



Teaching a Song: Considerations and Guidelines

PREPARING TO TEACH A SONG

ANALYSIS

- *Aesthetic* (appeal to children; personal ownership!!)
- *Musical*: length, form, lyrics, key/mode, range & tessitura, ideas about music
- *Pedagogical* - scope for activities, curricular balance; *social and cultural* relevance; *Social-emotional* appropriateness

APPROACH/METHOD

- Rote, rote-note, note, and combinations



LESSON PLAN OUTLINE

○ Front matter

- Basic info, resources, standards
- Lesson Objectives/engagement (what will students know and be able to do)

○ Procedure

- *Prepare* (typically high energy)
- *Present* (focused, skills based, guided new learning)
- *Practice & Extend*
- *Assess learning & Close* (ongoing and summative; coming home to a new place ...)



SONG LESSON PREPARATION

THINKING AHEAD

- *Musical* (beat, tempo, starting pitch, accompaniment and dynamic level, lead in [1, ready, sing] and ending)
- *Pedagogical* (motivate and engage, questions, guide practice, diagnose and remediate, check for learning)
- *Communication* (use of hands, facial expression, speaking voice, singing voice, taking answers, use of silence, energy levels, position in classroom, identifying students)



IN THE MOMENT... LOTS TO THINK ABOUT...

MULTI-TASKING YOUR WAY THROUGH TEACHING A SONG!

- give students **starting pitch and set tempo**
- sing **whole song** first before breaking it down into phrases
- teach **phrase by phrase**

- give **feedback**
- ask **questions**
- use appropriate **language**
- give simple and clear **directions**

- use varied **facial expression and body language**
- make **big motions** for little people!
- be aware of the **envelope of space** you're using (where did I stand; did I walk around, did I look at everyone, who caught my attention, how did I move)



WHERE DO YOU FIND REPERTOIRE?

- Basal textbook series (classified index helpful)
- Song collections (traditional, world)
- Song story books
- Mentor teachers
- Personal library
- Recommendations from colleagues

- American folk singers (e.g. Seegers, Ella Jenkins, Sweet Honey in the Rock)
- Artists who produce recordings for children (Sharon, Lois & Bram, Raffi)



OPENING UP THE WHOLE WORLD OF SONG

- Singing at the *core* of the curriculum
- Variety of songs that are age-appropriate

action songs

greeting songs

game songs

story songs

dance songs

songs of celebration historical events

lullabies

special occasions

work songs

folk/national

- Represent a range of cultures
- Engagement: create, perform, respond, connect





Birdie, Birdie,

Where is your nest?

