

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

In Orff Schulwerk, participants are introduced to the basic elements of music, rhythm, melody, harmony, form, timbre, texture, and dynamics through developmental exercises in speech, singing, movement, and playing instruments. Students are led to conscious awareness and understanding of an element only after they are familiar and comfortable with using it in music making. Then the teacher may proceed with reading and writing of notation, thus facilitating the transition to music literacy.

Students in teacher training courses should build a conscious awareness of how this sequence occurs in Orff Schulwerk and become competent in the procedures needed for applying it in their own classrooms. The following material provides a frame of reference for developing these competencies. The order presented here may guide teacher training content but is not intended as an outline for classroom curriculum.

Rhythm

In the Orff Schulwerk approach, rhythm is considered the foundation of dance and music making, with acknowledgment of the rhythm of spoken language as its source. Beginning experiences are designed to awaken the natural human rhythmic sense and to reinforce and use it as a primary component in expanding musical ability. Rhythmic sensitivity and skills are developed within the framework basic to Western musical tradition, including steady beat, metric groupings, and duration patterns in a variety of phrase formations and combinations.

1. Beat

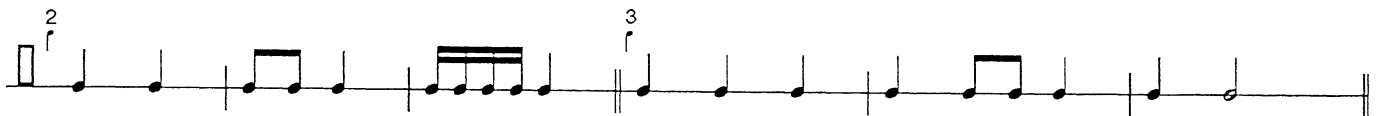
- a. steady beat
- b. variable: changing through variations in tempo, both gradual and abrupt

2. Meter

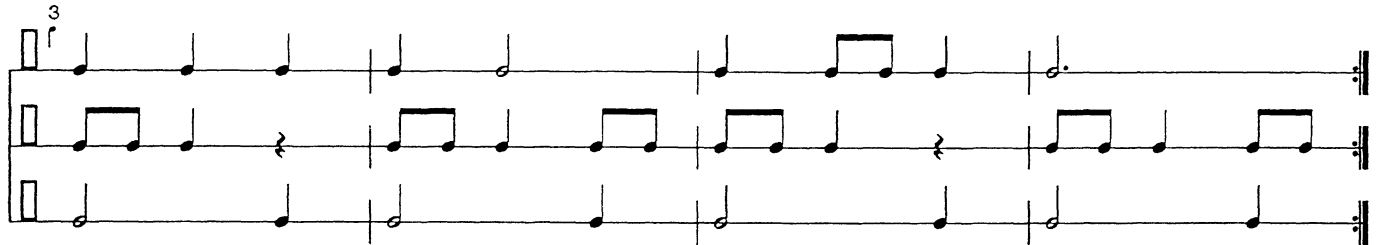
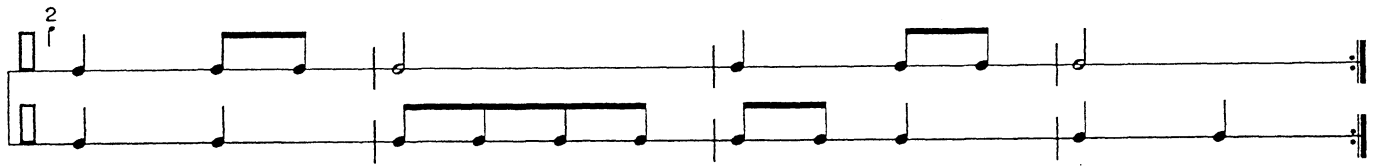
- a. accented beats
- b. commonly used regular groupings: duple (2/4, 6/8), triple (3/4), and quadruple (4/4), plus others as appropriate

