

Montana General Music Teachers Association  
welcomes

## Jim Solomon

to the Montana Music Educators Association  
71<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference October 15-17, 2008 Great Falls, MT

### “Beginning Conga / Percussion Ensemble”

Session Notes sponsored by Treasure State Orff

# TREASURE STATE ORFF

is a state affiliate of the American Orff-Schulwerk Association,  
a professional organization of music and movement educators dedicated to  
the creative teaching approach developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman.

We are united by our belief that learning about music—  
learning to sing and play, to hear and understand, to move and create—  
should be an active and joyful experience!

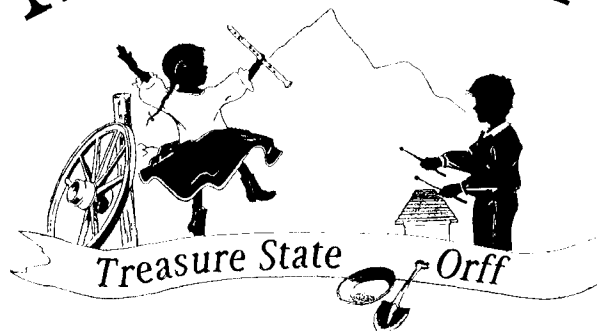
For more information go to [www.treasurestateorff.org](http://www.treasurestateorff.org)

Come play with us! We have 2 more workshops this year:  
Chapter Sharing, January 24<sup>th</sup>, for members only, and our Spring workshop, March 21<sup>st</sup>, featuring  
Debra Giebelhaus-Maloney. Both workshops are at Paxson School in Missoula.  
We are also planning a retreat for TSO members in June 2009 with Steve Calantropio.

Find out more at our website, or contact President Saxon Inabnit at 251-2673.

*You are invited to experience music and movement education  
that impacts a lifetime!*

# MONTANA



# **BEGINNING CONGA/ PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE**

Perform ensembles targeting 3rd-5th grade students not used to playing in ensemble.  
Form and improvisation are addressed.  
This session is appropriate for teachers with vocal, instrumental,  
and/or movement backgrounds.

**JIM SOLOMON**

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from D.R.U.M. by Jim Solomon, used with permission by Alfred Publishing

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## **CONGA DRUM TECHNIQUE FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Jim Solomon

**Two strokes are utilized: "Bass" and "Tone"**

- "Bass" = A powerful low pitched accent. Drive the palm into the center of the drum. The bass is played by either hand.
- "Tone" = The drum should ring out with a full sound; hit rim of drum with top edge of palm. Hand should be flat and relaxed. This is done with either hand.

**Suggestions for improving your own conga technique:**

- Play a variety of rhythms common rhythms placing the "Bass" in different locations, e.g. on beats 1 and 3, on 2 and 4, on 1 and 2, on 1, on 4, etc.
- Using "Tones" practice single stroke & double stroke rolls and paradiddle II:RLRR | LRLL:II starting slowly and building up speed, keeping the strokes even.

**NO CONGAS?  
NO TUBANOS?  
  
USE  
  
5 GALLON  
  
WATER JUGS!**

**SOME WATER COMPANIES WILL DONATE THEM OR GIVE YOU ONES THAT HAVE LITTLE CRACKS. AT MOST THEY WILL COST AROUND \$5 FOR A DEPOSIT. (BE SURE THEY DON'T HAVE AN EDGE ON THE BOTTOM.) FOR \$50 YOU CAN HAVE 10 DRUMS!**

- 1. SIT IN A CHAIR.**
- 2. TURN THE JUG OVER.**
- 3. PUT IT BETWEEN YOUR KNEES.**
- 4. REST THE MOUTH ON THE FLOOR (OR LIFT IT OFF THE FLOOR).**
- 5. PLAY THE BASSES AND TONES ON THE BOTTOM OF THE JUG.**

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# PIGS LIKE MUD

Traditional  
Arranged by Jim Solomon

Recommended grade level: 2nd, 3rd

♩ = 120 ~ 144

T = Tone (Open tone) B = Bass

4

Conga

Pigs like mud, cows like squash!

I like you, I do, by gosh.

