

Responsive Classroom in the Schulwerk: A Natural Fit

*Workshop Presented by Matthew Stensrud
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With the implementation of Responsive Classroom in elementary schools across the country, music educators can be an influential voice in the successful use of this process based, community driven and exploration centered approach. Come and learn more about the basics of Responsive Classroom, how it looks in the elementary classroom, and why Responsive Classroom is a natural fit in the Schulwerk. Join us for a morning full of playing, speaking, singing, moving and creating!

Responsive Classroom is an approach to elementary education that leads to greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement, and improved school climate. Inspired by elementary classroom teachers, Responsive Classroom teachers recognize that knowing our children developmentally and culturally is an essential part of teaching. Responsive Classroom creates an equal balance of social and academic curricula and employs this balance with students through an explorative and process-driven approach similar to what Orff Schulwerk teachers employ in their own classrooms.

Energizer Time!

- Dum Dum Dah Dah¹
- Flowing Mirroring²
- Drum Roll
- Steady Beat Mirroring³
- Laughing Objects

Responsive Classroom (RC) Philosophy

- An approach to elementary education that leads to greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement, and improved school climate by creating engaging academics, inspiring a positive community, ensuring effective management, and encouraging developmental awareness.⁴
- Studies have shown that Responsive Classroom increases student engagement, improves academic achievement, decreases discipline problems and leads to more high-quality teaching.⁵
- Music has an active and essential role in the RC approach through its use in morning activities and games, transitions, and student-created presentations.

¹ This energizer can also be found in *Energizers! 88 Quick Movement Activities That Refresh and Refocus*, by Susan Lattanzi Roser, #22.

² Music used for this activity: Traditions of Christmas, A Fresh Aire Christmas, Mannheim Steamroller, 1988.

³ Music used for this activity: Curumin (Bossa Nova Style), It Moves Me: World Music Warmups for Dance, Danaï Gagne, 2007.

⁴ Visit www.responsiveclassroom.org for more information.

⁵ Visit <http://curry.virginia.edu/research/centers/castl/project/responsive-classroom-efficacy-study> for more information.

Guiding Principles of Responsive Classroom⁶

1. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is as important as what they learn.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. To be successful academically and socially, children need to learn and practice specific social skills: *cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.*
5. We must know our children individually, culturally, and developmentally.
6. Knowing the families of the children we teach is as important as knowing the children.
7. Teachers and administrators must model the social and academic skills they wish to teach their students.

Use of Energizers

- An energizer is a quick and exciting activity that engages the entire class simultaneously.
- They allow for fun, build community, and instill safety and comfort in the classroom.
- Energizers are most often used to:
 - Re-focus and re-engage students that are distracted by outside stimuli or plain boredom.
 - Aid transitions such as between lessons or from one part of the room to another.
 - Offer a mental and physical break when working on difficult material. Studies show that movement stimulates the brain and can increase student productivity.⁷
 - Review content of previously learned material in an engaging way.
- What kinds of Energizers have we experienced so far?

Morning Meeting

- Twenty-minute active gathering to start the day.
- Includes greetings, group activities, and a morning message (*like the one below!*).

Dear Teachers,

Clapping and chanting and stomping, oh my!

Today we are going to learn about Responsive Classroom and how it can be used in the elementary Orff classroom. When you leave today's session, you will be ready to use new ideas, understand the basic principles of Responsive Classroom, and better communicate with colleagues and administrators on our own classroom approach! Think about something you have already taken away from this session. Was it an energizer, a fact about RC, or something else? Now, let's play!

Sincerely, Matthew

⁶ Visit www.responsiveclassroom.org/principles-and-practices-responsive-classroom to learn more about the RC Guiding Principles.

⁷ Visit www.creativitypost.com/education/the_benefits_of_movement_in_schools for more information on movement and student learning.

