorf teachers. The following songs are a collection of children’s songs, folksongs and nursery rhymes from around the world. There are a few that are obviously connected to one season or another, but most of them can be sung in any season. Where I was able to find it, I have
noted the origin of each song. Some of these songs have beautiful melodies suitable for dancing, but the words are not necessarily appropriate for this age group, so I used them as examples of songs without words. I have also included simple guitar chords for those teachers who might want to use them. For the songs with more difficult chords, I indicated the use of a capo so that easier chords could be used.

The movement activities listed are specifically geared towards teachers who may not have a music background. There are many, many more things that can be done with these songs, but for the purpose of this sample curriculum, I want to keep the activities simple and easy to follow. For each song, I have listed a combination of small movement, large movement, rhythm instruments or movement props (such as a rainbow rope, or silk scarves.) Small movement songs are generally done sitting, using mostly the hands and arms, or a fingerplay. Large movement songs use the entire body, and are generally done standing.
Good Morning, Dear Children

Pedagogical Purpose

This song can be used as a ritual song at the beginning of a music circle to set the tone for the music that it to come. It is very easy to play on the guitar or autoharp.

Activities

After singing good morning to the children and teachers, ask the children one by one to whom they would like to sing good morning. I usually begin by singing, “good morning, dear sunshine (or clouds!)” Then the children mention things they saw on their way to school, or their pets, etc. This allows the child to bring a little bit of their own world into the classroom and share it with their classmates in a structured way.

One teacher I worked with carried this song a little further – she asked the children to mime the animal (or something in nature, like the rain) to whom they would like to sing good morning, and everyone had to guess. When someone guessed correctly, we sang good morning to whatever they acted out, and the person who guessed correctly had a turn to be the mime.
Good Morning, Dear Children

Activities

Ask the children, one at a time, what they would like to sing good morning to. Often it is something they saw on the way to school, or something they can see out of the window. Then everyone sings good morning to whatever the child picked. Here are a few examples:

Good Morning, dear flowers, good morning to you.
Good morning, dear flowers, and how do you do?

Good morning, dear squirrels, good morning to you.
Good morning, dear squirrels, and how do you do?

Good morning, dear river, good morning to you.
Good morning, dear river, and how do you do?
Skipping through the Forest

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a pentatonic song that could be considered to be in the mood of the fifth. It is in a compound meter (duple macrobeat, triple microbeat) which lends metric variety to the curriculum. This song is an imagination about going through the forest and listening to the sounds we might hear. It lends itself to the use of rhythm instruments or recorder to make the sounds of different animals. This song is great practice for learning to be quiet and listen to nature.

Large Movement

Skipping around the room (or galloping, for the younger children who can’t skip yet), either in a circle or in follow-the-leader form, sing the verses. When you come to the “Listen...” part, stop skipping and look around for where the sound might be coming from – for example, if you are singing the robin verse, look up, etc.. Then pause on “What do I hear?” and play an instrument that might sound like that animal. You can use a pentatonic or diatonic recorder to make up a little song (just a few notes) for the animal, or, use a rhythm instrument such as rhythm sticks, a wooden frog instrument (has ridges on its back and when it is stroked, it makes a croaking sound), a shaker for the squirrel, etc. Then continue the song, moving like the animal in the verse (fly, run, hop, etc.) Add your own animals and sounds, or ask the children what they see and make up a sound for it.

As you repeat this song throughout the season, you can develop the activity further by playing the song for the animal and letting the children
guess what animal it is. (This works best if you have kept the song for that animal the same so the children can recognize it by its song.) When the children guess, you sing the rest of the verse and act it out. This song can also be adapted to geographical location – “skipping through the meadow, mountains,” etc..

**Nursery and Parent-Child**

If there are parents present, they can take their children by the hand a skip around, or hold them.
Skipping through the Forest

Pentatonic

Skipping through the forest on a warm and sunny day, what's that I hear?

What's that I see? Skipping through the forest on a warm and sunny day.

Who has come to play with me? Listen listen listen.

What do I hear? It's a robin, it's a little grey squirrel singing, come and fly with me.

It's a little froggie singing, come and climb with me.

It's a little froggie singing, come and hop with me.

"Come and fly with me," "Come and climb a way with me!" "Come and hop a way with me!"
**Seeds**

**Pedagogical Purpose**

This song can be used as a ritual song at the end of the music circle. It has the feel of a prayer, though it is not explicitly so. I introduced this song to several Waldorf teachers who use it as a ritual song at the end of circle or when there are special visitors to the classroom. It is especially beautiful when accompanied by a guitar, and the guitar part is easy to play.

