More Than Just Rhythm and Melody:  
Playing with Musical Form, Texture and Tone Color  

A Presentation for the Greater Cincinnati AOSA Chapter  
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List of Abbreviations:  

AG   alto glockenspiel  
AM   alto metallophone  
AR   alto recorder  
AX   alto xylophone  
BM   bass metallophone  
BP   body percussion  
BR   bass recorder  
BX   bass xylophone  
cl.   clap  
NPP  non-pitched percussion  
pt.   pat  
S    student(s)  
SG   soprano glockenspiel  
SM   soprano metallophone  
sn.   snap  
SoR  sopranino recorder  
SR   soprano recorder  
st.   stamp  
st. bt.  steady beat  
SX   soprano xylophone  
T    teacher  
TR   tenor recorder  

“Somebody’s Waiting” (Gathering Activity)  
Source: Handy Play Party Book, p. 61  

“Copycat Game” (Steady Beat Imitation; Identify AB form)  
(I got the idea for this beat keeping activity from Matt McCoy.)  

S sit in a circle on the floor.  
T walks around the outside of circle while playing recorder, each S keeps the beat his or her own way.  
T stands in back of individual S, the rest of the class copies that student’s beat.  
Repeat several times, selecting students who demonstrate a clear beat motion.  (If I choose someone who is clapping, I select someone demonstrating a quiet clap.  I want the students to not only show me what movement they are imitating, but also how the leader is doing it.)  

I encourage my students to keep the beat simple enough that everyone can tell what the pattern is.  In first grade we begin with both hands doing the same thing in one place (e.g., patting knees, snapping fingers, touching top of head, etc.), then move to keeping the beat in two places (e.g., head/shoulders; pat/clap).  As the students are introduced to other patterns in games we play, they naturally include alternating hand movements.
At some point early in the year when I am introducing or reviewing musical forms, I have students identify the form of our game (*AB form*). I ask students to list other songs and dances they have performed that were in AB form.

(I usually improvise my own music on recorder, creating a theme I use for the A section and another I use for the B. If I like what I came up with, I use it for the remainder of my first and second grade lessons that week. Sometimes I use a recorded selection in a very clear cut AB form. Many of the pieces found on the *Rhythmically Moving* CDs are great for this.

**“Deedle Deedle Dumpling” (Rhythmic Building Bricks; Rondo form)**

![Deedle Deedle Dumpling](image)

T chants the poem, S identify small form based on repeated text and rhythm. (*abca*)

S learn poem by rote; T adds BP (phrases 1 & 4; phrase 2; phrase 3); S perform poem with BP.

T: “John must have felt a little silly when he realized he had fallen asleep at his slumber party without fully getting ready for bed. When I have a sleepover, I get set up ahead of time – I’m not going to leave my shoes and stockings on. What would you make sure you have at a sleepover?” S provide examples.

T shares his/her five things for a sleepover: pizza, fuzzy slippers, hot chocolate, sleeping bag and FUN!

T displays the following “rhythmic building bricks:”

- pizza
- FUN!
- hot chocolate
- fuzzy slippers
- sleeping bag

T arranges cards into various formations of two rows, four cards per row, ending with the word “FUN!” S speak word chain (with a repeat).

S perform piece in ABA form: poem; word chain; poem. (S identify as ABA form.)

Individual students arrange cards on board; S perform in ABA form.

T distributes packets with word cards; in small groups, S create word chains (T verifies that S are placing cards in two rows, four cards per row, ending with the word “FUN!”)

All groups practice speaking their word chains at the same time (aka “group practice”). S perform piece in ABA form (group practice).

T distributes hand drums; S practice word chains on hand drums (group practice).

T shares that after performing the poem each time, a different group is going to perform its word chain. T says that since each group will probably have a different word chain, a different letter is needed for each group; the form is A B A C A D … A. This is rondo form. (If this is not the class’s first experience with rondo form, S identify form as rondo.)
Extension:
S could transfer each level of BP to a NPP.

See more about “rhythmic building bricks” in Gunild Keetman’s *Elementaria* (Schott ED 11152, English edition), pp. 24ff.