The Parts of a Morning Meeting

Greeting: Gilly Gilly Gilly Good Morning

- Scattered around the room
- Teacher-led singing of song
 - Gilly gilly gilly good morning
 - Good morning, good morning
 - Gilly gilly gilly good morning
 - Good morning to you
- Adding eye-contact and waving
- Add partner interaction
 - A: Hello, B: Hello
 - A: Goodbye, B: Goodbye

Group Learning: Find a Spot!

- Colored polypots scattered around the room
- From the morning message: *what have you learned so far?*
 - Energizer = yellow, orange
 - RC fact = red, green
 - Anything else = blue, purple
- Find a spot = share with your 'spot partner' what you learned
- Add greeting song for traveling to another spot (same color!)

Activity: Double This, Double That

Double double this this
Double double that that
Double this double that
Double this that

- Everyone in a circle, hands in front
- Silent mirroring
 - Double = palms forward
 - This = back of the hand forward
 - That = fist
 - Explore location: air, lap, neighbor's back
- Adding words
 - 'Double' 'this' and 'that' individually
 - Teacher = 'double'; Everyone else = 'this' and 'that'
 - Split, switch
- Face a partner
- Turn = a new partner!
- What else could we say?
 - Animal sounds
 - Foods
 - States
 - What is the rule to pick a word?

Energizer Time! My Two Hands⁸

- Effective transition tool
- Whatever position students are currently in (perhaps scattered standing)
- Teacher-led call and response
 - My one hand goes... (students snap-snap-snap)
 - My one foot goes... (tap-tap-tap)
 - My two hands go... (clap-clap-clap)
 - My two feet go... (jump-jump-jump)
 - My whole body... (turns around)
 - My whole body... (sits right down)

Guided Discovery

- Focused, purposeful, and playful technique to introduce materials and concepts to students.
- Students explore an object, figure out what it can do, and then answer directed questions to discover its best purpose.
- “Guided experiences in spontaneous exploration of the materials under focus”⁹ is a playful opportunity to explore new concepts in the classroom.
- In the general classroom: crayons
 - What do you think this is?
 - What do they do?
 - What else could we do?
 - Explore, Share and Care
- In the music classroom: xylophone bars
 - What do you think this is?
 - What do they do?
 - What else could we do?
 - Explore, Share and Care
- How else could we do this in the general music classroom?

⁸ This energizer can be found in *Energizers! 88 Quick Movement Activities That Refresh and Refocus*, #49.

⁹ American Orff-Schulwerk Association (AOSA), visit www.aosa.org for more information.

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Yoga to Movement Sentences to Feathers for Lunch to the Volume to Jazz!

- In the Body = Yoga Pretzels¹⁰
 - Teacher scatters cards of various shapes and levels around the room
 - Find and explore cards individually
 - Metallophone improvisation accompaniment (varying modes)
 - Do you feel a glide? Or a press?
 - How can you move into, hold, and out of each pose in a sustained fashion?
 - Instead of simply walking between each card, how can each pose turn into the next?
 - Choose two cards to remember
 - How can you grow from Rock → First Card → Second Card → Rock
 - Elemental form: abca
 - What if you could change the order and create your own elemental form?
 - Can begin and end in any card/shape
 - Partner Composition
 - Discuss card choices with your partner
 - How can you create an elemental form incorporating something from each partner?
 - Partner movement sentence could mirror each other or create contrast
 - How do you begin?
 - How does the movement happen? Simultaneously? Opposite?
 - How do you end?
 - How does the music accompaniment change your movement?
 - Small Groups
 - Show partner movement sentence to another pair
 - What if the pair could play an accompaniment for you?
 - What instruments would you use?
 - How would the musicians react to the movers?
 - How would the movers react to the musicians?
- Read *Feathers for Lunch* by Lois Ehlert¹¹

*Big cat is sneaking
Looking for a spicy munch
Big cat is sneaking
But couldn't find his lunch*

- Speech Piece
 - BP = Pat, clap, snap, clap
 - Layer in melody, echo-sing phrases

¹⁰ *Yoga Pretzels: 50 Fun Yoga Activities for Kids and Grownups* by Tara Guber and Leah Kalish

¹¹ *Feathers for Lunch* by Lois Ehlert, 978-0-15-230550-5

Feathers for Lunch

arr. Matthew Stensrud

Volume I, p.95, no. 3

Orff/Keetman

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff, labeled 'Orff Soprano Xylophone', begins at measure 8 and contains a melodic line of eighth notes. The second staff, labeled 'Orff Soprano Glockenspiel', begins at measure 15 and features a sparse, rhythmic pattern of notes. The third staff, labeled 'Orff Alto Xylophone', contains a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The fourth staff, labeled 'Orff Bass Xylophone', provides a drone accompaniment with a repeating pattern of two notes per measure.

