MUSIC LEARNING THEORY (MLT)

How we learn when we learn music

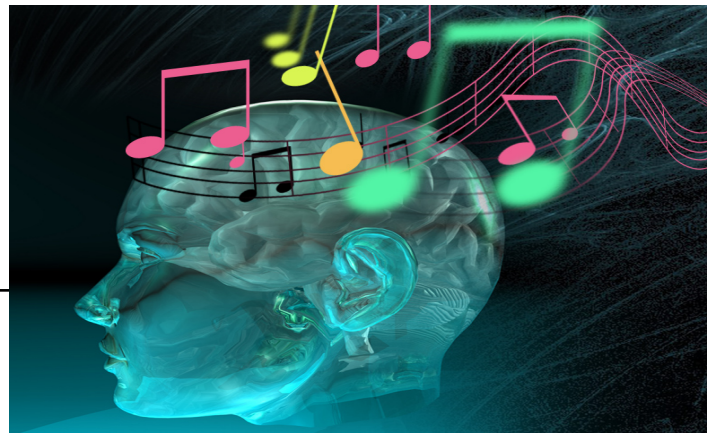
Dr. Edwin Gordon

- Based on an extensive body of research and practical field testing by Edwin E. Gordon and others, Music Learning Theory is a comprehensive method for teaching ***audiation***, Gordon's term for the ability to think music in the mind with understanding.
- MLT establishes sequential curricular goals in accord with their own teaching styles and beliefs.

The primary objective is development of students' tonal and rhythm audiation.

Through audiation students are able to draw greater meaning from the music they listen to, perform, improvise, and compose

"Initial music learning, like initial language learning, is informal, yet sequential." (Gordon)

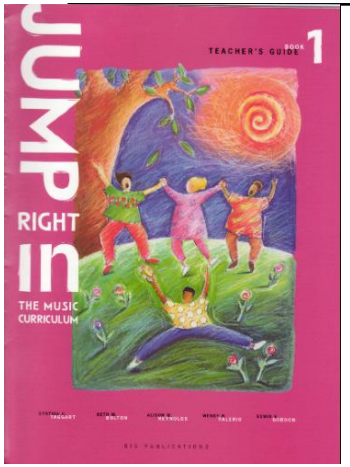


Stages of Audiation

- *Stage 1-* momentary retention
- *Stage 2-* imitating and audiating tonal patterns and rhythm patterns and recognizing and identifying a tonal center and macrobeats
- *Stage 3-* establishing objective or subjective tonality and meter
- *Stage 4-* retaining in audiation tonal patterns and rhythm patterns that have been organized
- *Stage 5-* recalling tonal patterns and rhythm patterns organized and audiated in other pieces of music
- *Stage 6-* anticipating and predicting tonal patterns and rhythm patterns

Jump Right In: The General Music Series...

- - Is based on how children learn music, rather than how it has always been taught
- - Can be used with ease by teachers of any methodological background
- - Allows teachers to adapt all lessons to meet the needs of individual children
- - Conforms to the National Standards - Includes comprehensive lesson plans for each song and activity