**Small Movement**

Make up gestures to go with the words. One teacher used Eurhythmmy gestures, but any reverent movement will work.
Seeds

Laz Slomovits

I will plant seeds of joy in my heart each day, water them care for them and watch them grow, in my heart each day. In my heart seeds of joy, growing every day.

I will plant seeds of peace in my heart each day, water them care for them and watch them grow, in my heart each day. In my heart seeds of peace growing every day.

I will plant seeds of love in my heart each day, water them care for them and watch them grow, in my heart each day. In my heart seeds of love growing every day.
Raisins and Almonds

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a lullaby with a story that can be used as a little puppet play.

Small Movement

Have the children sit or lie down and rock gently to the macrobeat. Before singing a lullaby in my parent child classes, I quietly play a little song on my pentatonic glockenspiel over the head of each child, singing on one tone, “Little golden starts are shining down on (child’s name).” This has become a ritual that the children and parents love, and it is a magical time that settles the children into a quiet mood.

If you want to act out the song with little wooden or felt animals or puppets, you will need a goat, a mother and a baby (humans or animals.)
Raisins and Almonds

Traditional Yiddish lullaby

B minor

Capo 2:

To my little one's cradle in the night comes a little goat snowy and white. The goat will trot to the market, while mother her watch does keep, bringing back raisins and almonds. Sleep, my little one, sleep.

To my little one's cradle in the night comes a little goat snowy and white. The goat will trot to the market, while mother her watch does keep, bringing back raisins and almonds. Sleep my little one, sleep.
John the Rabbit

Pedagogical Purpose

This song tells a story about a conversation between a farmer and a naughty little rabbit. At every pause, the rabbit sings, “Yes m’am” on the tonic (resting tone) of the song. The resting tone is often the first note a child will learn to sing in tune, and is the note that the entire key (or scale) of the song is built around. At first, the children get to be the rabbits, and they all sing, “Yes ma’am” together.

Small Movement

To introduce the song, hold two fingers up like bunny ears, and hop your hand to the beat as you sing. The teacher sings the farmer part, and the children sing, “Yes ma’am” and hop their bunny ears as they sing.

Large Movement

Standing, have the children line up into two lines facing each other, but quite far apart – opposite ends of the room is best. (This works well outdoors, too.) One line of children is the farmers, and the other line of children is the rabbits. The teacher stands with the farmers. The farmers sing the story, and frown at the rabbits or wag their finger, and when the rabbits sing “yes ma’am”, they jump forwards twice (once on “yes and once on “ma’am”). By the end of the song, the rabbits should be pretty close to the farmers. If they get to the farmers before the song is over, have them jump backwards. Then switch – the farmers are now the rabbits and the rabbits are now the farmers. The teacher will need to sing with the farmers in any case, until the children know the song very well.
John the Rabbit

Traditional African Folk Song

E Major

Oh John, the rabbit (Yes, ma'am!) Got a mighty habit. (Yes, ma'am!) Jump in

in my garden (Yes, ma'am!) Cuttin' down my cabbage. (Yes, ma'am!) My sweet potatoes

(Yes, ma'am!) My fresh tomatoes, (Yes, ma'am!) And if I live (Yes, ma'am!) to

see next fall (Yes, ma'am!) I ain't gonna have (Yes, ma'am!) no garden at all.

(No, ma'am!)
Hey Ya Na

Pedagogical Purpose

The tonality of this song is slightly unusual – e minor hexatonic, which provides tonal variety in our culture of mostly major and minor songs.

Small Movement

This song can be introduced with a series of simple lap-tapping and hand-clapping movements. While singing the first stanza, tap, clap, tap, clap, etc. to the macrobeat (the quarter notes). For the second stanza, continue the same movements, but on the microbeat (the eighth notes).

For older children, or those who need a little more challenge, pair the children up and have them do the following sequence: tap their own lap, clap, clap both hands of their partner, and then clap their own hands on the macrobeat. If they can do this, try it on the microbeat.

Large Movement

This song makes a perfect very simple circle dance. It is fun to do with jingle bells in one hand. Walk (and shake bells if you are using them) to the right on the macrobeat for the first stanza. Repeat. On the second stanza, tip-toe into the center and back out on the microbeat. Repeat. Then do the entire dance again, moving to the left this time.
**Rhythm Instruments**

This song is typically done as a drumming song. You can get a gathering drum, which is large enough for about six children to sit around, and put a lambskin underneath it so it is not so loud. Or, there are several varieties of individual children’s hand drums made of wood and skin that will work well. Sing the song tapping different levels of the beat on the drum. To begin the drumming, try drumming very fast (but not too loudly) on your own drum and then stop abruptly, holding your hands up, and wait. Do this several times, and the children will delight in joining in with you – stopping and starting – as you drum for different lengths of time, they really have to listen! Then begin playing a steady beat on the drum and singing the song. It is best to keep the same level of beat for an entire stanza – don’t change it too often because it takes awhile for the children to notice that you changed the level of beat.