- Xylophones¹²
 - Can you figure out the melody on the xylophone? It starts on C!
 - Drone: F-C' F-D' (single moving)
 - Ostinato: F-G-F-G
 - Color: C-C'-C (until last time, ending on F-F'!)

¹² Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman's *Music for Children, Volume I*

Feathers for Lunch

arr. Matthew Stensrud

Jazz Style

SX

Looks for munch

Can't find lunch

SG

AX

BX

- How did the new version feel? How did it change our performance?
- Rondo
 - A: Song with Xylophone Accompaniment
 - B: Partner Movement Sentences with Partner Accompaniment
- Reflecting on Responsive Classroom
 - Where did you see *guided discovery* in this activity?

Academic Choice

- Student-created final product, project, or presentation showcasing student learning.
- Incorporates natural cycle of learning: student-initiated goal planning, active working, and reflection on experience.
- We do this each and every day when students choose an unpitched percussion instrument for part of a sound story, improvise a B section on the xylophone, or create a rhythm from a selection of building bricks. As music educators, we often take it a step further when we ask groups of students to create an 8-measure creative movement piece or compose an ABA melody on the recorder with an unpitched percussion ostinato.

La Bastringue¹³

- Process: Begin in a circle
- Aural cues
 - Explore forward and back
 - End with in 4, out 4
 - Explore left and right
 - End with left 8, out 8
 - Combine
 - In 4, Out 4
 - In 4, Out 4
 - Circle left 8
 - Circle right 8
 - Add holding hands
- Partner Steps
 - Partner dominoes
 - Dosido for 8
 - Add to previous steps
 - Two hand turn for 8
 - Add to previous steps
 - Promenade counterclockwise for 16
 - Think how it transitions from two hand turn
 - Add to previous steps
- Partner Composition
 - What if you and your partner could create something in your space instead of the promenade? How long do you have? What are some examples?
- Final Form
 - A: In and out 2x (16)
 - B: Circle L and R (16)
 - C: Dosido and Two hand turn (16)
 - D: Promenade or Composition (16)
- Extension of Form
 - 1st D: Promenade, 2nd D: Composition, Repeat
- Reflecting on Responsive Classroom
 - Where did you see *guided discovery* in this folk dance? Where did you see *academic choice*?

¹³ From “Chimes of Dunkirk: Great Dances of Children” by New England Dancing Masters. Track on accompanying CD.

Energizer Time! Shark Attack¹⁴

- Scattered around the room
- Teacher-led text and movement
 - Baby shark (doo doo doo doo da doo)
 - Mama shark
 - Papa shark
 - Surfer dude
 - Saw a shark
 - Shark attack
 - Swam away
 - Where's my board?
 - Surfin' shark
- How could you tell your own story?
- Small group creation of four steps of the story with movement