3. Rhythm development

- a. divided beat in duple and triple meters



c. layered rhythmic ostinato



d. rhythmic canon

e. augmentation and diminution

f. retrograde

5. Other rhythmic groupings

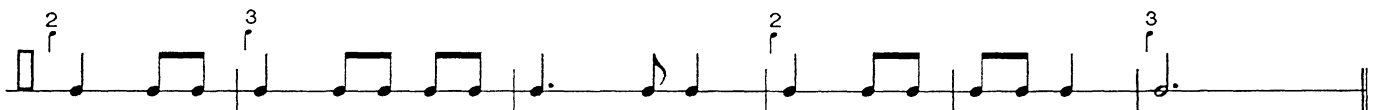
a. 5/4 and 7/8

Murray II, p. 91; Murray V, p. 95; American Edition 3, p. 217

b. regular changing meters



c. irregular changing meters

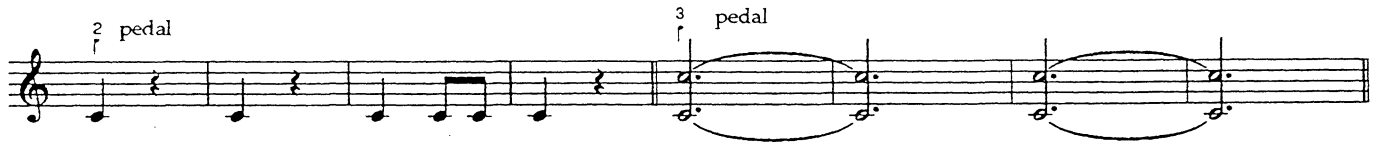


Accompaniment

1. Accompaniments for pentatonic, hexatonic, and diatonic modal melodies with unchanging tonal center

In Orff Schulwerk, the first accompaniments for melodies, including selected traditional songs and improvised melodies, are built from pedals and borduns that can be readily played on the barred instruments.

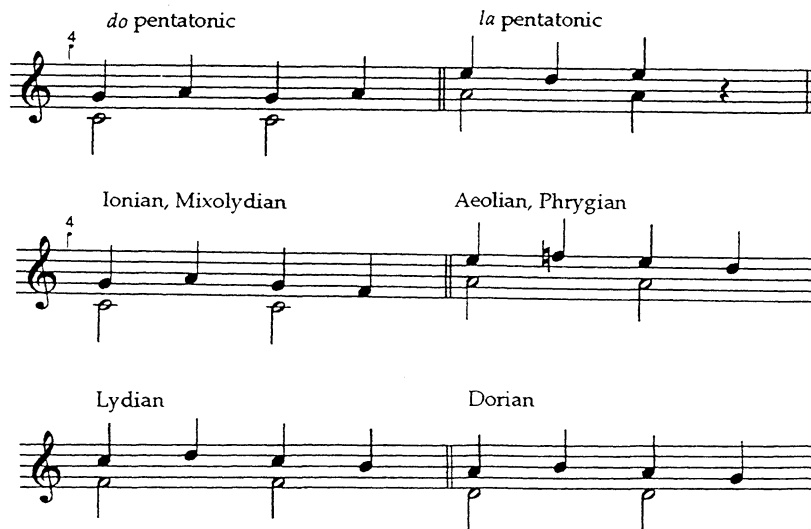
- a. pedal: an accompaniment based on a single tone, most frequently tone 1, sometimes tone 5; octave doubling is possible



- b. simple bordun: accompaniment consisting of tones 1 and 5 within the same octave. Bordun patterns may include tones of more than one octave and can be varied rhythmically in many ways.



- c. moving bordun: bordun pattern in which one tone, almost always the upper voice, moves up or down to a neighboring tone on weak beats. It is an ornamented form of simple bordun.



The distinction between a moving bordun and a melodic ostinato is sometimes difficult to determine; the term bordun is useful, however, in identifying the particular type of repeated pattern—based on tones 1 and 5—that is scored as the lowest-pitched repeating pattern.

Note: Theoretically, pentatonic melodies can always be accompanied by the bordun. However, harmonically-based pentatonic melodies, especially with *re* and *la* on strong beats, are usually accompanied with chord changes.