For those who already are able to drum a steady beat, you can give them a little more challenge by tapping a rhythm on your drum. For example – short, short, long (eighth, eighth, quarter) which follows the rhythm of the music. Don’t do this unless most of the children can already play a steady beat.

After you have introduced this song both as a dance and as a drumming song, you can have some children be the dancers and others be the drummers.
Hey Ya Na

Traditional
Native American (Apache)

E Minor hexatonic
(no 3rd) throughout

Hey ya na. Hey ya na. O ha a le ya na ya.

Hey ya na. Hey ya na. O ha a le ya na ya.

Hey ya hey ya. Hey ya na. O ha a le ya na ya.

Hey ya he ya he y ya na. O ha a le ya na ya.
Old Brass Wagon

Pedagogical Purpose

This song is primarily a large movement song. It is perfect for those times when the children need to *move*. The beauty of this song is that the name of the movements is sung, so the children can follow your singing. This allows the teacher to be able to come up with the movements on the spot, depending upon what she feels is needed in the moment.

Large Movement

Standing in a circle, walk to the macrobeat (quarter note) and follow the movements in the song. You can also do quicker movements (tip-toe, run, etc.) and slower movements on the elongated beat (the half note, in this case). Often it is best to do each verse twice, especially with younger children, because it takes them longer to catch on to the change in movements.

Rainbow Rope - Kindergarten

This song lends itself very well to the use of a Co-operband, or what I call a “rainbow rope”, which looks like a large hair scrunchie with rainbow-colored fabric around it. Typically, everyone holds on to the rainbow rope and does the same movements. It is very stretchy, which lends itself to movements such as “stretch it out, old brass wagon..., baby steps in.... stretch it high... stretch it low....”etc. The rainbow rope is great for holding the class together.
Rainbow Rope – Nursery

With younger children, it can sometimes be difficult to use this prop standing up if there are only one or two grownups in the room who will consistently hold onto it. You can try it sitting down, bouncing the rope up and down, shaking it back and forth, stretching it out while rolling backwards, etc.
Old Brass Wagon

G Major

Other Movement ideas:
Circle to the right...
Clap your hands...
Jumping up and down..
Kick your feet.....
Stomp to the right...
Tiptoe around...
Fly like a bird....
Hop like a bunny...
Slither like a snake....
Canoe Song

Pedagogical Purpose

This song is non-major, non-pentatonic to offer more tonal variety to the curriculum. It is written in the Aeolian mode, but could also be considered to be melodically pentatonic, though it feels more like Aeolian (natural minor). It can be played on a pentatonic flute. It is a very versatile song in that it lends itself to many different activities.

Small Movement

This is a quiet song with a descriptive imagination. To introduce the song, make rowing or paddling motions with your arms to the elongated beat (half note). It is fun to make boats in the classroom by having several lines of children sitting behind one another and “paddling” a canoe together.

Resonator Bells

The use of resonator bells (see the section on rhythm instruments in Chapter 5) works well with this song because it is in a key compatible the A and D bells. Start by playing the macrobeat (quarter notes), and then experiment with different levels of the beat. You can mute the resonator bell by placing your thumb over the metal bar for a different sound.
Canoe Song

D minor

Traditional Native American folksong

My paddle's keen and bright, Flashing with silver

Follow the wild goose flight, Dip, dip, and swing.
The Orchard

Pedagogical Purpose

This is an upbeat little song that works well with shakers (egg shakers, wooden maracas, etc.). This song is also a good one to sing without words. Pick a syllable such as doo, la, etc.

Small Movement

Tap knees to the elongated beat (half note) while singing. Mime the motions to the song (picking apples, eating blueberries, etc.)

Egg Shakers/Maracas

Sit and sing this song while shaking to the different levels of the beat. There are many different movements that can be done with egg shakers – clap them together, tap them on the rug, different body parts, cross the midline, to name a few.
The Orchard

C Major

2. Come, Little Mouse, to the orchard with me.
   How many peaches do you see?
   Pick one, two, three, four, five,
   Enough to bake a peachy pie.

3. Come, Little Mouse, to the garden with me.
   How many pumpkins do you see?
   Pick one, two, three, four, five,
   Enough to bake five pumpkin pies.

