Infusion of Responsive Classroom in Elementary General Music

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 elementary music classroom. 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 elementary music teachers employ in their own classrooms. Additionally, we'll dive into the connections between Responsive Classroom and Orff Schulwerk, an approach to music education developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman and employed by educators across the globe.

Energizer Time!

- Dum Dum Dah Dah[1]
- Flowing Mirroring[2]
- Drum Roll
- Steady Beat Mirroring[3]
- 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, Danai 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 Classroom[6]

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:
    1. Re-focus and re-engage students that are distracted by outside stimuli or plain boredom.
    2. Aid transitions such as between lessons or from one part of the room to another.
    3. Offer a mental and physical break when working on difficult material. Studies show that movement stimulates the brain and can increase student productivity.[7]
    4. Review content of previously learned material in an engaging way.
- What kinds of Energizers have we experienced so far?

Opening Routines

- Consistency in routines instills confidence and helps students feel safe
- Some steps in opening routines can include: orderly entrance, greeting, message, simple starting activity, effective transition to next class activity

Morning Meeting

- Twenty-minute active gathering to start the day.
- Includes greetings, group activities, and a morning message
- Let's explore one and see how this could work in the music room!

The Parts of a Morning Meeting

Orderly Entrance

- Scattered around the room
- Teacher-led → student-led

[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.

- Could grow to wall facings, partners, diamonds

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

Morning Message

Dear Teachers,
Clapping and chanting and stomping, oh my!
Today we are going to learn about Responsive Classroom and its connections to the music room. When we finish our time together, we will better understand the principles of Responsive Classroom and have some new ideas to try on Tuesday. Thinking about Responsive Classroom…

- *What is something you already know and use?*
- *What is something you hope to learn?*
- *What is something you've already taken away?*

Now, let's play!

Musically Yours, Matthew

Group Learning: Find a Spot!

- Colored polyspots scattered around the room
- From the morning message: *what have you learned so far?*
  - Know and use = yellow, orange
  - Hope to learn = red, green
  - Already taken away = 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?

Morning Meeting in the Music Room

- 1-3 minutes
- Routine to enter the room → read message → quick share/answer/discussion → next steps to continue/begin lesson
- Find ways for message to connect to learning
- Keep it musical

Energizer Time! My Two Hands[8]

- 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
    1. What do you think this is?
    2. What do they do?
    3. What else could we do?
    4. Explore, Share and Care
- In the music classroom: xylophone bars

[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.

1. What do you think this is?
2. What do they do?
3. What else could we do?
4. Explore, Share and Care

- How else could we do this in the general music classroom?

Interactive Modeling

- Clear, student-centered way to follow routines and master skills with independence and observation
- Students watch teacher model behavior, say what they notice, then model it themselves before practicing as a class
- The Seven Steps of Interactive Modeling:
    1. Say what you will model
    2. Teacher models
    3. Students say what they noticed
    4. A student models
    5. Students say what they noticed
    6. All students practice
    7. Students say what they noticed and teacher provides feedback
- Let's try this as we head to the xylophones!

Academic Choice

- Student-centered, teacher-guided decisions – to both develop intrinsic motivation while allowing for differentiation
- Can be as simple as a brief activity choice or a multi-class project or presentation
- 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.

Energizer to Academic Choice
Shark Attack[10]

- 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

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

  - Where's my board?
  - Surfin' shark
- How could you tell your own story?
- Small group creation of four steps of the story with movement
- Reflecting on Responsive Classroom
  - Where did you see *guided discovery* in this folk dance? Where did you see *academic choice*?
  - How could we have used *interactive modeling* if students were having difficulty performing a certain step?

Teaching 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.
  1. Reinforcing language
     - Concrete, professional, encouraging, class-centered
       - I notice…
       - We did…
  2. Reminding language
     - Brief, to the point, clear, calm
       - Who can show us…
       - Who remembers…
       - Remind us how…
  3. Redirecting language
     - Stopping word → wait for follow-through → reminder to get back on track
       - Freeze.
       - Wait for follow-through
       - When lining up, we walk with our voices in a whisper.
  4. Open-ended language
     - Helps students explore and experience
     - Student-centered questions value student input
     - Allows further insight into student understanding

Folk Dance to Academic Choice

La Bastringue[11]

- 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

[11] From "Chimes of Dunkirk: Great Dances of Children" by New England Dancing Masters. Track on accompanying CD.

        - 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*?

Logical Consequences

- Respectful, Related and Realistic
- Break It, Fix It
- Loss of Privilege
- Positive Time-Out (Take a Break)
- Consider length of time and teacher voice/attitude toward student

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
    1. 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.

2. 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 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
    1. 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.
    2. 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 out a new number, groups form and create a new shape. For an extension, add movement cards to give students more focused ideas.

Closing Routines

- Spend the time ending the class smoothly.
- Consistency with putting instruments away, lining up, grabbing jackets, other steps
- Brief energizers to keep the class focused while in line, waiting, etc
- Closing energizer example:
    1. Make A Motion: 1 2 3 __ , 5 6 7 __ , A B C __ , E F G __ , Make a motion with your…

Responsive Classroom Review

- What have we touched on so far today?
    1. Opening Routines
    2. Morning Meeting
    3. Interactive Modeling
    4. Energizers
    5. Interactive Learning Structures
    6. Academic Choice
    7. Closing Routines
    8. Teacher Language

Closing Energizer! Soy Una Taza[12]

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!).

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

- 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

Responsive Classroom for Music, Art, PE and Other Special Areas by Responsive Classroom, Matthew Stensrud, Key Content Contributor
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
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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Matthew Stensrud is an award-winning Elementary Music and Movement Teacher and currently in his ninth year and teaches kindergarten through fifth grade general music at George Mason Elementary School in Alexandria, Virginia. He received his Master of Music Education from George Mason University and Bachelor of Music Education from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He is certified in Responsive Classroom I and Orff Schulwerk and is an approved Teacher Educator of Movement and teaches movement at Orff Levels courses in South Carolina and Oregon. Matthew frequently presents workshops nationally and currently serves on the American Orff Schulwerk Association's *The Orff Echo* Editorial Board. He is a key content contributor to the book ***Responsive Classroom for Music, Art, PE and Other Special Areas***.