## "WE'VE HAD A GOOD TIME PLAYING THE GAME — NOW WHAT?"

by Peggy Bennett

Because the song-experience games are the primary means of beginning music study in Education Through Music, they often receive a great deal of attention. Attention on the games is necessary for learning:

1. how to value what they have to offer the students and 2. how to play the games carefully for maximum benefit to students and teachers.

But what comes after the game is played? How can the intellectual play, begun by the game, continue through other study procedures?

This semester with my music students, I have used an organization which seems to give some answer and some structure to these questions. Terminology may not be perfected yet, but I wanted to share it with you in case it can help in your classroom.

A teaching sequence, from the perspective of the teacher rather than the learner, is outlined for the sound to symbol process. After presenting the seven steps, I will explain what is meant by each of them and how they can be accomplished in the classroom.

### PROCEDURE FOR PROGRESSING FROM SOUND TO SYMBOL — A TEACHING SEQUENCE

1. Build students' repertoire of song.
2. Develop students' awareness of musical sound and specific sound patterns.
3. Allow students to construct descriptions of what they hear in the sound pattern being studied.
4. Assign the appropriate label to that sound pattern.
5. Guide students' notations of their perceptions of that sound pattern.
6. Present the traditional symbol for that sound pattern.
7. Provide music reading opportunities with that sound pattern.

### STEP 1: BUILD STUDENTS' REPERTOIRE OF SONG

**Means:** Song-experience games.

**Rationale:** Games provide varied repetition of song. This repetition allows students to internalize the whole song, including sound patterns within the song which are to be studied later.

**Building Student Independence with Material:** Respecting the song while playing the game; providing sufficient repetition so that students can learn the song well; giving students the responsibility for various turns during the game. (See "Starting a Song," ETM News, Nov./Dec. '84: and "Getting a Turn," ETM News, Fall '85)

**Example Questions/Statements:**

"Who will start the song for Sarah's turn?"

"How many of you think you can sing all the words to the whole song this time?"

### STEP 2: DEVELOP STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF MUSICAL SOUND AND SPECIFIC PATTERNS

**Means:** Antiphoning, movement, chinning, inner hearing.

**Rationale:** Experiencing the song-game does not necessarily develop awareness of specific sound patterns. The teacher leads the students to perceive patterns by using playful focus to highlight them within the song through the means listed above.

**Building Independence:** Giving students opportunities to demonstrate their awareness through antiphoning, inner hearing, chinning and movement. Students need to function in smaller groups (solo, partner, 3 or 4 students) occasionally as they demonstrate why they hear.

**Example Questions/Statements:**

"Choose a new way to move this time to 'go jiggety jiggety jog." (have students notice and listen to others' ideas)

"Can you put that part of the song in your inner hearing and just show the movement when we get there?" (have students notice others' ideas)

"This time can you think of a movement that

Bennett, P. (1985, Win). We've had a good time playing the game: Now what? *ETM News*, 3(2).

lets us hear the sounds of the words 'go jiggety jiggety jog'?" (have students notice and listen to others' ideas)

## STEP 3:
## ALLOW STUDENTS TO CONSTRUCT DESCRIPTIONS OF WHAT THEY HEAR

**Means:** Verbal description, movement.

**Rationale:** Students need to process perceptions initially through their own vocabulary and experience. The teacher gathers important information by studying these demonstrations of perception.

**Building Independence:** Giving students time to explain: asking follow-up questions if answer is unclear and the teacher believes more explanation time would time would help the student express his thoughts; teacher maintaining the interaction attitude of curiosity and interset in students' thoughts.

**Example Questions/Statements:**

"How can you describe what you hear in that part of the song?"

"Can you show how you think the melody moves on that part? . . . How would you describe that?"

"Can you think of any other words that might fit the way we move to 'go jiggety jiggety jog'?"

## STEP 4:
## ASSIGN THE APPROPRIATE LABEL TO THE PATTERN

**Means:** Saying label (solfa syllable, rhythm syllable, musical term) and writing the word(s) on the chalkboard.

**Rationale:** After awareness and student description, it is appropriate for the teacher to give students the accepted label/name for the pattern being studied (anacrusis, mi mi re re do, ti tripleti trip, etc.) Musically technical information about why the pattern is called that is rarely helpful at this point of learning.

**Building Independence:** Have students sing the new word-labels when the studied pattern occurs in the song, and create opportunity for practice with new labels through varied repetition.

**Example Questions/Statements:**

"Let's call that mi mi re re do.' Can you sing the song that way?"