4. Come, Little Mouse, to the blueberry patch.
   Open your mouth and down the hatch!
   Eat one, two, three, four, five,
   But please save some for a blueberry pie!
Jack Frost

Pedagogical Purpose

This song is a fun little story that captures the children’s imaginations. It is also quite rhythmic and is written in D minor, which suits the mood of the song and provides tonal variety to the curriculum. It can also be used for crossing the midline.

Small Movement

While sitting, with right hand, creep fingers on the floor in front, going diagonally and ending up in front of the left side of the body. On the second stanza, switch hands and creep the left hand across to the right. Repeat these movements on the doo doo part. Repeat from the beginning for the rest of the verses, or stand up and creep around the room. Add your own favorite vegetables or flowers to extend the verses. After the children are familiar with the song, ask them for ideas on where Jack Frost might be creeping....

Large Movement

Sing very quietly while tip-toeing around the room to the macrobeat (quarter note.) While you could change to a different level of the beat, the macrobeat best serves the mood of the song. If you have a big enough room, you can be the leader and lead the children to the garden... to the tomatoes, or, if you add your own verses, to the orchard, the forest, etc.
Jack Frost

D minor

Capo 5

2. Jack Frost sneakin' up upon the tomatoes,
   Jack Frost creepin' up so quiet and still.
   Tiptoe, tiptoe, silently stalking,
   Goodbye, summer, goodbye.

3. Jack Frost sneakin' up upon our fingers,
   Jack Frost creepin' up upon our toes,
   Tiptoe, tiptoe, silently stalking,
   Goodbye, summer, goodbye.
Tingalayo

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a fun “sit and sing” song which works especially well with egg shakers. It has slightly silly lyrics, which the children delight in. It is also very easy to play on the guitar or the autoharp.

Small Movement and Egg Shakers

Clap, tap or shake to the macrobeat, then change to the microbeat or elongated beat. If you have some older children who might enjoy being the leader, you can have them lead a movement and everyone follows.
Tingalayo

Traditional

C major

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sheet Music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tim ga lay o! Come, little donkey, come, Tin ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My donkey eat, my donkey sleep, my donkey kick with his two hind feet. (repeat).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My donkey dance, my donkey sing, my donkey wearin' a diamond ring! (repeat)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. My donkey eat, my donkey sleep, my donkey kick with his two hind feet. (repeat).

3. My donkey dance, my donkey sing, my donkey wearin' a diamond ring! (repeat)
Trot, Old Joe

Pedagogical Purpose

This very simple song is an absolute favorite of children from infants through age six! It is a good song for working with different levels of the beat and involves rocking back and forth movement on “Whoa, Joe!”

Small Movement

Sitting, start by clicking your tongue, holding the imaginary reins and bouncing your knees up and down. Then rock backwards and pull on the reins so that your feet are up in the air on “Whoa, Joe!” You can speed it up, or slow it down, or create a story, for example: Joe is trotting in the meadow, and he sees his friend rabbit, so he quickly trots after him, and then he sees his friend turtle so he trots slowly along with him, etc..

Rainbow Rope

Sitting, everyone holds the rainbow rope (the reins). Begin the song the same way as above, bouncing the band up and down to the beat. On “Whoa”, pull the band towards you and roll back, as above.
Trot, Old Joe

Trotting tempo

Traditional Texas folksong

G Major

Trot, Old Joe, Trot, Old Joe. You ride better than any horse I know.

Trot, Old Joe, Trot, Old Joe,

You're the best horse in the country, Whoa, Joe!
Arirang

Pedagogical Purpose

This song switches from major to minor and is in a triple meter, providing variety in both tonality and meter. It is also a versatile song that can be used in several different ways. It is perfect for dancing with a lilting, triple meter and works very well with silk dancing scarves. It also can be used with finger cymbals or small triangles for an exploration of triple meter with the chiming sounds of metal.

Large Movement with Dancing Scarves

Verse:

1. Hold a dancing scarf with both hands and sway side to side to the macrobeat (dotted half note), moving the scarf in a figure 8 pattern.
2. Facing the center of the circle, put one foot in front of the other and sway forward and back, moving the scarf forward and back.
3. Facing sideways to the circle, with the scarf in the outside arm, reach over your head and back with the scarf making a rainbow arc.
4. Throw and catch a dancing scarf on the macrobeat.
5. For more variation, move freely out of the circle formation, stepping to the microbeats (quarter notes) which are grouped in 3. This is a waltz step - step side to the right, close left, step right; step side to the left, close right, step right.

