

# **Choral Singing the Orff Schulwerk Way!**



**Texas Choral Directors Association**

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## I. Background

As one of primary media, singing is vital to Orff Schulwerk. Historically, choral singing has also played a role.

- A. Discuss the historical role of choral music singing in classes at the Güntherschule. (from *The Schulwerk* by Carl Orff)
- B. Share strategies that Orff Schulwerk teachers use when teaching choral music.
  - 1. All of the students often learn all of the parts.
  - 2. Use the “evolution process” that we sometimes use when teaching Orff/Keetman melodies: read the melodic outline of a section, and gradually add notes until the final product is reached.
  - 3. Break down the music phrase by phrase for students to read from the staff; or, have the students sing the response each time the teacher sings the “call.”
  - 4. Begin with movement to establish the meter and feel of a piece.
  - 5. Add improvisation, if appropriate to the piece!

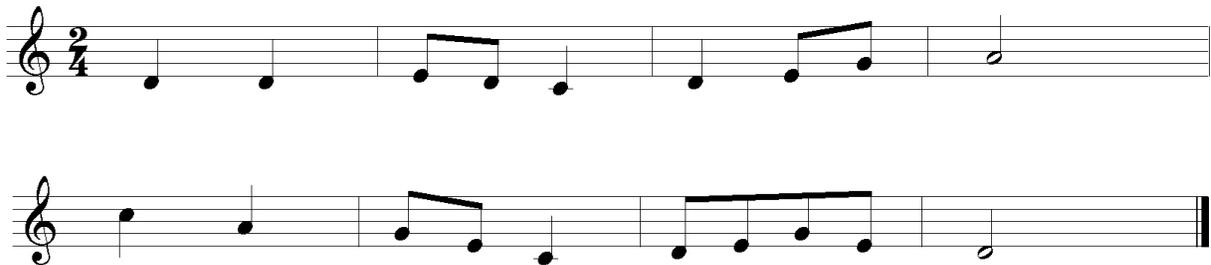
## II. Beginning with the Melodic Outline

“Shady Grove,” Arr. by Shirley McRae

Pavane Publishing

P1227

- A. Sing solfège patterns, centered on *re*.
- B. What is the most important note (the tonal center) of this piece?
- C. Read and sing the outline of the melody on solfège from the staff.



- D. Sing the melody on the text.
- E. Learn and sing the first verse, which is the same melody!
- F. Work on the clapping pattern in the introduction. Add stamps, if needed, to help with rhythmic accuracy.
- G. All will learn and sing the countermelody on pp. 4-5.
- H. Divide into two parts, and sing the two parts for the refrain on pp. 4-5.
- I. Sing verse 2 in unison.
- J. Notice that the next refrain is just like the last one we learned! Sing it!
- K. Sing from top of page 4 to middle of page 6.
- L. Perform the piece from the beginning to middle of page 6.

### III. Phrase-by-phrase Reading from the Staff

#### (Adding recorder!)

“Where Go the Boats,” by Roger Sams

Music Is Elementary

Crooked River Project

CRCPI

- A. Warm up by echo-singing pitches in Do pentatonic on G.
- B. The teacher will use hand signs to generate patterns, which the students will audiate then sing with hand signs.
- C. The students will read patterns from the board on solfege, using hand signs.

Robert Louis Stevenson

#### (Recorder score)

Roger Sams

The image shows a recorder score for the song "Where Go the Boats" by Robert Louis Stevenson, arranged by Roger Sams. The score is written on four staves of music, all in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and consists of quarter and eighth notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on G4 and moves through A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F#7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F#8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F#9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F#10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F#11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F#12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F#13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F#14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F#15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F#16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F#17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F#18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F#19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F#20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F#21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F#22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F#23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F#24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F#25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F#26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F#27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F#28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F#29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F#30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F#31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, 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#### IV. Movement to Establish the Meter and Feel of a Piece

##### “Risseldy Rosseldy,” by Jay Broeker

Santa Barbara Press

5825740

(This idea can also be used effectively for “Antonio” by Jay Broeker.)

- A. Perform a pat-clap pattern as we say “Hickory, Dickory, Dock.”
- B. How many beats are there in each pattern? (2!)
- C. Say it again, but this time, put the beat in your feet and sway as you speak.
- D. How many sounds are there on each beat when we say, “Hickory, dickory, hickory, dickory?” (3!)
- E. Does anyone know what the meter is called? (6/8!) 6/8 meter sounds like skipping or galloping.
- F. Learn and sing the pitches for the response: “Risseldy rosseldy mow, mow, mow.”
- G. Learn and sing the final, longer response: “Risseldy rosseldy hey bombassity nickety nackety retrical quality willoby wallaby mow, mow, mow.”
- H. Ask the students to:
  - Sing the first response two times, followed immediately by the longer response.
  - Keep the beat in their feet and move side to side, as we sing the song.
  - Listen to the words and see if they can tell what’s going on. What’s the story?
- I. Sing the song from the beginning through measure 68.
- J. What is this song about? Who are the characters?
- K. Learn and sing the “calls.”
- L. As teachers, we will discuss the differences between each verse of the song. How does it build?
- M. Read the entire piece with the accompaniment.

##### “Duérmete, niño,” by Victor C. Johnson

Heritage Music Press

15/2264H-3

- A. Before beginning instruction for this piece, lead a warm-up that focuses on breath control. Students need to practice singing eight-beat phrases with no breath in the middle.  
Read the text aloud, with the help of Spanish speakers from your choir. Discuss the meaning of the text, also with the help of Spanish speakers.
- B. Look at mm. 5-13 again, and lead the students to discover when Part I sings and when Part II sings. Read the text in rhythm, only when it is your part’s turn.
- C. Learn and sing the piece from the beginning through measure 13. Make arcs with one arm to show the phrasing of each line as we sing.
- D. As adults, read the entire piece with accompaniment.

**V. Adding Improvisation to a Choral Piece**  
**“Yonder Come Day,” Arr. by Judith Cook Tucker**

World Music Press  
PO Box 2565  
Danbury, CT 06813-2565

- A. Learn and sing the melody.
- B. Learn and sing the “bass” part.
- C. Sing the two parts together.
- D. Learn and sing the inner part.
- E. Sing all three parts together.
- F. Each group (Parts I, II, and III) will work together to create movement to go with their part of the song.
- G. Share the movements with the entire group.
- H. Perform the entire piece with movement.
- I. Let’s have some vocal improvisation for the “B” section! Discuss the harmonic changes in the song (I-V). Where does the song move to V?
- J. Everyone will practice singing notes of the I and V chords as they occur in the melody.
- K. Add passing tones and neighbor tones, but stay on notes from the chord on strong beats.
- L. Perform the piece in ABA form:
  - “Yonder Come Day”
  - Improvisations
  - “Yonder Come Day”

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