"Let's substitute the new words 'ti tripleti trip' this time. Can you say that?. . . Let's sing it."

## STEP 5:
## GUIDE STUDENTS' NOTATIONS OF THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE PATTERN

**Means:** Mapping, song dots, voice graphs.

**Rationale:** Without knowledge of traditional music notation, students need to translate what they hear into movement, them into graphic notation. The means listed here allow students to record their perceptions on paper, without the notation system creating a barrier to their written dictation of sound.

**Building Independence:** Students need several opportunities to notate during initial written experiences. This repetition helps students become comfortable with writing the sound as they produce the sound. Students must be encouraged to read their notation (by touching and tracking the symbol as they sing) many times. Have them read the notation with original words of the song and with the new word labels.

**Example Questions/Statements:**

**Mapping:**

"Let your finger sing the song this time . . . Now let your marker sing . . . Can you sing as you read your map?"

**Song Dots:**

"Let your fingers tap the words to the song this time . . . Now let your marker (chalk) sing the words . . . Can you touch your dots this time, so they fit right with the words you are singing?"

"Let your finger carry your voice as it moves up and down and around. . . . Now let your marker (chalk) carry your voice . . . Now can you read your graph and feel how your voice follows it as you read?"

## STEP 6:
## PRESENT THE TRADITIONAL SYMBOL FOR THE PATTERN

**Means:** Writing the symbol on the chalkboard.

**Rationale:** After student awareness, description, use of appropriate label, and non-traditional notation of specific sound pattern, the traditional symbol, the traditional symbol for that pattern should be introduced. Musically technical information (mathematical correlation between rhythms, interval relationships between tonal patterns, etc.) is unnecessary during beginning study and seldom is concrete enough to have meaning for students' hearing of sound patterns. This information is appropriate much later when a variety of sound patterns and notation are being compared.

**Building Independence:** Writing appropriate symbols on individual papers as representing a portion of a map, and/or as an outgrowth of song dots or voice graphs. Students must be encouraged to read their notation by touching/tracking the bottoms of note stems (rhythm) or the note heads (tonal pattern) as they sing. Have them touch/track the notation as they sing original song words and symbol labels.

**Example Questions**

"This is what a 'tripleti' looks like . . . And here is 'ta' . . . What do you notice about how these musical symbols look?"

"This is what a 'mi mi re re do' looks like on the staff. What do you notice?"

## STEP 7:
## PROVIDE MUSIC READING OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE PATTERN

**Means:** Show the traditional notation of the pattern studied in new contexts: new arrangements of the rhythm pattern or the tonal pattern studied, a full score of the same song, another familiar song, or a new song in order to locate the familiar pattern.

**Rationale:** Moving gently from the familiar, the teacher leads the students to recognize the familiar sound pattern in various contexts. Stretching students' knowledge and recognition this way can give them confidence in music reading and a system of scanning for familiar patterns in an unfamiliar score. (See Two Part Songs - Bartholomew; "Tricks, Masks, Camouflages: Is imitation Passing for Music Reading?" - Bennett, MEJ, Nov. '84."

**Building Independence:** When presenting students with the challenge of "see if you can read this," time must be given for them to study in their inner-hearing. As well, the sound patterns they are to read need to be aurally present before a "cold" reading. Often, students are prematurely expected to have long-terms auditory recall for specific tonal and rhythmic patterns.

**Example Questions/Statements:**

"Let me see if I can trick you with something. I'm going to change just a little part of the score to 'Hot Cross Buns.' Let's see if you can still read it." (Teacher makes slight change in rhythm or tonal pattern notation, i.e. repetition, deletion, inversion of pattern, augmentation of rhythm, etc.) "Well, I see that was no problem, let's see if you can read this change."

"Here is the score to a new song. Study it for a minute, and see if you can find any 'tripleti ta's.' Don't tell anyone if you find them. Keep your secret, but raise your hand if you can perform the sound you are reading."

## SUMMARY:
Do these steps help? Do they make sense? I am so aware of the fact that lists, steps, procedures, and graphics can be meaningful only to the person who made them. It would be helpful for me to know if that is the case with these steps. Actually this way of working is nothing new. Mary Helen has written about the "Phases of Learning" in several contexts. Something Fleurette and Doug did last summer in Bozeman, however, gave me the incentive to organize it for my classes.

This organization is not intended to represent a regimented method, or a "never stray from" sequence. It is intended as a framework for planning, sequencing and monitoring your lessons as you lead your students to musical understanding and self awareness.