Rhythm Instruments: Jingle bells, finger cymbals, triangles

Verse 1: Play instrument to the macrobeat (dotted half note)
Verse 2: Play the microbeat (quarter note)

Verse 3: Play long, short, long, short (2 counts, 1 count, 2 counts, 1 count, etc.)
Arirang

G Major/minor

Traditional Korean folksong

(no 3rd throughout)

(sing on "doo", "dee, or other syllable)
There’s a Cobbler – Rhythm Chant

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a duple meter rhythm chant that works well with both small and large movement as well as with rhythm sticks.

Small Movement

Clap, tap lap, or tap your feet or shoes to the macrobeat. On “bang bang bang” it is compelling to play the rhythm instead of sticking to the steady beat and the older children will tend to notice that something is different.

Verse Variations

Tap two fingers together lightly on the microbeat (eighth notes), and with a high-pitched quiet voice:

There’s a cobbler down our street
Mending shoes for tiny feet...

Heavily tap the floor, alternating hands on the elongated beat (half notes), and with a big low-pitched voice:

There’s a cobbler down our street
Mending shoes for giant feet...

Rhythm Instruments

With rhythm sticks, tap the floor to the macrobeat for the first verse, microbeat for the second verse, and elongated beat for the third verse. Experiment with different ways to play the sticks. Here are a few ideas:

- Tap sticks together
• Tap on floor, alternating hands

• Reach behind you and tap them together

• Rub the sticks together

• Pretend one stick is a hammer and one is a nail. Hold the “nail” loosely in one hand and hammer it down.
There's a Cobbler

Traditional nursery rhyme

There's a cobbler down our street, mending shoes for little feet, with a bang and a bang and a bang bang bang. Mend ing shoes the whole day long. Mending shoes to make them strong, with a bang and a bang and a bang bang bang.
A Ram Sam Sam

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a simple focus song without words. It can also serve to wake the children up, especially if you sing it at a fast tempo.

Small Movement

Sitting, sing the first note on “Aaaaaa” – holding the note and wiggling your hands in front of you until you see the children are ready. Then tap your lap, clap, clap on “ram sam sam.” Repeat. Roll hands around each other on “guli guli, etc.,” then tap, clap, clap on “ram sam sam.” Raise arms in the air on “a rafi,” then repeat the movements for “Guli....” And “ram sam sam.”

Repeat the song several times, getting faster and faster.
A Ram Sam Sam

F Major

Traditional Moroccan children's song
Snowfall

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a quiet focus song that creates a winter picture. It works well with dancing scarves.

Small movement

Using the words of the song as a guide, make gestures of falling snow, moving to the macrobeat (half note or 2 beats).

Dancing Scarves

Sitting or standing, hold the scarves with both hands, moving them to the macrobeat (half note, 2 beats) or the elongated beat (whole note, 4 beats).
Snowfall

D Major

Snow is falling lightly down, covering both field and town
Laying down a blanket white, upon the earth all through the night
Moon Song

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a focus song that creates a beautiful imagination about what the moon sees when it looks down below. Its triple meter gives metric variety to the curriculum. It works well with dancing scarves.

Small Movement

Sitting, move torso side to side in a swaying movement, waving arms back and forth to the macrobeat (dotted half note or 3 microbeats).

Dancing Scarves

Sitting or standing:

Verse 1: Hold scarf with both hands and wave slowly in an arc overhead.

Verse 2: Wave scarf forward and backward, or in a figure 8.
Moon Song
Bohemian Folk Song, words by Homer H. Harbour
arranged by Lui Collins

1. Silver moon sailing, through the sky sailing, what do you see when you look down below?
2. Cities and towers, gardens of flowers, turned into silver beneath your clear light.

Optional Guitar capo 5 and play in G:
C = G
G/B = D/F# 
Am = Em
F = C
Dm = Am
G = D

©2010 Molly Gambin Music/SMI
Clap Your Hands

Pedagogical Purpose

This song is written in the Mixolydian mode, which provides tonal variety in the curriculum. It is a good song for structured movement and working with the whole body to experience the beat. It is very easy to play on the guitar or autoharp as it has only two chords.

Small Movement

While the movements given here are a large movement activity, the entire song can be done sitting down. It is a good song to pull out of your pocket if you need to keep the children engaged for a few minutes. The only words to sing are the names of the movements themselves: clap clap clap your hands, tap tap tap your head, bounce bounce bounce your knees, etc. Ask the children for ideas.