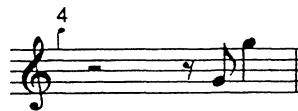
- d. melodic ostinato: a repeated melodic pattern made from any tones of the scale being used. Ostinato patterns are at least one measure in length and may be as long as a phrase with at least one repetition. When several ostinati are layered, care must be taken to achieve rhythmic complementarity and contrasting melodic direction.



- e. color or ornamental parts: short patterns used as a rhythmic complement to borduns, ostinati, and melodies
- (1) tone cluster: tones of a pentatonic scale sounded together in clusters for color and variety. These structures are not to be considered chords, but only as decoration of the unchanging tonal center.

Murray I, p. 12

- (2) color part: used in an upper part, generally to fill in rests that occur in other lines



- f. personance: the simultaneous sounding of different elements of a clearly defined tonality. This device can be used in pentatonic or diatonic settings with melodies implying harmonic change. Tones from both harmonies are combined in a manner that veils or masks the change. Usually the tonic is maintained in the lowest voice. The personance may occur in a continuous ostinato pattern.

Murray IV, p. 16; Murray III, p. 77

2. Shifting triad accompaniment: consistently repeating chord change patterns

Shifting triad patterns serve to establish the unique sound quality produced by repetitive movement from the tonic triad to the other triad in the pattern, and to develop a sense of tension and resolution. This is an initial step in establishing the basis for harmonic change. The shifting pattern is often combined with a pedal on tone 1 or 5 of the scale, making the shift an elaboration of a basically unchanging tonal center.

Appropriate shifting triads may be used as accompaniment for melodies in all modes structured without functional chord change. They offer a basis for transition to functional accompaniment for melodies in which chord change is required. (See "Supporting Materials—Elements of Music, Accompaniment: 3. d., Modal Harmonization," page 6–15 .)

- a. stepwise movement of triads from the 1st degree triad to a triad on the 2nd degree or on the lowered 7th.

I ii
I II
i VII
i vii
Ionian, Mixolydian
Lydian
Aeolian, Dorian
Phrygian

For examples, see Ionian—Murray II, p. 74; Aeolian—Murray IV, p. 42

Incomplete triads that may be considered double moving borduns (both 1 and 5 move) may be used in lieu of the complete triad in repeating step-wise shifts.

Aeolian
Lydian

For examples, see Aeolian—Murray IV, p. 42; Lydian—*Paralipomena*, p. 62

- b. Triad movement by short leap

I vi
i iii
i IV
Murray II, p. 102
Murray IV, p. 108
Murray IV, p. 44

These shifts usually occur in upper voices, using common tones and inversions, with the chord roots or pedal tone sounding in the bass.

- (1) one common tone and the inversion of IV

I - IV, Dorian
I - IV, Ionian

- (2) two common tones and the inversions of III and VI

i - III, Aeolian, Dorian, Phrygian
I - vi, Ionian, Mixolydian, Lydian

3. Functional harmony: accompaniment based on chord changes in pentatonic and diatonic harmonic-based melodies

a. major and minor tonic–dominant

The most frequent chord change implied by the melodies of many musical traditions is Major I-V. The lowest part supports the harmonic structure using 5ths and octaves. The third degree of either chord will appear in the melody or other upper part. The common chord tone is usually maintained as illustrated below. The range of the instrument may force an accommodation of this principle. The same principles hold for i-v in minor.

I V I I V I

I V I I V I I V I

Accompaniment figures should adhere rhythmically to ostinato style as closely as possible, with minimal modifications made to accommodate the harmonic changes. The common tone is maintained.

b. major and minor tonic–subdominant

It is useful to deal with this pattern separately before incorporating the IV chord into the traditional I-IV-V sequence. As with the I-V chord changes, the common tone should be maintained where possible.

I IV I I IV I I IV I

c. major and minor tonic–subdominant–dominant

In the open construction of elemental harmony, the chord roots sound at or below the child's vocal range.

I IV I V I I IV I V I

- d. modal harmonization: shifts occurring according to the structural implications of a given melody. The chords may shift at cadences and other specific points where change is strongly implied by the melody (e.g., I-v or I-VII with a Mixolydian melody). In all cases the characteristics of elemental style should be retained (see page 7-1; also Keller, page 35). The chord change most strongly identifies the mode when the scale degrees particularly characteristic of the mode involved are present. The tritone is to be avoided.

