

Session Description:

Learn songs, play games, and listen to authentic field recordings from Step It Down by Bessie Jones and Bess Lomax Hawes. Historical information about Bessie Jones, as well as cultural and gender considerations in teaching African American children's music, will be included.

Date: Saturday, 1/11/2014 * Time: 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM * Room: TCC 15

Nyssa Brown is a choral and general music educator at South View Middle School in Edina, Minnesota. From 2007-2012, she served as Music Education Coordinator for Minnesota's Perpich Center for Arts Education, coaching teachers in over 100 school districts across the state of Minnesota in developing standards-aligned curriculum and assessments. A collaborator in the revision of the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, she currently serves on the Grades 3-5 subcommittee, offering input to the Core Writing Team. Ms. Brown taught elementary school vocal and general music at Park Spanish Immersion School in St. Louis Park, Minnesota from 1998-2007. Passionate about teaching in a global context,

Nyssa taught at the American Embassy School in New Delhi, India and in both Namibia and South Africa, through a fellowship offered by the Eastman School of Music's Umculo: The Kimberley Project. Ms. Brown was one of ten finalists for 2004 Minnesota Teacher of the Year and received a prestigious Milken Educator Award in 2004 from the Milken Family Foundation. In 2006, Nyssa was chosen by Education Minnesota, a state affiliate of NEA and AFT, to represent Minnesota at the national level in NEA's Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence. Nyssa is a faculty member of the Kodály Levels Course at Indiana University and the University of St. Thomas. She also serves as an adjunct professor at the University of St.

Thomas and Augsburg College. Nyssa also studied in Hungary at the Kodály Institute's summer seminar. She released her first CD in October, 2000, "Packwood or Paradise" and is currently recording a CD of lullabies. Ms. Brown graduated from the Hartt School of Music and Hartford College for Women in 1998 with a BMus in Education and a BArts in Women's Studies. She completed her Master of Arts in Music Education at the University of St. Thomas, 2008. Her Kodály certification was earned at Brigham Young University in 2001, and she has completed Levels 1 and 2 of her Orff training at University of St. Thomas.

Session Goals:

- Learn songs and plays from the African American Tradition
- Describe context for each of the songs learned
- Discover resources to support integration of this material into the classroom

Recommended Resources:

- Book <u>Step It Down: Games, Plays, Songs and Stories from the Afro-American Heritage</u> by Bessie Jones and Bess Lomax Hawes
- CD and booklet "Put Your Hand on Your Hip and Let Your Backbone Slip" by Bessie Jones
- Brown Girl in the Ring (book and cd) by Lomax

Opening Questions:

Why did I choose this session? * What do I hope to gain from the session? * What would success look like for be by the end of this session?



Plays, not Games	The Nature of the Play		
Quality of fun	• Collaborative (not competitive)		
The Sea Islanders "played"	Sense of timing and movement through space		
Repeatedly constructing small life drama	Move to the music, don't try to get there first		
 Improvising on the central issues of their deepest 	Circle is community space		
concerns	• Each person takes a turn in the center		
Taking on new personalities for identification or	• The circle insulates from the outside world		
caricature	Democratic structure		
Acting	• Multiple ways to express oneself: music, movement,		
	and drama.		

Categories of Plays	Example Song from Category	Source	Other songs in category (all found in Step It Down)
Baby Games and Plays	Go To Sleepy Little Baby	Step It Down and American Folk Songs for Children, rec by Lomax*	Patty Cake
Clapping Plays	Hambone	Step It Down and Put Your Hand on Your Hip	Head and Shoulders, Baby
Jumps and Skips	Shoo Turkey	Step It Down and Put Your Hand on Your Hip	Just from the Kitchen
Singing Plays	Oh Green Fields, Roxie	Step It Down and Put Your Hand on Your Hip	Draw Me a Bucket Green, Green the Crabapple tree
Ring Plays	Little Sally Walker	Oral Tradition and Step It Down and Put Your Hand on Your Hip	Little Johnny Brown Way Down Yonder in the Brickyard
Dances	Zudie-O	Oral Tradition Step It Down	I'm Going Away to See Aunt Dinah
House Plays and Home Amusements	Missy-La Massa-La	Brown Girl in the Ring (Book and cd) by Lomax	Bob-a-Needle
Outdoor Games Songs and Stories	See Step It Down		