## FORM

A Section - Play 4x

B Section - Soloists play (improvise or play the basic rhythm of the words, whichever the group is ready for)

A Section - Play 4x

## ACCOMPANYING PARTS:

Cowbell

Vibraslap

Bass Drum

## TEACHING PROCEDURES

1) Use a chart. Mark words where bass is played with a "B." Teach location of basses first by speaking rhyme and clapping on basses. 2) Play rhythm of entire rhyme.

Play Vibraslap only on special words "mud," "squash," and "gosh."



# I. AS I WAS SITTING IN MY CHAIR

ANONYMOUS  
Arranged by JIM SOLOMON

4  $\text{♩} = 108 \sim 126$

Conga

T T T T T B B B

As I was sit - ting in my chair

T T T T T B B B

I knew the bot - tom was - n't there,

T T T B T T T B

Nor legs nor back, But I just sat,

T T T T T B B B

Ig - nor - ing lit - tle things like that.

T = Tone      B = Bass

4

Accompanying parts:

Maracas

Cowbell

Guiro

## FORM

Rondo:

A Section: rhyme and accompanying patterns

B Section: individuals or small groups improvise; accompanying patterns continue

A Section: repeat

C Section: individuals or small groups improvise; accompanying patterns continue

A Section: repeat

etc.

## TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

Rhythm of the rhyme: 1) Write the text on a chart with the pick-up words/syllables highlighted in red. 2) Ask students if the first words or syllables of each line fall right on the beat or just before the beat, then tap the steady beat and read the rhyme. 3) Students identify the "quick pick-up words" at the beginning of each line. 4) Echo patsch rhythm using upper thigh for Tones and knee for Bases. 5) Patsch whole rhythm. 6) Play on congas.

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Version 1: 4th / 5th Grade  
Version 2: 5th Grade Special Groups / Middle School

# Jack & Jill

Traditional, arr. by Jim Solomon

## A SECTION

♩ = 116 ~ 138

Hi/Med. Congas

B T T T T T T B T T T T T

Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of wa - ter.

B T T T T T T B T T T T T T T 2x or 4x

Jack fell down and broke his crown and Jill came tum - bl - ing af - ter.

B = Basses, T = Tone

Accompanying parts:

Cowbell

Maracas

Low Conga

Bass Drum

Version 2: To markedly increase the difficulty level, add the following cowbell and high conga parts:

Cowbell

High Conga

B T T B T T etc.

R L R L R L

B/C, etc. SECTIONS: Conga improvisation - utilize the talents of your group, i.e., do Question / Answer with many taking a turn, or have 1 student improvise for each section.

FORM: Rondo: A B A C A

Teaching Suggestions:

1. "Does the pattern of the Basses change?" Teacher plays rhyme on conga..."No."
2. "Clap on each Bass with me." Teacher plays again, students clap.
3. "This comes from an old rhyme you probably knew before you ever went to school. Dig into your memory bank to figure out what it is!" Play again if necessary, students identify.
4. Pat rhythm on legs.
5. Pat rhythm on thigh and play knee for the Basses.
6. Play on drums.
7. Students create words for challenging parts.



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# PETER, PETER IF YOU'RE ABLE

Traditional

Arranged by Jim Solomon

Recommended grade level: 4th and older

♩ = 104 ~ 116

T = Tone (Open tone) B = Bass

4

Conga

T T B T T T B T T T B T T T B T

Pe - ter, Pe - ter, if you're a - ble, get your el - bows off the ta - ble.

T T B T T T B T T T T T T T T

This is not a hors - e's sta - ble, but a ritz - y din - ing ta - ble.

## FORM

Introduction - Layer instruments in 2-measure intervals: 1) Guiro 2) Cowbell 3) Maracas 4) Bass Drum

A Section - Play 4x

B Section - Improvise with accompanying parts

A Section - Repeat

B Section - Repeat

A Section - Repeat with Cowbell pattern #2

## ACCOMPANYING PARTS:

Maracas

Cowbell

Guiro

Bass Drum

Cowbell pattern #2: or

## TEACH

Rhythm of Rhyme: 1) Teach rhythm of 4th measure first. All instruments will play in unison on 4th measure.