

AES NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2022

San Antonio, TX

“Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the Choral Setting: Warm-ups, Canons, & Repertoire Applications”

Dr. Marla Butke
marlabutke1@gmail.com

Dr. David Frego
rjdfrego@gmail.com

1. Choral Warm-Ups

- Sirens
- 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.
- Doobie Doo
Students sing “doobie doobie doo” (drmfsmrdmrfsmrdmrfsmrd 6 sets of 16th 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.
- 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.
- Tune Up
Students are in pairs, standing across from each other about five feet.
Student “A” sings an ascending five-note pentachord on numbers and walking forward, student “B” sings a descending five-note pentachord on numbers and walks backward. As the students walk the beat towards each other and on “three” they give a gentle high five.
Then student “A” descends (walking backwards) and student “B” ascends (walking forward) they give a gentle high five on “three.”
Variation #1 - sing in minor.
- Stretching Chords
Students are in SATB quartets with elastics connected by overlapping each one (looks like a spider web).
Students pull the elastics to the whole notes at a slow tempo while singing chords d’msd, d’fld, tfsr, d’msd on “shah.”
Teacher says “hip” (twice as fast) or “hop” (twice as slow) and students pull the elastics to the new rhythm while singing the changing chords.
- 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.

2. Canons

- Full Moonlight Dance
 - First measure—tap the rhythm in your palm
 - Partners—one taps steady quarters, the other taps the melodic rhythm (switch)
 - Sing the five-measure song—clap the two quarter-rests at the end
 - Sing the song with a circular clap on beat one
 - Sing the song stepping on beat one
 - Sing in canon

Sing in canon

- Come Follow Me
 - Students stand in rows with their music at their side.
 - Students sing a C major scale, walking the beat forward as it ascends and backward as it descends.
 - Students sing the first phrase of the song in *sofège* and walk the scale degrees in the melodic rhythm at a slow tempo.
 - Students practice singing and walking the scale degrees *re-sol-do*.
 - Repeat step #3.
 - Students sing the second phrase in *sofège* and walk the scale degrees in the melodic rhythm.
 - Students practice singing and walking the scale degrees *sol-mi-la-mi-sol-mi*.
 - Repeat step #6.
 - Students sing the third phrase in *sofège* and walk the scale degrees in the melodic rhythm.
 - Students practice singing and walking the scale degrees *la-sol-mi'-re'-re'-do'*.
 - Repeat step #9.
 - Students sing the song in *sofège* and walk the scale degrees in the melodic rhythm.
 - Students sing out loud only on *do, do'* and walk the scale degrees in the melodic rhythm of the entire song (inner hearing).
 - Students sing the song with text and walk the beat.

3. Repertoire Applications

- Greensleeves
 - Sing the song while walking the macro-beat
 - Sing in place and move one hand (forward and back) to indicate dynamics
 - Sing and step forward as dynamics increase; back as dynamics decrease
- Niska Banja
 - Concept: Mixed Meter (2+2+2+3)
 - Students stand in self-space.
 - Teacher plays the macro-beats in 9/8 with the configuration of 2+2+2+3 on the hand drum. Students echo clap the rhythmic pattern, making sure that the fourth altered beat is clapped in a circle.
 - Students form groups of four and count off one to four to represent each macro-beat.
 - Each student claps on their beat number as teacher plays the 9/8 macro-beats on the hand drum. Repeat multiple times.
 - Students count off again with new beat numbers and repeat step #5. Repeat two more times so everyone has clapped on each of the four beat numbers.
 - Students take the last beat number they had in step #6 and instead of clapping on their beat number, they each create a gesture for their beat number. Teacher plays the 9/8 macro-beats on the hand drum as the students repeatedly go through the measure with their gestures.

Students form pairs and pull the macro-beats of the 9/8 meter with elastics as the teacher/accompanist plays the second piano part in measures 3-6 repeatedly.
Students walk to the 9/8 macro-beats repeatedly as the teacher/accompanist plays the second piano part in measures 3-6.
Students sing measures 7-10 as they walk the macro-beats and give a gentle push on the fourth macro-beat.

Concept: Articulations

Students stand in rows holding their music.
Students sing measures 11-14, adding a punch in the air on the first macro-beat of each measure as indicated by the accents.
Students sing measure 31 and give a flick with one hand on beat four to represent the *staccato* that is to be sung.

4. Across the Vast Eternal Sky – mini-plastique with elastics
 - Students walk macro-beat and show expression with elastics solo, in pairs, in small groups

5. Discussion/Benefits of Implementing Dalcroze Eurhythmics into the Choral Classroom
Specifically, Dalcroze Eurhythmics will enable choral students to:

- Embody rhythmic integrity
- Improve expressive singing
- Develop sight-reading skills
- Develop conducting skills
- Develop sensitivity to nuance
- Reinforce musical concepts
- Enhance musical interpretation
- Increase muscle memory

There are also social skills and non-musical benefits that are cultivated in a eurhythmics experience:

- Increase focus
- Enjoy social interactions
- Practice listening skills
- Increase visual and kinesthetic awareness
- Engage in processed-based learning
- Share in the joy of shared musical experiences
- Release tension
- Stimulate brain function
- Energize body