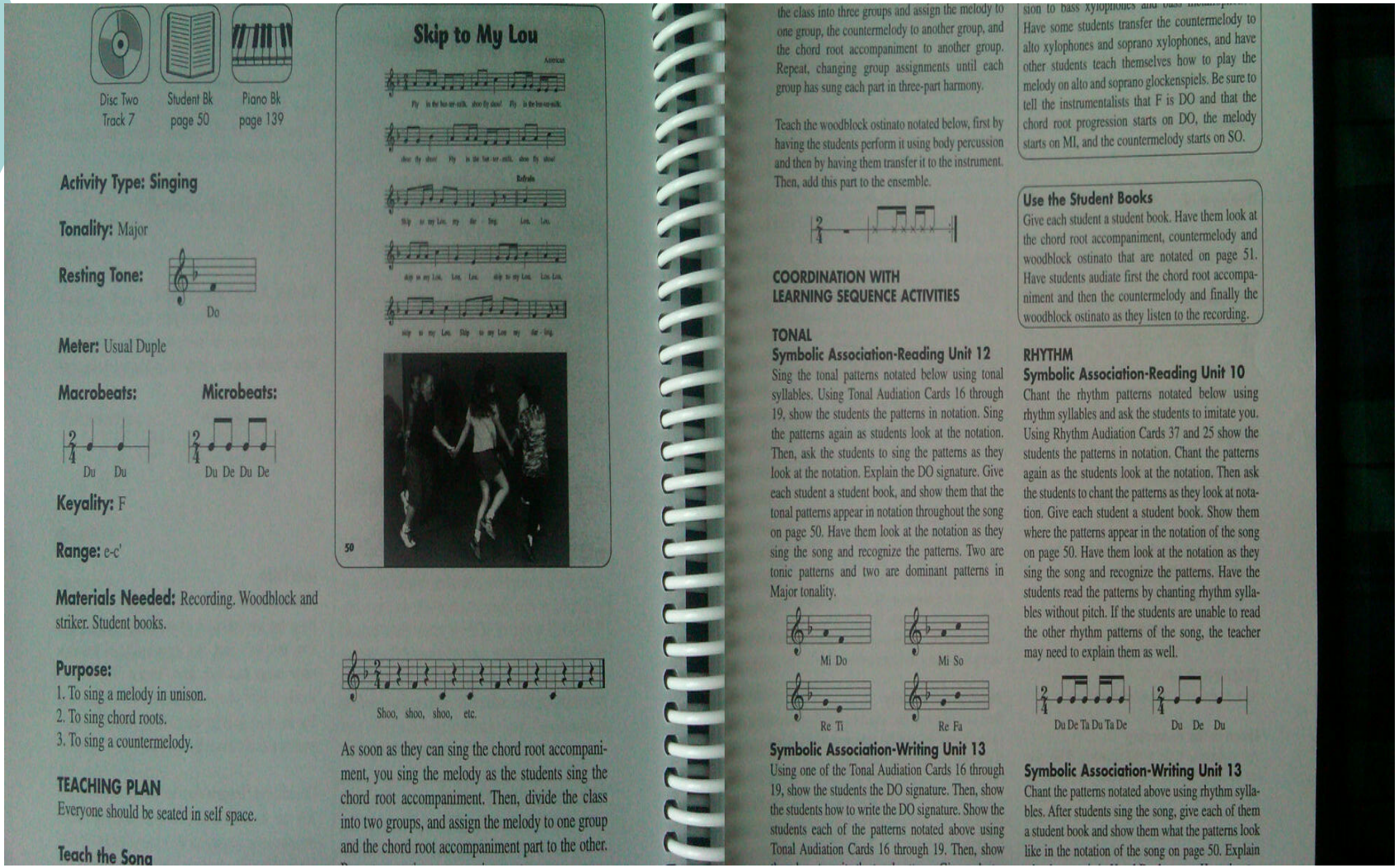


- Focuses on helping children learn to audiate and become independent, creative musicians

- Incorporates outstanding folk repertoire from all over the world

Music Learning Theory has many characteristics in common with such rote-first methods as Suzuki, Dalcroze, Kodaly, and Orff

JRI 3rd Grade Spring Learning Activity



Disc Two Track 7 | Student Bk page 50 | Piano Bk page 139

Activity Type: Singing

Tonality: Major

Resting Tone: Do

Meter: Usual Duple

Macrobeats: Du Du

Microbeats: Du De Du De

Keyality: F

Range: e-c'

Materials Needed: Recording. Woodblock and striker. Student books.

Purpose:
1. To sing a melody in unison.
2. To sing chord roots.
3. To sing a countermelody.

TEACHING PLAN
Everyone should be seated in self space.

Teach the Song

Skip to My Lou

American

Refrain

50

Shoo, shoo, shoo, etc.

As soon as they can sing the chord root accompaniment, you sing the melody as the students sing the chord root accompaniment. Then, divide the class into two groups, and assign the melody to one group and the chord root accompaniment part to the other.

the class into three groups and assign the melody to one group, the countermelody to another group, and the chord root accompaniment to another group. Repeat, changing group assignments until each group has sung each part in three-part harmony.

Teach the woodblock ostinato notated below, first by having the students perform it using body percussion and then by having them transfer it to the instrument. Then, add this part to the ensemble.

COORDINATION WITH LEARNING SEQUENCE ACTIVITIES

TONAL

Symbolic Association-Reading Unit 12

Sing the tonal patterns notated below using tonal syllables. Using Tonal Audiation Cards 16 through 19, show the students the patterns in notation. Sing the patterns again as students look at the notation. Then, ask the students to sing the patterns as they look at the notation. Explain the DO signature. Give each student a student book, and show them that the tonal patterns appear in notation throughout the song on page 50. Have them look at the notation as they sing the song and recognize the patterns. Two are tonic patterns and two are dominant patterns in Major tonality.

Mi Do | Mi So | Re Ti | Re Fa

Symbolic Association-Writing Unit 13

Using one of the Tonal Audiation Cards 16 through 19, show the students the DO signature. Then, show the students how to write the DO signature. Show the students each of the patterns notated above using Tonal Audiation Cards 16 through 19. Then, show

sion to bass xylophones and bass [illegible]. Have some students transfer the countermelody to alto xylophones and soprano xylophones, and have other students teach themselves how to play the melody on alto and soprano glockenspiels. Be sure to tell the instrumentalists that F is DO and that the chord root progression starts on DO, the melody starts on MI, and the countermelody starts on SO.

