

## “CHORAL WARM-UPS USING DALCROZE EURHYTHMICS”

Dr. Marla Butke & Dr. David Frego  
[marlabutke1@gmail.com](mailto:marlabutke1@gmail.com) [rjf43@psu.edu](mailto:rjf43@psu.edu)  
FMEA Virtual Conference – January 2021

“Joy arises in the child the moment his faculties are liberated from any restraint, and he becomes conscious of his control over them, and decides on the direction in which that control shall be exercised. The joy is the product of a joint sense of emancipation and responsibility.”

- Jaques-Dalcroze

### Emile Jaques-Dalcroze and his approach

- born in 1865 to Swiss parents (died 1950)
- was appointed Professor of harmony, *solfège*, and composition at the Geneva Conservatory, careful observation of his students showed him that while the students could be good musical technicians, they often did not hear or feel the nuances of the music
- the approach involves the whole body, mind, and emotions by representing an integrated physical, intellectual, and emotional experience
- three components of this approach are eurhythmics, *solfège*, and improvisation
- special emphasis on child-centered learning
- the body is the first instrument of expression

### Objectives of the Approach

- Focus/Concentration
- Teaching of the music elements through movement, rhythm being the most important
- *Solfège*
- Expression
  - *Plastique animée* - "An artistic and creative embodiment of music through individual or group movement" (Butke/Frego). It is a combination of improvisation and choreography, a physicalization of the music, and an expressive visualization of the music in an artistic and meaningful way.

Participants will experience Dalcroze-based activities which will help students to increase focus and concentration. The combination of the physical, cognitive and affective domains activates multi-sensory parts of the body for students to stay engaged in meaningful ways. These activities serve as motivational tools for students in both the general music and rehearsal settings. Focus and concentration experiences for all age groups will be provided.

### Activities Presented

1. Alphabet/Number
  - Students designate one hand for the letters and one hand for the corresponding numbers.
  - Students speak the letters/numbers and show the steady beat with hands for the entire alphabet and twenty-six numbers with the last pair being "Z-26."
2. Alphabet/Number Variation #1
  - Students speak the first two pairs out loud and the second two pairs silently (inner hearing).
3. Alphabet/Number Variation #2
  - Students sing "A-1" on *do*, "B-2" on *re*, etc., going from *do* to *sol* ascending and descending; continuously looping the partial scale until reaching "Z-26" which is on a repeated *do*.
4. Alphabet/Variation #3
  - Students speak two pairs as quarter notes and the second two pairs as eighth notes.
5. Alphabet/Number Variation #4
  - Students speak first two pairs as half notes, the second two pairs as quarter notes, and the third two pairs as eighth notes.
6. Diminishing Phrases of 8
  - Students stand in a circle or in rows.
  - Students pat on alternating legs and say counts for 7 beats, then clap and speak on beat 8.
  - Repeat to count 7, then 6, then 5, then 4, then 3, then 2, then 1, always clapping the final beat number.

## 7. Energizer Coordination

- Students stand in rows.
- Students count to 8 (speaking “1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 and 6 and 7 and 8 and”) while punching hand right across body on beat 1, punch hand left across body on beat 2, punch hand right to the side on beat 3, punch hand left to the side on beat 4, punch right hand up above body on beat 5, punch left hand up above body on beat 6, punch both hands up above body on beat 7, bring hands down in a flowing manner through the “and” of 7 and all of beat 8 until hands are at the sides of body.
- Step on the “ands” of all the beats and on beat 8 beginning with right foot.

## 8. Harmonic Dictation

- Teacher plays a I chord repeatedly with the root in the bass and student steps the beat facing forward.
- Teacher plays a V7 repeatedly and student steps the beat facing backwards.
- Teacher plays I & V7 chords, switching back and forth and student does appropriate movement (play uneven phrase lengths so it is not predictable).
- Teacher plays a vi chord repeatedly and student walks in a small circle.
- Teacher plays I & V7 & vi chords, and student does appropriate movement.
- Teacher plays a IV chord repeatedly and student steps the beat facing the right.
- Teacher plays all 4 chords, and student does appropriate movement.

## 9. Rhythmic Improvisation

- Students step the beat and speak on “doo” improvised rhythmic patterns (8-beat phrases for older students), add light clapping of the rhythmic improvisation so speaking and clapping match (more difficult).

## 10. Consonant Energizer

- Students speak consonants (“ch, k, t, ss, sh, p, f”) with energy in compound meter. (eighth, eighth, eighth, eighth, eighth rest, eighth rest, eighth, eighth, eighth, eighth, eighth rest, eighth rest, eighth, eighth, eighth, quarter, eighth, quarter, eighth, dotted quarter) Sway to the macro-beat (dotted quarter) and snap on the eighth rests.

