

## **“CHORAL WARM-UPS USING DALCROZE EURHYTHMICS”**

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*“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 letters/numbers for two pairs
  - Students use inner hearing for the next two pairs (A-1, B-2, --, --, E-5, F-6, etc.)
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. 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
5. Consonant Energizer

- Students speak consonants (“ch, k, t” *also can do* “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.
6. The Conductor
- Students sing on “dah” (dmsmfmr – 4 quarters, 2 eighths, quarter, half note) while conducting a 4-beat pattern and stepping the beat in place.
  - Repeat but step the beat in place.
7. Pirate Exercise (M)
- 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.
8. Disappearing Scale (D)
- 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
9. Walk and Sing a *do* to *do* Scale (D)
- 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.
10. Echo Step and Sing
- Students stand on their *do*. Teachers play a four-beat phrase
  - Students step and sing the phrase using *solfège* syllables
11. Additive Scale (D)
- 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.

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### **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.