Large Movement

Follow the movements given, changing the level of beat where appropriate. For example, jumping could be on the macrobeat (quarter note or 1 beat) while stomping could be on the elongated beat (2 beats.) There are endless variations to this song, and you can change to words to have it fit what else you are doing in the class. For example, if you are baking bread, you can sing, “pat pat pat the dough….roll roll roll the dough,” etc. Or you could do the entire song with animal movements, “fly fly fly around, waddle...,slither...”
Clap Your Hands

Clap, clap, clap your hands, clap your hands together. Clap, clap, clap your hands, clap your hands together.

2. Stomp, stomp, stomp your feet, stomp your feet together; (repeat and sing la la verse).

3. March, march, march around, march around together; (repeat and sing la la verse).

4. Sneak, sneak, sneak around, sneak around together; (repeat and sing la la verse).

5. Jump, jump, jump around, jump around together; (repeat and sing la la verse).

Make up your own movements: Dance, spin, sway, slide, run, etc.
Icicles – Rhythm Chant

Pedagogical Purpose

This rhythm chant is in a meter with seven beats to the measure. This is relatively uncommon in Western cultures, but is becoming more and more common with the merging of music from other parts of the world into the West. The meter is felt in three macrobeats of unequal length – the first macrobeat is long, containing three microbeats, and the second two are short, containing two microbeats each. You can get a good sense of the rhythm by counting, “1 2 3, 1 2, 1 2,” with a slight emphasis on each “1” beat.

Small Movement

Before saying the chant, establish the beat by doing the following movement: tap lap on first macrobeat (dotted quarter note or 3 microbeats,) clap, clap for the second and third macrobeats (quarter note or two microbeats). It is best to be audiating the microbeat when you do this to make sure that the first macrobeat is held for three microbeats. This may take some practice if you have not moved to a seven meter before. An alternative, and easier, way to move to this chant is to pick a movement to do only to the microbeats. The last is easier because the microbeats are all the same duration.
**Rhythm Sticks**

Start by tapping the sticks on the floor for the first macrobeat, then tapping them together for the second and third macrobeats. After a few measures of this movement, begin the chant. Alternately, you can tap the sticks lightly to the microbeat and say the chant.
Icicles

Lui Collins

I-cicles forming, i-cicles hanging, i-cicles sparkling, winter!

Rolling a snow-ball, rolling it bigger, making a snow-man, winter!

I-cicles melting, i-cicles dripping, i-cicles gone! Spring!

Snow-man is melting, snow-man is drooping, snow-man is gone! Spring!

©2008 Molly Gambin Music/BMI
Lukey’s Boat

**Pedagogical Purpose**

This is a fun sea shanty that provides the children an opportunity to echo the teacher, as a sailor would call “Ahoy!” It is also a good song to use in an imagination or story, as there is no end to where Lukey’s boat can go and what Lukey can find there! This song works well with the rainbow rope.

**Small Movement**

Sitting, move as if rowing a boat to the macrobeat (half note if you sing the song quickly, or quarter note if you sing it slower) for the first verse. On the second verse, rock from side to side. You can also have the children sit in pairs facing each other, and rock back and forth and side to side holding hands. On “Aha!,” cup your hands around your mouth as if calling from far away, then cup your hand to your ear to wait for the echo. (You will have to help the children with this at first.) There are three “Aha’s”: two long ones and then a short one. It is simplest to have the children echo just the first two, because after the third “Aha” the song goes right to “Aha me riddle I day.”

**Rainbow Rope**

Sitting, hold the rainbow rope and bounce it up and down, shake side to side, raise it up and down, etc. to different levels of the beat. On Aha’s, roll backwards and pull back on the rope. Another variation is to ask the children what color they want Lukey’s boat to be, and sing that color.
**Large Movement**

Move arms to make the shape of a sail and walk in a circle to different levels of the beat. Stop on “Aha!” to listen for the echo.
Lukey's Boat

Traditional folksong
from Newfoundland

E Major

Lukey's boat is painted green a ha me boys! Lukey's boat is painted green, the
Lukey's sailing down the shore a ha me boys! Lukey's sailing down the shore to

fi nest boat you've ever seen, a ha aha me ride I day! A
catch some fish in Labrador a ha aha me ride I day!

ha! __________________ A ha! __________________ A

ha! A ha me ride I day!

ha!________ a ha,________ a ha aha me ride I day. D.C. al Fine
Two Little Kitty Cats

**Pedagogical Purpose**

The minor key of this song gives the curriculum tonal variety. It is a small movement song, or fingerplay, that can also be used as a large movement song.

**Small Movement**

Hold out your first two fingers of each hand and start by making “meow” sounds to the macrobeat (quarter note). Sing the song and act out the movements with your hands. This is a good substitution song – ask the children what other animals they would like to be and move like them.