MODE	CHARACTERISTIC INTERVALS	ACCOMPANYING TRIADS
With major third as tones 1 and 3		
Ionian	major 3, major 6, major 7	I-ii, I-vi
Lydian	major 3, augmented 4 , major 6, major 7	I-vii, I-II
Mixolydian	major 3, major 6, minor 7	I-VII, I-ii, I-vi
With minor third as tones 1 and 3		
Aeolian	minor 3, minor 6, minor 7	i-VII, i-III
Dorian	minor 3, major 6 , minor 7	i-IV, i-VII, i-ii, i-III
Phrygian	minor 2 , minor 3, minor 6, minor 7	i-II, i-vii, i-III

See Murray IV, pages 92 and 104 (Aeolian i-VII) for examples of modal harmonization.

- e. longer triad patterns

(1) repeated chord sequence used for developing chaconne or passacaglia forms

Murray V, p. 61; Murray IV, p. 124

(2) extended open 5th sequences use for developing "decoration of the third" melodies

Murray IV, p. 118

4. Other harmonic material

- a. sevenths and ninths in accompaniment patterns

As an extension of harmonic vocabulary, sevenths and ninths may be added to triads in accompaniment patterns. Raising of the 6th and 7th degrees in minor may also be employed.



- b. expansion of accompaniments in elemental style
 - (1) tone row structures: single-line and tone cluster ostinati used in conjunction with serially constructed melodies
 - (2) style-related chord progressions, such as 12-bar blues, popular song I-vi-IV-V, passacaglia and chaconne, and Flamenco progressions

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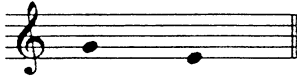
Melody

Melody in the Orff Schulwerk approach is conceived in a primarily conjunct, singable style that moves naturally and sequentially from two tones through the full range of mode or scale tones.

1. Melody without defined tonal center or tonal accompaniment

- a. two tones (call): *sol-mi*

The Schulwerk begins melodic development with the falling minor third.



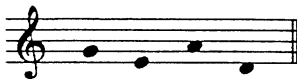
- b. three tones (childhood chant pattern): *sol-mi-la*

The addition of *la* is a melodic elaboration.



- c. four tones: *re-mi-sol-la*

With the addition of *re*, tonal neutrality is still preserved.

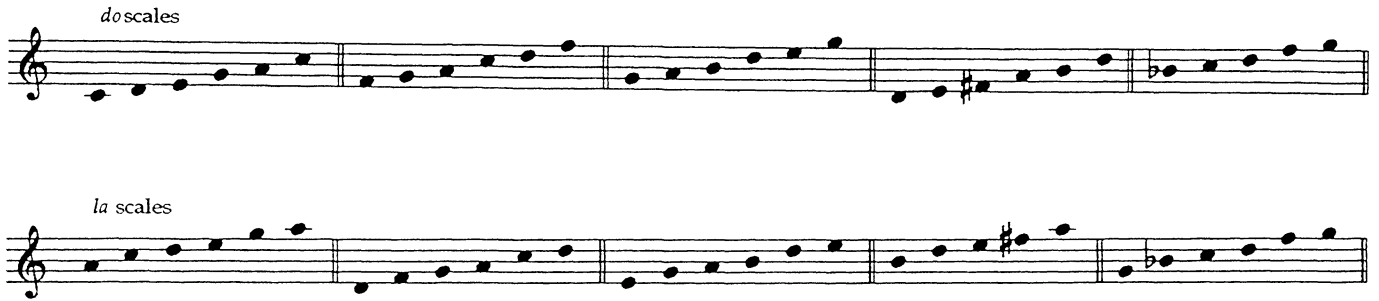


2. Pentatonic scales

When *do* is added, the full pentatonic scale is present, and a tonal center becomes more evident. The rich heritage of American folk tradition provides an abundance of pentatonic songs, most of which are tonally centered on *do* or *la*; less frequently they are centered on *re* or *sol*.



