Effective strategies for using children's literature in the elementary classroom

John O Egger, Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne

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Effective Strategies for Using Children’s Literature in the Elementary Music Classroom

Presented by John Okley Egger, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Music/Director of Music Education
Contact: eggerjo@ipfw.edu

The approach uses music-based criteria to encourage the selection of children’s literature that is compatible with:

- Consistent use of verbal and non-verbal cues
- Modeling sequencing of rhythmic speech (RS)
- Model transfer of rhythmic speech to body percussion, unpitched percussion, or melodic percussion.
- Frequent student engagement through music making

Sequencing of Lesson

- Demonstrate full rhythmic speech
- “Chunk & Chain” used to teach rhythmic speech
  - Echo imitation
- Transfer to body percussion
  - Revisit “Chunk and Chain”
- Transfer to unpitched/melodic percussion
- Consistent use of verbal and nonverbal cues
- Read story with musical contribution of students

Suggested Criteria for Selection of Children’s Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Best</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repetition Throughout Story</td>
<td>RS repeated every page/every other page</td>
<td>RS repeated every other page and occasionally every 3 pages</td>
<td>RS cannot easily and consistently be repeated throughout the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition &amp; Flow of Story</td>
<td>RS makes sense when repeated throughout the entire story</td>
<td>RS must be changed slightly once during the story (end)</td>
<td>RS must be changed multiple times in order to make sense in the flow of the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Per Page</td>
<td>1 – 2 sentences per page</td>
<td>3 – 4 sentences per page</td>
<td>5+ sentences per page OR only a few words per page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Skills, Objectives, &amp; Content</td>
<td>Age of students who would enjoy the story closely matches motor skills need to perform rhythms</td>
<td>Age of student that would enjoy the story is somewhat above/below motor skills needed to perform rhythms</td>
<td>Age of student that would enjoy the story is not well matched to motor skills needed to perform rhythms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS Length</td>
<td>6 – 8 beats or 4 beats repeated</td>
<td>6 beats (not repeated)</td>
<td>Less than 6 beats (not repeated)</td>
</tr>
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</table>