**Large Movement**

It is possible to do this song as a large movement song, but it can get a bit chaotic with the children all running around like little kitty cats. Another idea would be to play the following game: two children are in the middle of the circle, lying on the floor. They jump up when singing, “one jumped up,” and run around the outside of the circle. At the end of the song, they each stop next to someone who will be the next kitties in the middle.
Two Little Kitty Cats

Traditional

C minor

Two little kitty cats lying in the sun, One jumped up and said, "I'd like to run." Then said the other one, "I'll run too, running round and round and round I'll play with you."
Kookaburra

Pedagogical Purpose

This is a good song for experimenting with different levels of the beat and it works well with rhythm instruments.

Rhythm Instruments

Egg shakers, jingle bells, rhythm sticks, resonator bells (tuned to A and D – you would have to sing it in the key of D): Sing and play instruments to the macrobeat (quarter note) for the first verse. On the second verse, try playing to the elongated beat (half note). On the word, “Stop,” stop abruptly, then continue. In the beginning, only some of the children will notice the pause and stop playing, but after doing it a few times, most of the children will look forward to it and they will stop together.
Kookaburra

Australian children's song

Merrily

C Major

Koo ka bur ra sits on the old gum tree, merrily merrily king of the bush is he.
Koo ka bur ra sits on the old gum tree, eating all the gum drops he can see.

Laugh, Koo ka bur ra, laugh, Koo ka bur ra, gay your life must be!
Stop, Koo ka bur ra, stop, Koo ka bur ra, Leave some there for me!
Rain

Pedagogical Purpose

A small movement, focus song that you can pull out of your pocket on a rainy day.

Small Movement

Use fingers, arms and hands to act out rain drops falling to the ground on the macrobeat. On the second verse, move fingers to the microbeat for the little mouse scurrying about and jumping in the puddles. This is a good substitution song – ask the children what other animals might be out in the rain and sing about them.
Rain

Lui Collins

D Major

Rain is falling down all over my town
Rain is falling down from the sky to the ground.

Little Mouse it out scurrying about
jumping in the puddles and giving a shout!
Here is a Beehive – Rhythm Chant

Pedagogical Purpose

This nursery rhyme is a fingerplay in a compound meter – duple macrobeats with triple microbeats, which lends metric variety to the curriculum.

Small Movement

Hold up a fist with one hand for the beehive and wrap your other hand around it to cover it. Say the chant while pulsing your hands gently to the macrobeat (dotted quarter note.) On “one, two, three, four five,” poke a finger from the hive out of its cover, then two fingers, etc. until all of the bees are out of the hive. Then wiggle all of your fingers on “bzzzzzzzz!” and make the bees fly away.

Parent-Child Classes

The parents do the movements themselves, and on “bzzzzzz” make their fingers very lightly tickle their child, or land the “bees” somewhere on the child. This is engages the child with their parent and is a fun moment.
Here is the Beehive

Traditional nursery rhyme

Here is the hive but where are the bees? Hiding a way where no body sees.

Here they come creeping out of their hive. one, two, three, four five!
Conclusion

The ability to participate in the music making of one’s culture is the birthright of every child, who is born with a natural aptitude to do so. There has been so much research on the secondary benefits of becoming musical, showing increased SAT test scores, etc. that it is easy to lose sight of the fact that, while this is an added benefit of developing our musical abilities to the fullest, it is not the raison d’être. In becoming musical, a child can, with their whole being, enter the stream of music that is all of creation and become one with it. Participating in the arts is a truly human activity, and provides much-needed nourishment for the soul.

This inborn potential or aptitude for becoming musical will atrophy unless it is nourished by providing the child with a musically rich, developmentally appropriate musical environment, in which live musical behavior (singing and moving to the beat) is modeled for the child.

Because of the times we live in, with fewer and fewer opportunities for live music making in the home, the task of nourishing and guiding these innate capacities falls more and more to the child’s first teachers. This guiding of the child’s musical development must happen well before grade school because this is the time in the child’s development when the window for learning the language of music is fully open. However, early childhood teachers are not given enough training in how to work musically with young children. While many teachers neglect the subject entirely, others who are overly achievement-
oriented teach formal music too early (note reading, abstract musical concepts, etc.) and never offer any kind of informal guiding of the child’s musical development. One of the things Waldorf schools are doing that is *helpful* is that the teachers, at least, *are singing* with their children!