Pentatonic scales easily accessible on the Orff instruments are based on C, F, or G. With the addition of the standard supplemental bars f-sharp and b-flat, pentatonic scales centered on D or B-flat are also possible, but with certain limitations in range of each instrument and in singing range.



The pentatonic scales are especially useful for developing improvisational skills. The absence of half steps removes the leading tone tendency associated with traditional harmony. Melodies can be improvised that are free to follow their own logic rather than fulfill harmonic implications. Improvisation is thus made easily accessible to children and can be introduced in the earliest experiences with melody.

The development of even a superficial familiarity with the less common pentatonic scales will help to establish the concept that any tone of a scale can function as tonal center. The changing position of the gapped pattern determines the characteristic sound of each pentatonic mode.

This flexibility in using different tonal centers will also be helpful in dealing with diatonic modes. Familiarity with the characteristic sounds of several pentatonic scales provides more tonal possibilities for composition and improvisation; lack of abundant song literature in a given mode need not preclude exploration of its musical potential.

3. Transition to hexatonic and diatonic scales

The 4th and later the 7th degrees of the major scale are added to the melodic vocabulary.

a. the addition of *fa*

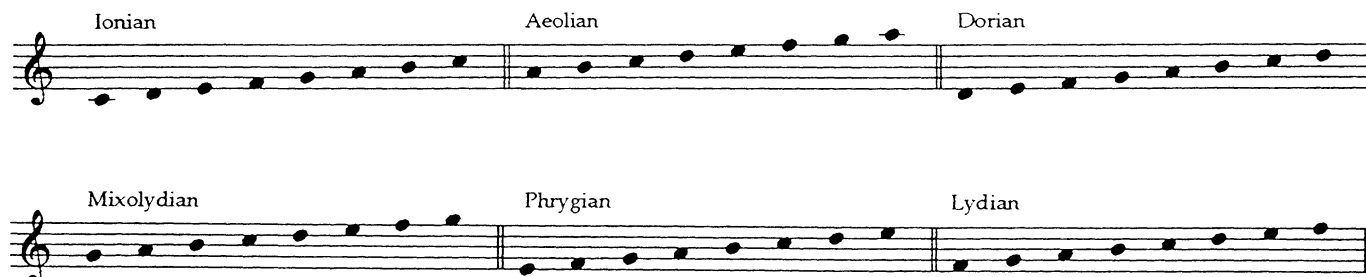


b. the addition of *ti*



4. Diatonic Modes

Diatonic modes, introduced in whatever order desired, offer a broad array of traditional Western melodic possibilities. Though written here in the common keyboard locations, they are to be utilized with other tonal centers. In order to accommodate vocal and instrumental ranges, modal melodies are often found in transposed positions.



Note: It is essential that modal melodies with unchanging tonal center be thoroughly explored before proceeding to examples implying harmonic change. The distinction between Ionian and "major" is especially problematic: "The Ionic suggest imminent harmonic (diatonic) treatment, but it is possible to keep a melody independent of this by using the devices of the pedal point, parallel motion, an emphasis of the step-wise and not the functional character of the chords, as it would be found in Classical harmony."¹ (See "Supporting Materials—Elements of Music, Accompaniment" page 6–11.)

5. Major and minor melodies, structured toward harmony by outlining triads

- a. major
- b. natural minor
- c. melodic minor
- d. harmonic minor
- e. other diatonic modes

6. Expansion of melodic possibilities

- a. tone rows: serial melodic structures that may use augmentation, diminution, retrograde, and inversion
- b. experimental or invented scales
- c. scale structures from other cultures within Western tradition or from non-Western cultures, adapting authentic musical pieces where appropriate

¹Wilhelm Keller, *Orff-Schulwerk: Introduction to Music for Children*, trans. Susan Kennedy (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1974), 35.