## 11. The Sizzler

- Students sing “Are You Sleeping?” and vertically tap the melodic rhythm
- Students “sizzle” and vertically tap the melodic rhythm.
- Repeat but step the beat in place.

## 12. The Conductor

- Students sing on “dah” (dmsmfmr - 4 quarters, 2 eighths, quarter, half note) while conducting a 4 pattern and stepping the beat in place.
- Repeat but step the beat in place.

## 13. Doobie-Doo

- Students sing “doobie doobie doo” (drmfsmfmrdrmfsmfmrdrmfsmfmr 6 sets of 16<sup>th</sup> notes, half note) at a fast tempo and tap the beat for the six beats and then tap a half note vertically in their own hands showing the space.

## 14. Pirate Exercise

- Students sway to the macro-beat (dotted-half note in triple meter) and swing a pretend drinking mug in one hand to the macro-beat as they sing “Ya-ha-ha-ha” (dmsd’ - quarter quarter quarter half).
- Students sway to the macro-beat and punch on the first “dub” of “rub-a-dub-a-dub-a-dub-a” (td’r’d’tlsf - 8 eighths).
- Students sway to the macro-beat and flick on “yo, ho, ho, ho (final note is a punch)” (mfrd - 4 quarters and 2 quarter rests) singing *staccato*.
- Sing entire exercise.

## 15. Disappearing Scale

- Students speak the scale using *solfège* syllables in eighth notes as they take two steps to the right and two steps back again in quarter notes (do not repeat high *do*)
- Internalize one pitch of the scale while stepping the pattern. For example, do not speak *sol*.
- Leave out two or more pitches.

- Repeat the process but sing the scale.
16. Walk and Sing a *do to do* Scale
- Students stand on their *do*, prepared to step and sing a major scale, repeating the high *do* (*do'*) in the descending scale. Since they are standing on *do*, the first step will be in place. All step and sing together.
  - Reinforce the starting pitch being in place.
  - Ask students to find the half-steps in the scale (m-f and t-d'). Students step the ascending and descending scales with smaller steps in the half steps.
  - Repeat process but insert *fi* for *fa* to indicate a G major scale.
  - Repeat process but insert *te* for *ti* to indicate a F major scale.
17. Di-chords and Tri-chords
- Students stand on their *do*. Moving up in duples (di-chords), they step and sing.
  - Singers stand on their *do*. Moving up in triplets (tri-chords), they step and sing.
18. Echo Step and Sing
- Students stand on their *do*. Students echo step the motives.
    - *do re mi re do* (q q e-e q)
    - *do re mi fa sol* (e-e e-e half)
    - *sol fa mi mi mi* (q q e-e q)
    - *mi re do mi do* (e-e e-e half)
  - Students echo step and sing using *solfège* syllables.
    - *do re mi re do* (q q e-e q)
    - *do re mi fa sol* (e-e e-e half)
    - *sol mi sol sol sol* (q q e-e q)
    - *sol mi do* (q q half)
  - Students echo step and sing the motives with altered pitches using *solfège* syllables.
    - *do re me re do* (q q e-e q)
    - *do re me fa sol* (e-e e-e half)
    - *sol me do do do* (q q e-e q)
    - *do mi sol sol sol* (q q e-e q)
    - *sol fi fi sol* (q e-e half)
    - *sol fi mi fi sol* (q q e-e q)
    - *sol mi do* (q q half)
19. Additive Scale
- Teacher demonstrates the additive scale while the students listen and conduct a four-beat pattern.
  - Students sing the additive scale while conducting.
  - Students repeat the scale while conducting and stepping the quarter note beat in place.

---

### What is the American Eurhythmics Society?

Established by Dr. David Frego, Dr. Marla Butke, and Dr. Kathy Thomsen, the American Eurhythmics Society seeks to continue the work of Dalcroze by providing training opportunities in Eurhythmics for music educators who practice their craft in the classroom or in the private teaching studio. The AES serves those teachers looking for meaningful ways to include movement rooted in the philosophy of Dalcroze to meet national and state education standards, and to provide authentic assessment opportunities. The AES teaches personal musicianship along with pedagogy and applications of Eurhythmics.

Check out the website at <http://www.americaneurhythmics.org/>. If you become a member you will have access to lesson plans, videos of lessons, piano improvisation ideas, and *plastique animée* examples with children and adults, a bibliography, blogs, and an extensive recording list with concepts to be taught.