

*The Significance of Orff
Schulwerk in the Modern
Classroom*

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORFF SCHULWERK IN THE MODERN CLASSROOM

What is significant about the role of Orff Schulwerk in the lives of children today? In a word – EVERYTHING!

Children (and adults too!) have become accustomed to a world of artificial interactions and immediate gratification – a world where in just a short period of time they can transform themselves from someone with limited musical experience into a “Guitar Hero.” Children in this world of virtual music are prisoners of music recorded decades ago - forbidden to add their own interpretation the music. Instead, they engage in musical experiences based on the recreation of solos and riffs recorded before many of them were even born.

Absent from this world of virtual music making are the key components of not just musical activity, but also human interaction. Anyone who has ever played in an ensemble knows the thrill of creating music with another person, the challenges of working within a group, and the work required by all parties to achieve success. It seems in a world of “tweets,” “texts,” and “IM,” children can struggle with even the most basic of social interactions.

Herein lies part of the genius of the Schulwerk. In an Orff Schulwerk classroom, the answers don’t often come quickly or easily. Children are nurtured through the creative process as they come to terms with the challenges of capturing a creative moment, working with others, compromising, and practicing.

Today we will take a look at a piece from Volume I of *Music for Children*. What possibilities exist within this piece for enriching the lives of our students?

- Body Percussion
- Vocal
- Barred Percussion
 - Woods
 - Metals
- Recorders
- Unpitched Percussion
- What else can we come up with?

After working together to create an A section we will get into small groups. Each group will be responsible for creating a four measure ostinato, and movement to go with it. After that we will work to create a larger form based on our ideas.

Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman, “Allegro,” *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children I, Pentatonic*, trans. Margaret Murray, (London, Schott & Co.), 128.