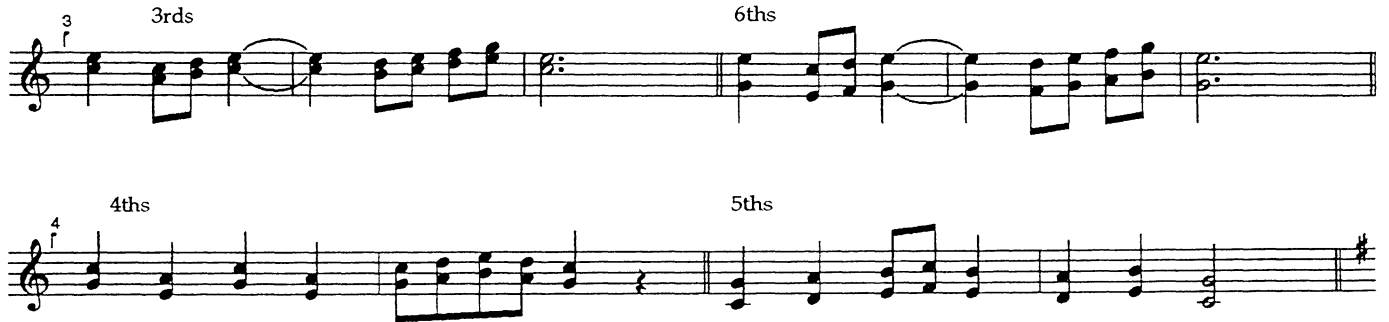
7. Embellishment of melody

a. parallelism (paraphony): one or more voices moving parallel to the melody, with no accompanying bass line or with a pedal bass

(1) pentatonic parallelism: the distance between tones is constant within the tones of pentatonic scale, creating both 3rds and 4ths. This device is particularly useful in constructing vocal and instrumental ostinati.



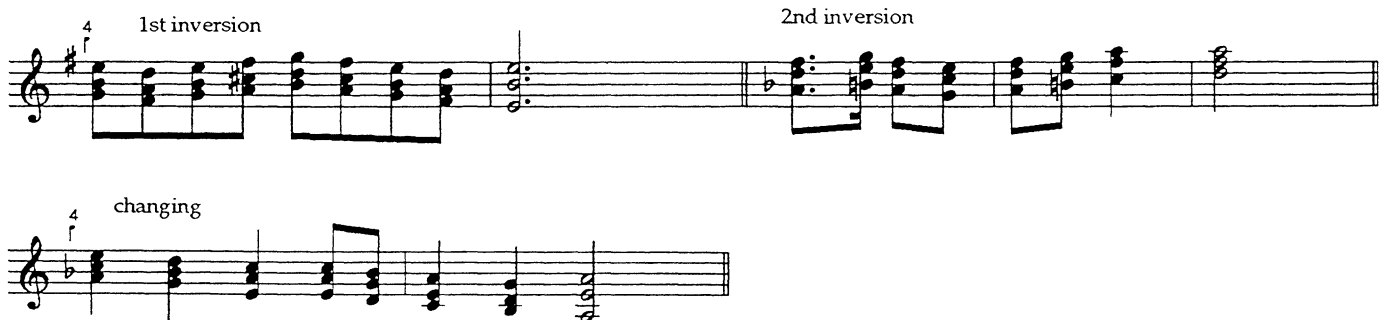
(2) diatonic parallelism: one or more consistently parallel voices above or below the melody, beginning with thirds and sixths. The tritone, diminished fifth, and augmented fourth are to be avoided.



(3) harmonically-based parallelism: with a changing bass either present or implied by the harmony, voices run primarily in a parallel fashion; however, when the resulting combination conflicts with the chordal implications, notes are changed to accommodate the harmony.

Murray V, p. 68; p. 129

The procedure begins by using parallel triads in first inversion or second inversion, and as the understanding of functional harmony develops, using triads that change inversion according to the harmonic requirements of the melody.



b. diaphony (contrary motion)

- (1) countermelody: a complementary melody rising above or extending below the main melody
- (2) descant: a complementary melody consistently higher in pitch than the main melody

Murray V, pp. 132–3 (both countermelody and descant)

c. decoration of the third: the technique of constructing melodies that are an elaboration of the missing third in a progression of fifths

Murray IV, p. 118; V, p. 33