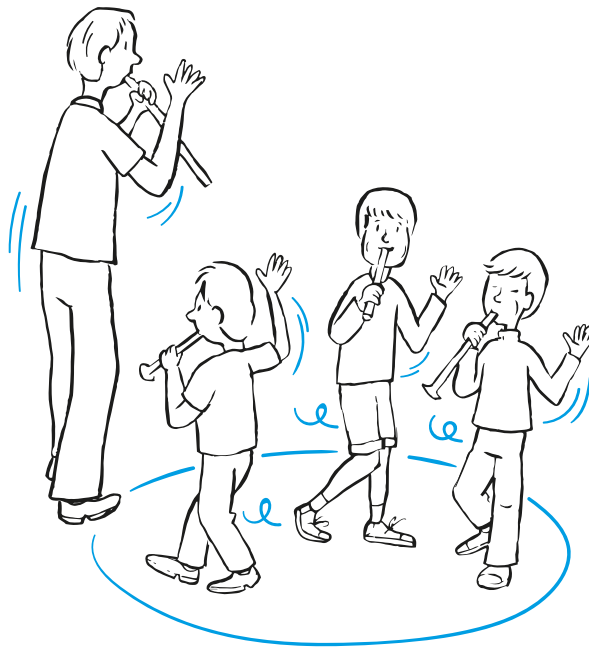


7.1 Meet 'n Greet



Learning goals

Students

- Match musical expression to different qualities of physical interaction.
- Build a repertoire of contrasting musical motifs that reflect different expressive intentions.
- Adapt their musical response to the expressive quality initiated by a peer.

Requirements

- A large space
- Possibly accompanying music for the handshaking

Suggestion: Gabrielle Roth's 5 Rhythms. Endless Wave.

Inspiration

This activity draws on Rudolph Laban's concept of 'shape', expressing how we physically relate to the environment (peers in this case).

There are three shapes:

1. Shape flow: focus on oneself, not interested in the environment
2. Directional: polite, direct, formal
3. Shaping: expressive, engaged

Constraints

Description

Phase 1

The teacher briefly explains the activity and describes the three ways of shaking hands:

1. Like not being interested in each other. Only concerned with yourself, not the other.
2. Very formal, professional. You do make connection with the other person, but in a very formal way.
3. You greet each other very expressively.

Students walk around the classroom without their instrument. The teacher invites them to explore the entire room. There is no talking.

On a signal from the teacher, students shake hands in the first way (disinterested) whenever they encounter another student.

When the teacher signals again, they switch to the second way of handshaking (formal). The following signal switches to the third way (expressive). With each switch, the teacher briefly mentions which way is involved.

This exercise can be performed with or without accompaniment (for example, a simple backtrack, a teacher playing the piano, guitar, djembe, etc.). The accompaniment's tempo should be appropriate for the students' ages.

Phase 2

Students walk around the classroom again, this time holding their instrument. The teacher invites them to explore the entire room. There is still no talking.

On a signal from the teacher, students greet each other musically (i.e., by improvising a musical motif appropriate to the mode of greeting), in the first manner (disinterested), whenever they encounter another student.

When the teacher gives another signal, they switch to the second way of greeting musically (formal). The next signal introduces the switch to the third way of greeting musically (expressive). Always by playing a musical pattern or motif on the instrument. With each switch, the teacher briefly indicates which way it is.

For some variations, this phase can be done with an accompaniment (improvised live by the teacher or with a recording). For other variations, the teacher can accompany this phase with a percussion instrument.

Variations

- Students can choose which way they greet someone, but now the other student responds in the same way (both with handshaking and music).

- Students devise a fixed musical motif for each way of greeting and use these motifs in the switch exercise.
- A fixed rhythm is chosen for each way of greeting, students improvise on that rhythm. This rhythm can be linked to their name, for example
- Improvisation is done using a pentatonic scale or a chord progression.
- Musical motifs are performed in a fixed tempo (e.g. through an accompaniment).

Based on the variations, the teacher can regularly repeat the exercise and also make it increasingly challenging. In this way, the students' development can be optimally supported.

Although this exercise and its variations are structured around Laban's concept of Shape, students can just as easily be asked to invent or find three different ways of greeting.