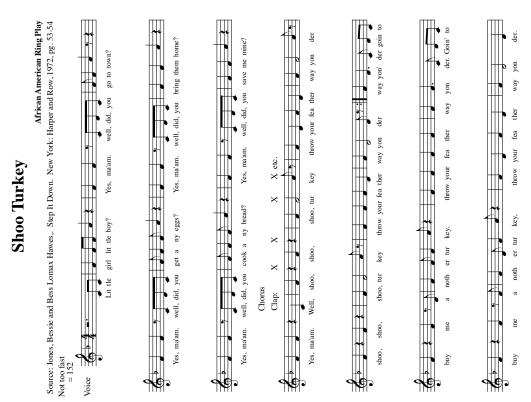
Ring Plays

- 1. Number of players almost any number, even or odd, b/w 6 and 12
- 2. Formation Players in the circle sing, clap, and "step it down"
- 3. The Center Player actor
- 4. Movement to and from the Center with the music
- 5. When to Change Actions Continue action
- 6. Different Roles in the Circle The center player and lead singer are two different roles.

Source for all of the above information: Step It Down by Bessie Jones and Bess Lomax Hawes and "Put Your Hand on Your Hip and Let Your Backbone Slip" by Bessie Jones (except where noted)

* From "American Folk Songs for Children" recorded by Alan Lomax, summer 1959, from the Southern Folk Heritage Series (SD-1350, 1965)





Formation: Line of children, facing the leader.

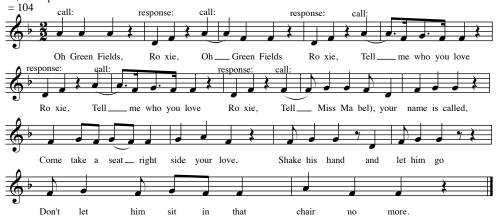
Action: none during the verse.

Chorus: leader leads line in a winding course, body in squatting position, arms thrown out to right and left, alternately on each step, keeping time to the down beats of the song.

Oh Green Fields Roxie

African American Singing Game

Source: Jones, Bessie and Bess Lomax Hawes,. Step It Down. New York: Harper and Row, 1972, pg. 74-75. Fast, with spirit



Formation: ring of players standing, one center player sitting on a chair. Leader/caller stands near chair.

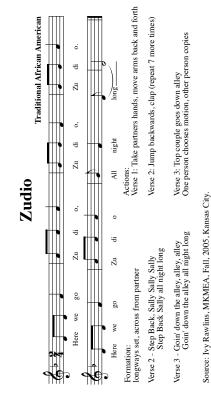
Action: Person in chair whispers the name of another player to caller on "Tell me who you love, Roxie."

When the next players name is called, he or she dances to center, shakes sitting player's hand, and pulls the seated child out of the center seat. The new player sits in the chair. Game repeats.

*Originally, this song was notated in common time, since the tempo suggests speed, I chose to notate in cut time. February 17, 2007, Nyssa M. Brown.







Missy-La, Massa-La

Game Song, St. Lucia

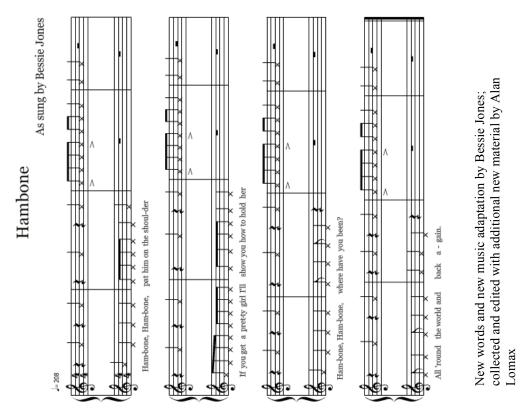
Source: Lomax, Alan and J.D. Elder, and Bess Lomax Hawes. Brown Girl in the Ring-New York: Pantheon Books, 1979, pg. 94-95.



Formation: Standing circle, with hands behind backs.

Action: While song is sung, students pass the ring. The children in the center tries to guess who has the ring at the end of the song. (Original game, the child in the center reaches around behind the back of a child he/she thinks has the ring and tries to grab it - catching the circle player in the act of passing.)





Go To Sleepy, Little Baby

As Sung By Bessie Jones