Use the Student Books

Give each student a student book. Have them look at the chord root accompaniment, countermelody and woodblock ostinato that are notated on page 51. Have students audiate first the chord root accompaniment and then the countermelody and finally the woodblock ostinato as they listen to the recording.

RHYTHM

Symbolic Association-Reading Unit 10

Chant the rhythm patterns notated below using rhythm syllables and ask the students to imitate you. Using Rhythm Audiation Cards 37 and 25 show the students the patterns in notation. Chant the patterns again as the students look at the notation. Then ask the students to chant the patterns as they look at notation. Give each student a student book. Show them where the patterns appear in the notation of the song on page 50. Have them look at the notation as they sing the song and recognize the patterns. Have the students read the patterns by chanting rhythm syllables without pitch. If the students are unable to read the other rhythm patterns of the song, the teacher may need to explain them as well.

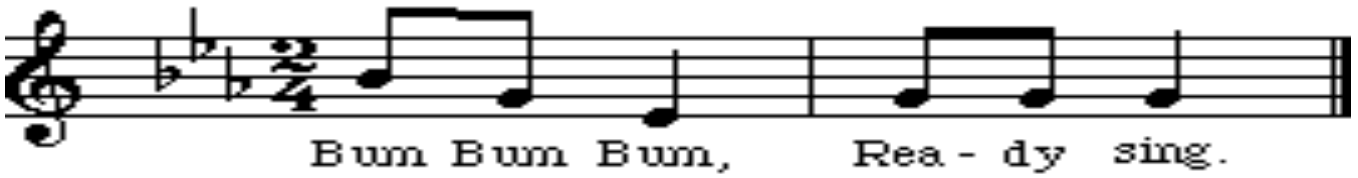
Du De Ta Du Ta De | Du De Du

Symbolic Association-Writing Unit 13

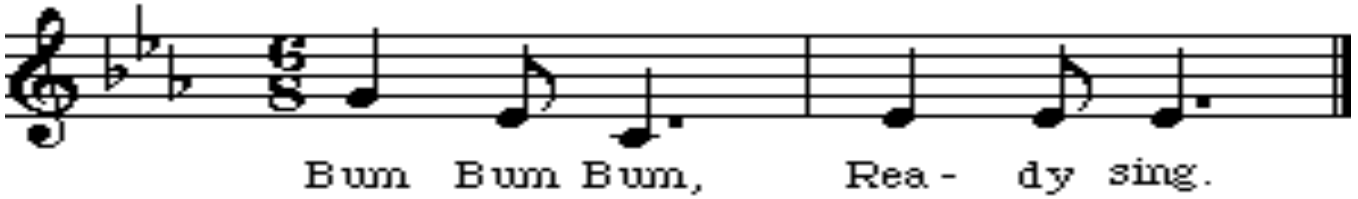
Chant the patterns notated above using rhythm syllables. After students sing the song, give each of them a student book and show them what the patterns look like in the notation of the song on page 50. Explain

Preparing Audiation

Major Tonality (Usual Duple Meter)



Minor Tonality (Usual Triple Meter)