**Pease Porridge Hot (Ostinato; Arpeggiated Bordun; Rondo Form; SR notes G-E)**

T speaks poem while S walk to the beat (A section). At the end of the poem, T performs body percussion pattern based on AX part: C=pat, G=clap, C’=partner clap (B section). The first few times the partner clap is in the air, S join as they are comfortable. After a few times through, S find partner by the end of the A section.

T introduces or reviews G and E fingerings and plays patterns using these notes; S echo on recorder (whole class echo, ½ class echo, smaller group echo, solo echo).

T sings song, S echo by phrase. S sing entire song.

T plays song on SR, S echo by phrase (A section); S play entire song. S play song while walking. T introduces SG/AG part (from Vol. I, p. 4, #3c (part for glasses)); Add SG/AG to accompaniment and perform A section.

Improvisation: Review Q/A procedure already used by S with other Orff media (e.g., speech, body percussion and barred percussion). T plays 8-beat phrases, S improvise 8-beat phrases (whole class, ½ class, etc.)

Perform piece in rondo form, improvisations forming the episode sections (B, C, D, etc.)

(Note: If you decide to sing the song in A section instead of playing on recorder, use BX instead of AX. The bass part of a piece should be in the octave below the melody. The BX sounds an octave lower than children’s voices; the AX sounds an octave lower than SR.)

![Pease Porridge Hot Sheet Music](image-url)
Jack Be Nimble (Split Ostinato; Rondo; Melodic Composition)

T speaks poem while clapping rhythm, S echo. T changes each “Jack” to brushing the fingers and the other words to tapping on the heel of the hand. Transfer to hand drums.

T models split ostinato (tambourine/claves) with body percussion (tambourine on snaps, claves on claps), S echo. Transfer to instruments. Combine ostinato with hand drums.

T displays composition template onto screen. Students play rhythm of poem all on E, all on G and all on A. Students play rhythm using different combinations of pitches.

T demonstrates how to use the template to compose melodies.

S use printed template and create their own melodies (either individually or in small groups). S must end on A. (S could improvise a melody instead of writing one out.)

S perform their compositions in group practice.

Perform piece as rondo: Section A is poem (on hand drums and/or spoken) with tambourine/claves accompaniment, sections BCDEF etc. are individual composed melodies.

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Jack Be Nimble, Jack be quick,

Jack jump over the candlestick.

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Form: Rondo
A: hand drums, tambourine and claves
B: recorder improvisation accompanied by drone on the pitch A

T reads book to class.
T divides class into four groups. T rehearses choral reading of book in four groups. (A solo speaker reads the first two pages of the book and the final two pages of the book.)
T introduces the ostinato patterns through speech and BP, adding each pattern (from the bottom of the score up to the top). S transfer ostinati to instruments. Once a pattern is in, it continues to the end.
S create a thunderstorm using ostinato instruments. S crescendo into the peak of the storm and then diminuendo, transitioning back into the ostinato patterns.

PERFORMANCE:
Form: (Ostinati continue once they enter.)
- Solo speaker reads first two pages of text.
- Ostinato (“Bringing the rain to Kapiti Plain”)  
- Speech: “This is the cloud…”
- Ostinato (“Heavy, heavy, heavy with rain.”)
- Speech: “This is the grass…”
- (Entrances of ostinati alternate with the verses of the poem until all ostinati are in.)
- Speech: “This was the shot that pierced the cloud… with thunder LOUD!”
- Students create thunderstorm and transition back into the ostinato patterns
- Speech resumes with “A shot from the bow…”
- Solo speaker reads the last two pages of text.

![Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain](image-url)
“Allie’s Waltz” (Phrase Lengths; Mirroring)
Source: Klez Is More (The Klezbros), 2003. Track 7 (available on iTunes as well as on CD)
Website: klezbros.com

(The clarinetist in this group, David Asman, was a classmate of mine in my Orff Level I class at UNLV, Summer 2002.)