Interactive Learning Structures

- Student-centered partner, small group, and whole class activities
- Allows opportunities for students to collaborate, socialize, create and move
- Giving students unique ways to share their thoughts – *often through action* – allows the opportunity for deeper understanding while keeping the classroom environment fun and uplifting
- Rely on the feedback, thoughts, actions and decisions of our students rather than ourselves, the teachers.
- Mix and Mingle ILS
 - RC Structure: Students walk around the room. When you direct, they find a partner. One partner asks a question (student-created or teacher-chosen) and the other partner answers. Pairs switch roles and repeat. After a minute or so, teacher directs students (with a signal) to leave their partner and walk around the room again, wait for teacher signal, find new partners and repeat.
 - Orff Structure: Students travel around the room (walking, skipping, galloping, crawling, etc based upon the students) while the teacher plays an instrument (drum, piano, temple blocks). When the teacher stops, students find someone near to the them to create a movement shape with and freeze. The teacher then takes a tour of the 'statues', noticing different shapes, and begins to play an instrument again so students can continue to travel and end up with a different partner.
- Maître d' ILS
 - RC Structure: Teacher calls out for a 'table of __'. Students form groups of that number and discuss a prompt, question, or activity. Next, teacher calls out new table, students must form new group and repeat.
 - Orff Structure: For a movement lesson, teacher calls out for a 'table of __' and students form groups of that number and create a shape using positive and negative space. The teacher then takes a tour of the 'statues', noticing different shapes, and begins to play an instrument (drum, piano, temple blocks) as students travel around the room (walking, skipping, galloping, crawling, etc based upon the students). Teacher stops playing, calls

¹⁴ This energizer can be found in *Energizers! 88 Quick Movement Activities That Refresh and Refocus*, #71.

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out a new number, groups form and create a new shape. For an extension, add movement cards to give students more focused ideas.

Energizer Time! Alphabet People

- When you hear the sound, turn your body into a letter
 - Uppercase
 - Lowercase
- Spelling
 - Name
 - Favorite food
 - Spell to beat, change tempo
- Groups
 - With partner, spell 2 letter word together, mirroring each other
 - Join pairs, spell 4 letter word mirroring (*keeping it appropriate!*)
 - Join groups, spells 8 letter word mirroring
 - Join again, spell 16 letter words, each person a letter (*examples given for assistance!*)

What Have We Experienced Today?

- Take a moment and look back on what we've done today. How much of it felt comfortable in the Schulwerk? How much of it *was* the Schulwerk? A final component of Responsive Classroom is the importance of teacher language. Think about the language used today. Student-centered or teacher-centered? Encouraging or dismissive?
- Teacher language should reinforce, remind, be open-ended, and occasionally redirect.
 - Reinforcing language
 - Concrete, professional, encouraging, class-centered
 - I notice...
 - We did...
 - Reminding language
 - Brief, to the point, clear, calm
 - Who can show us...
 - Who remembers...
 - Remind us how...
 - Open-ended language
 - Helps students explore and experience
 - Student-centered questions value student input
 - Allows further insight into student understanding

Responsive Classroom in the Schulwerk: A Natural Fit

Orff Schulwerk = Responsive Classroom

- Preliminary Play = Spontaneous Exploration = Guided Discovery
- Process = Scaffolding Teacher- Imitation to Student-Creation = How Students Learn
- Exploration to Composition = Structured Student-Led Risks = Academic Choice
- Small Group Creation = Student-Centered Social Curricula = Interactive Learning Structures

Closing Energizer! Soy Una Taza¹⁵

A Spanish kid's song first introduced to me by Sofia Lopez-Ibor, this song is a hit, breaks a sweat, and even allows for some student composition (otherwise known as Academic Choice in the RC world!).

- Motions with teacher-created sound effects (increasing tempo)
- Echo spoken Spanish words with motions
- Adding music
 - During rests, add body percussion: pat, clap, snap, clap
- Discover all the kitchen utensils, and then create!
- Instead of these utensils, can you create new ones?
- Instead of utensils, try animals or even musical instruments!

Suggested Additional Materials

99 Activities and Greetings by Melissa Correa-Connolly

The Morning Meeting Book by Roxann Kriete

The First Six Weeks of School by Paula Denton and Roxann Kriete

Intery Mintery by Doug Goodkin

A Complementary Combination: Responsive Classroom and Orff Schulwerk, "*The Orff Echo*", Spring 2014, by Matthew Stensrud

"5 Simple Ways to Incorporate Responsive Classroom Ideas into Orff Schulwerk," *Reverberations*, January 2015, by Matthew Stensrud

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¹⁵ Music used for this activity: Soy Una Taza, Grupo Encanto, Cantajuego Vol. 4, 2008.