It is crucial to perform songs in various tonalities and modes

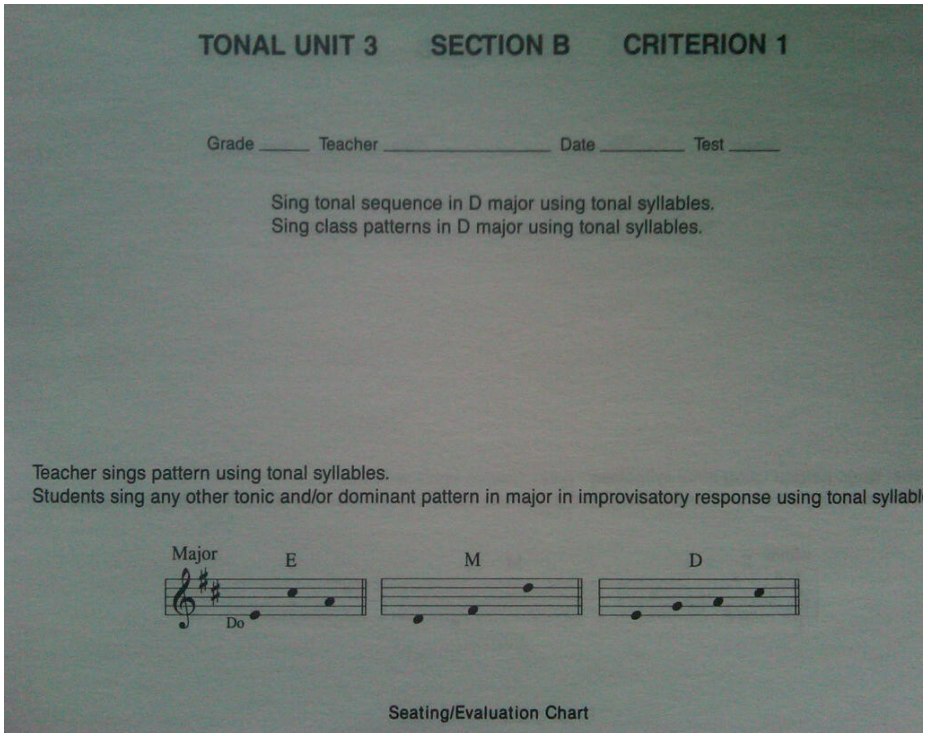
MLT PHILOSPHY FOR AUDIATION

Teaching Procedure

- **Separation of Tonal and Rhythm Content**
- **Teaching to Students' Individual Differences**
- **Importance of Individual Performance**

Separation of Tonal and Rhythm Content

Gordon's research indicates that children have difficulty conserving the tonal and rhythmic characteristics of music.
For this reason, tonal and rhythm content are kept separate in learning sequence activities. Tonal patterns are performed without rhythm and rhythm patterns are performed without pitch.


TONAL UNIT 3 SECTION B CRITERION 1

Grade _____ Teacher _____ Date _____ Test _____

Sing tonal sequence in D major using tonal syllables.
Sing class patterns in D major using tonal syllables.

Teacher sings pattern using tonal syllables.
Students sing any other tonic and/or dominant pattern in major in improvisatory response using tonal syllabl

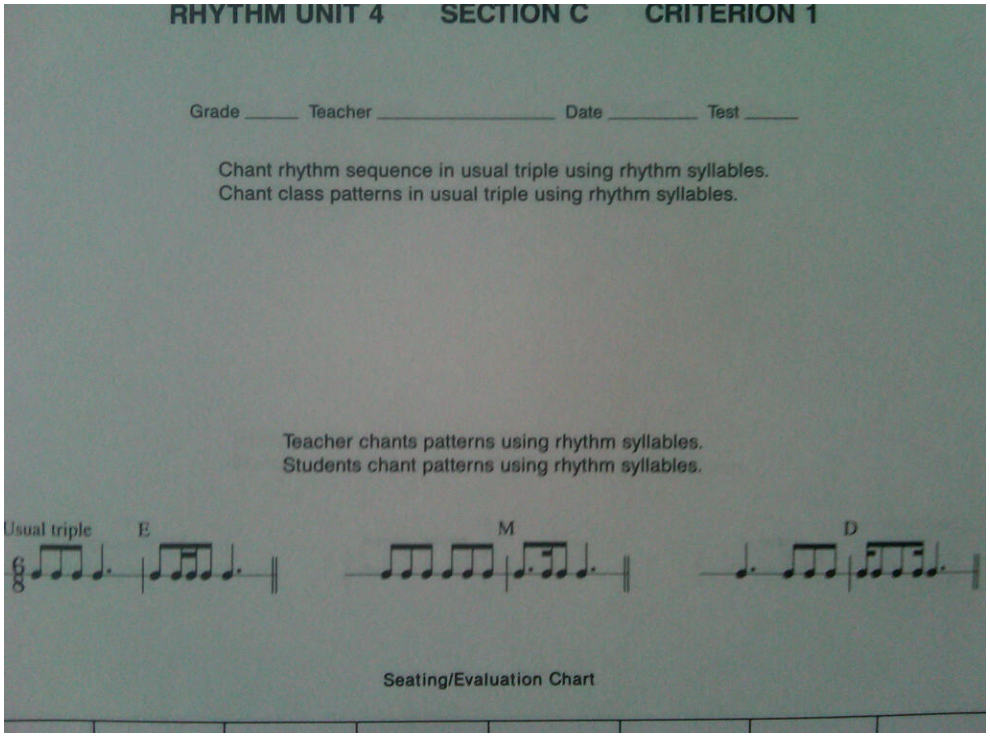
Major E M D

Do

Seating/Evaluation Chart

Teaching to Students' Individual Differences

During learning sequence activities all students are taught patterns that are easy to audiate. Students of average aptitude also learn patterns of medium difficulty, while high aptitude students learn easy, medium, and difficult patterns.



Importance of Individual Performance

Music Learning Theory tells us that individual performance is essential for the development of audiation. Too often, students who never perform by themselves learn only to *imitate* music rather than audiate it.

In learning sequence activities it is essential for each student to perform patterns in solo and to hear other students do the same.