S are in scattered formation.
S listen to beginning of the piece. After the four-phrase introduction, S demonstrate phrase length with their arms or bodies. There may be differing opinions about the phrase lengths.
(Optional: S come to a consensus about the length of phrases; T diagrams the phrase structure on the board.)
T models smooth movements (stationary and/or travelling), S mirror the movement. (Begin after the four-phrase introduction.)
S divide into pairs; one S is the first leader, the other the follower. T plays a cue (e.g., on finger cymbals) indicating the partners to change tasks. T encourages S to use different levels, amount of space, etc. Mirroring can also be done with fingertips touching.

Mini Body Percussion Canons (Canon)
(I have experienced great canon teaching in so many classes, workshops and conference sessions, but my first exposure to canon in the Orff Schulwerk setting was in my Level I course with Randy DeLelles and Jeff Kriske.)

T begins keeping st. bt., S join in (simultaneous imitation); T changes location of st. bt., but S are not allowed to change the position until T gives a verbal cue (e.g., “change” or “switch”).
Variations: T decreases amount of time between changing positions until T changes to next position at the same time S change; T performs short rhythm pattern instead of st. bt.; T alternates rhythm patterns with measures of st. bt. T divides class into two groups; the first group follows T, second group follows first group.
T explains to S that a rhythmic canon is more rewarding when rhythms are divergent (different rhythms are performed at the same time) rather than convergent (the same rhythms occurring in more than one part at the same time).

“Deedle Deedle Dumpling” Revisited (Canon)

T reviews text and BP for poem.
Perform poem as canon with T entering first, S entering after 4 measures. T points out that there were places where the rhythms were convergent, causing the canon to not be very satisfying.
Perform poem as canon at the interval of 2 measures. Canon is still not very satisfying due to similar rhythms and tone color in the second and third phrases.
Perform poem as canon at the interval of 1 measure. Ahhhhh, much nicer.
“Autumn is Here” (Canon, SR, Improvisation to a text)
Rhythm of melody adapted from Music for Children, (Murray Edition) Vol. I., p. 75, #1
(“Rhythmic Canons”)
Melody by John Crandall

T speaks the text of the poem. S determine that the first, second and fourth phrases have the same rhythm.
T sings song by phrase; students echo. Students sing entire song.

A Section:
S learn first phrase from pitch stack and perform first phrase on recorder while teacher performs the rest of the song (using a dotted quarter A in m. 6).
S determine that the third phrase (modified) is the same as the first. S play first and third phrases, T plays the second and fourth.
S identify the melodic contour of the fourth phrase (the reverse of the first phrase). S play all but the second phrase, which is played by the T.
T asks students to figure out the second phrase on their own. S play entire melody.
T plays third phrase with A AG AG, students identify the change. S perform phrase and then the entire song.
T makes final change in third phrase to A AG AC’, S identify change, and perform the phrase and song. T accompanies with chord bordun on AX. (Play D and A on each downbeat.)
Perform as canon with the second part entering after one measure.

S learn the speech pattern for section B.
S improvise together (using speech pattern) on A and G; on A G C’; on A G C’ E; on A G C’ E D. (S may improvise using their own rhythms or the speech pattern. T accompanies with bordun on AX.)
Perform piece as rondo. All S perform A section; S take turns improvising. (S decide whether or not to play the A section in unison or as a canon.)

Autumn Is Here
Canon for Recorders
John R. Crandall

SR

\[\text{Autumn is here, breezes abound.}\]

SR

\[\text{See all the leaves fall and scatter down to the ground.}\]

B section

\[\text{Orange and crimson and yellow and brown.}\]

**Introductory Activity:**
T asks S to name different forms of water: forms of precipitation (*e.g.*, rain, snow, sleet), bodies of water (*e.g.*, ocean, stream) and ways in which water returns to the sky (*e.g.*, evaporation, condensation, mist); S identify this process (*water cycle*).

T reads each poem, stopping after “I am the …,” asking S to infer which form of water the poem describes. T shows the page in the book after reading each poem.

**Instrumental Piece:** “Flowing Water” (John Crandall) (to be used as the A section of the rondo form) (*Barred instruments are set up in C-pentatonic, A= la*)

S learn the SR/SX melody by rote (I like to use a pitch stack or paper xylophone to model; S determine the number of phrases (four) and which phrases are identical (*1st* and *3rd*)).

T introduces each accompaniment part using BP. S practice on BP and transfer to instruments.