While Waldorf schools do better than other schools by providing live music making for their young children, they have not yet taken heed of the research in the scientific community that shows how much more needs to be done to ensure the proper development of their musical capacities. Due in large part to the proliferation of media in our society, today’s children face many more obstacles to their musical development than they did fifty or sixty years ago and therefore require the adults around them to consciously provide a musically rich environment for them so that their innate capacities can develop.

We are in a time, right now, in the development of our human consciousness, that we are at risk of losing something very precious and music is a manifestation of that. We are so tied tight to the illusion of materialism that we could completely lose our spiritual homeland, and keeping music alive in whatever way we can is one way to touch everybody’s soul, because everybody knows the truth of it. (Dyanne Harshman, Waldorf kindergarten teacher, Whidbey Island, WA).

The current thinking in some Waldorf schools, that we can only introduce one tonality, the pentatonic, and that we must not move to the beat
or rhythm of the music with our young children, while well-intentioned, has not been substantiated by research. Until more research can be done, we must strive to incorporate everything we know into a comprehensive music education that begins at birth, to ensure that the future generations will continue to be able to take part in one of the most sublime activities known to man – the making of music.
APPENDIX A: Music Developmental Milestones

One does not necessarily have music training to be able to observe the developmental milestones for tonal and rhythm development. Because these milestones are not widely known, I am including them here so teachers will be able to make these observations, as part of an overall picture of the child. These musical milestones can be roughly put into the following chart (note the T1... and R1... designations are given as a shorthand way to denote musical behaviors):

Tonal Development

T1 Child sounds or briefly intones around a one-pitch center, usually the dominant (the fifth degree of the scale) or the resting tone (the first degree of the scale, or tonic)

T2 Child purposefully intones more than one pitch, representing the song’s correct melodic contour (i.e. the child’s voice will go up or down to match when the song goes up and down.) The pitches she sings may not be the exact pitches of the song.

T3 Child sings some parts of the song correctly. Those parts often begin the song or progress to a resting pitch at the end of a song.

T4 Child sings those parts of the song below “the break” between the head and chest voice, which is usually around B flat above middle C, correctly and in tune.

T5 Child sings an entire song correctly and in tune.
Rhythm Development

**R1** Child moves with a characteristic gesture and/or sings with a characteristic pattern of rhythm that is short in duration. The gesture or pattern usually does not synchronize with the beat of the music he is hearing or creating.

**R2** Child beats or sings an accurate pattern of rhythm (usually over two or three macrobeats) that is aligned with the ends of phrases.

**R3** Child moves or sings with a consistent tempo that may be different than the tempo of the music he is hearing or creating. When it is aligned, it usually reflects the microbeat rather than the macrobeat.

**R4** Child’s movements may coincide to the macrobeat of the music he is hearing or creating. He moves or sings in the correct tempo and meter only when there is prominent visual, kinesthetic, or auditory stimulus.

**R5** Child’s movements coincide with the macrobeat of the music he is hearing or creating. He moves or sings to an entire song in the correct tempo and meter without relying on external stimulus.

(Music Together®, 2009)
Reference List


www.dictionary.com/browse/dance
What does the music curriculum in a waldorf school look like? What is eurythmy? When do children begin learning world languages?

What is waldorf's approach to teaching science? Waldorf teachers begin teaching reading in the first couple months of first grade by teaching consonants and vowel names and sounds through an artistic approach of drawing, painting, movement, and speech. This artistic, deliberate process engages the children with great interest, and by the end of first grade, children are writing and reading sentences and short texts. The curriculum offers a classical education in all academic disciplines that fully integrates the arts into its teaching methodology. Why? Early childhood education is an important step in educating young minds and offering stimulating opportunities for exploring and learning. Those who contributed to the discipline of early childhood education came from occupations and professions outside the academic domain. What they had in common was an understanding of children. And that is what makes early childhood education unique; it starts with the child and not with the subject matter. Historical Foundations of Early Childhood Education. In a Reggio Emilia school, educators pay close attention to the look and feel of the classroom, which is often referred to as the third teacher. The goal is to create a room that is beautiful, joyful, inviting, and stimulating. Waldorf teachers offer a new curriculum each year and can be proficient in development across all age groups. It can also be difficult if teachers, students and parents have personality conflicts or other issues. Pros. Let’s take a closer look at the different types of Waldorf Education teachers. Waldorf early childhood educators. Waldorf early childhood educators teach children ages 2-5 enrolled in Waldorf-accredited pre-kindergarten programs. Some Waldorf early childhood teacher education programs don’t require a bachelor’s degree, but do require a high school degree or GED. With a full-time class schedule, this training will take two years. Training can also be completed during summer intensives, which will probably take three to four years.