(Teaching order: BX/BM; AX/AM; SG; finger cymbals) After teaching a new part, perform the piece with all parts learned thus far until all parts are in.

**Development of performance pieces (sound carpets) based on poems:**
T divides class into groups of 6 to 8 students and assigns each group one poem.
Each group creates a performance piece incorporating the following elements: the poem (spoken or sung); instruments and/or found sounds; and movement.

**PERFORMANCE:**
Form: Rondo (ABACAD….A) Section A is the instrumental piece “Flowing Water,” sections B, C, etc., are the pieces based on the poems.
My Little Pony (alto recorder, EDC AG, or soprano recorder, BAG ED)

Sometimes I use this piece with alto recorder, using the pitches EDC AG (transposing the Cs in the first two measures up an octave). It can also be transposed up a fifth to be played on soprano recorder (using BAG ED).

Feel free to “pick and choose” accompaniment parts from what is found in the score, create your own parts, and have your students create movement and form to go with it.

High in the Pine Tree (SATB Recorders; ostinati; Rondo form)

(I wrote this arrangement while “shadowing” Matt McCoy’s recorder classes during the July 2010 George Mason University Orff Levels Course. The rhythmic setting of the traditional rhyme and the text and rhythms of the ostinati are the creation of Mandy Brown, a Level I student. I composed the melody and added pitches to the ostinati.)

Source of rhyme: www.zelo.com/family/nursery/pinetree.asp
Source of quotations about trees: www.quotegarden.com/trees.html

T invites S to walk around the space (holding their SRs), imagining they are strolling through the woods on a warm summer evening. S describe the sounds they hear. T states that he/she hears birds singing.

T displays the song text and sings the song. T repeats the song, S show the melodic contour with their hands. S identify similar contours (phrases 1, 2 and 4). S learn song.

T shows melodic skeleton for phrase 1. S play the pitches (out of rhythm) on SR. T displays notation for these phrases, S practice each one on their own. Perform song with T playing phrase 3.

T displays melodic skeleton for phrase 3. S practice the fingering for B-D’-B. S practice phrase 3.

S perform entire melody.

T speaks first ostinato (“shh, tiny birds”), S join in. S speak ostinato while T plays melody on SR.

T speaks second ostinato (“too dark to see”), S join in. S speak ostinato while T plays melody on SR.

½ class speaks first ostinato, ½ class speaks second ostinato, T plays melody. Switch parts. Transfer ostinato patterns to larger recorders. (The first ostinato can be played on either SR or AR, the second ostinato is played on both TR and BR.)

Perform piece with all recorders.

For a performance piece, use quotations about trees as the episode sections of a rondo. Find a way to accompany the poems (NPP? Pitched percussion? Vocal sounds?)
High in the Pine Tree

Text Setting and Ostinati by Mandy Brown

Score

"Coo," said the turtle dove, "coo," said she; in the long, shady branches of the dark pine tree.
“Great Big House” (Traditional Play Party; Folk Song Arrangement)
Source: Sail Away: 155 American Folk Songs to sing, read and play, Boosey & Hawkes

S stand in circle formation; T numbers off students (1, 2, 1, 2 etc.). T joins circle if there is an odd number of students.
S learn dance (while T sings song). T displays song text so S may join in on the singing when they know the song well enough.

T tells S that his/her favorite holiday meal is Thanksgiving dinner because of the pumpkin pie.
T pats the chord bordun part while speaking the words “pie, pumpkin pie…” S pat while T sings song.
T explains that pumpkin pie is not as tasty without Cool Whip. T speaks “Cool Whip, (1, 2, 3), please don’t forget the Cool Whip…” and pats the pattern. S pat the pattern while T sings song.
½ class practices BX part and ½ class the AX part on BP, T sings song.
Transfer parts to pitched percussion.
Add dance to orchestration. Have some pumpkin pie with Cool Whip. Enjoy!

Great Big House

Verse 2:
Went down to the old mill stream to fetch a pail of water;
Put one arm around my wife, the other ‘round my daughter.

Verse 3:
Fare thee well, my darling girl, fare thee well, my daughter,
Fare thee well, my darling girl with the golden slipper on her.