


5-15-2015

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Myriantopoulos, E. (2015). Improving pre-service teachers' preparation to integrate music and movement in early childhood classrooms. *New York : Bank Street College of Education*. Retrieved from <http://educate.bankstreet.edu/independent-studies/44>

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Improving Pre-service Teachers' Preparation to Integrate
Music and Movement in Early Childhood Classrooms

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Science in Education
Bank Street College of Education
2015

Improving Pre-service Teachers' Preparation to Integrate
Music and Movement in Early Childhood Classrooms

Elaine Myrianthopoulos

This study examines student teachers' fieldwork experiences, in order to better support their efforts to integrate music and movement in early childhood classrooms. Grounded in the work of educators who write about arts integration, the study also draws on literature describing the life-cycle stages of teachers and the importance of self-efficacy for new teachers. Using interviews and classroom observations, I explored how new teachers experience, understand, and plan music and movement activities in early childhood classrooms. Through the interviews and a review of scholarly literature, the study also explores obstacles to the integration of music and movement.

The interviews revealed that lack of models, support, and training created obstacles to implementing music and movement activities in the classroom. New teachers need on-going training that will provide opportunities to develop skills, learn how to identify and use resources effectively, and deepen their understanding of children's learning through the arts. Opportunities to reflect on practice and develop self-efficacy will support their ability to address challenges in their efforts to integrate music and movement in the classroom.

One-time workshops are inadequate in the effort to develop new habits and dispositions. Effective professional development must be ongoing, experiential, and collaborative. I offer a professional development proposal in the hopes of taking one step forward in this direction.

Acknowledgements

My heartfelt gratitude goes to

Joel, for reading so carefully and encouraging me

and Emily, for supporting me, challenging me and guiding me.

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One year ago, Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City announced a dramatic initiative: the allocation of \$23 million for arts education in the 2014-15 school year, to address inequality of arts access in city schools, and offer schoolchildren opportunities to experience music, dance, visual arts, and theater. These disciplines, said the mayor, “will help these children grow in a way that helps them succeed in school and in life.”

Although this funding is primarily geared to access in middle and high schools, it also includes professional development funds for Community Early Childhood Centers and trainings in the Arts and the Common Core. Such an investment is extraordinary in the current educational climate, but follows in the wake of many smaller, innovative efforts. School systems across the country are struggling to balance a commitment to integrating the arts in education with the demands of federal mandates and high-stakes tests. In the effort to engage all learners, connect schools to communities, and address academic standards in innovative and meaningful ways, the arts can be a powerful tool.

Context

As an instructor in the Early Childhood Program at Dutchess Community College, I work with pre-service teachers preparing to work in Pre-K classrooms. I am seeing new teachers being trained and beginning their careers in an environment that does not provide much incentive for including the arts in curriculum, despite substantial evidence that the arts support children’s development in creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration, as well as building motivation and school engagement. With the current emphasis on academic standards and measurable achievement, many schools offer little or no arts instruction.

In early childhood classrooms, in particular, music and movement activities address young children's need for active learning, multisensory experiences, and multiple expressive possibilities. They foster a positive learning environment by engaging reluctant learners, releasing tension, and building community. The arts can strengthen all learners, supporting a variety of abilities and learning styles.

Young teachers, who may have grown up in schools with limited access to arts curriculum themselves, should see arts curriculum modeled and develop a commitment to including the arts in their classrooms. They need to feel comfortable planning and implementing arts experiences.

My students participate in fieldwork both on campus and off-campus, in local schools. From my perspective as an educator and fieldwork supervisor, this seems a critical point at which they should see arts experiences modeled in their field placements, and be provided with opportunities to develop art experiences in their programs.

Aim

My study explores how student teachers' approach to the arts develops at their training sites. My essential questions are: How do student teachers experience the use of music and movement activities in their fieldwork placements? What is their understanding of the importance of including music and movement in early childhood classrooms? How do they integrate music and movement experiences in their lesson planning? What barriers to using music and movement activities do they perceive?

I hope that my study will help to build an understanding of how student teachers see the role of music and movement in early childhood classrooms. By closely

examining their experiences in their fieldwork, our program (and other teacher training programs) may better support them in their efforts to build the arts into a curriculum that addresses the whole child and reaches all learners.

Review of Literature

My study draws on three overlapping categories of literature. There is a large body of literature on the importance of the arts in education, addressing the integration of the arts in schools. Since my research will focus on music and movement, I will include work that explores the value of music and movement in the classroom, as well as literature that discusses arts in education more generally. Along another trajectory, there has been a great deal written in the past decade about the difficulty of integrating the arts in schools that are struggling to balance shrinking budgets and increased demands for measurable student achievement. Against this backdrop, a third body of work looks at the role of the teacher, and specifically, the preservice teacher, in providing arts experiences for students. This focus connects the literature directly to my study of the attitudes and experiences of preservice teachers in relation to music and movement activities in the classroom.

Arts Integration

There is a strong consensus regarding the value of the arts in schools; indeed, a formal commitment to integrating the arts in education is embodied in state and national arts standards, first established during the Clinton administration in 1994. Standards for learning in the arts were included in the *Goals 2000: Educating America Act* as one of the elements necessary for students to “fulfill their personal potential, to become productive

and competitive workers in a global economy, and to take their place as adult citizens” (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994). Research has demonstrated correlations between arts integration and academic achievement, critical thinking, student engagement, and positive attitudes toward school (Deasy, 2002; DeMoss & Morris, 2002; Hetland, 2000; Ruppert, 2006). Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences suggests that, in order to reach all learners, multiple modalities must be employed (1983; Campbell, 1997; Oreck, 2006; Pool, Dittrich, & Pool, 2011).

In the 1990s, the US became aware of the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, with its “Hundred Languages of Children” exhibit, which profoundly influenced thinking about early childhood education. The Reggio Emilia focus on extended inquiry using many forms of symbolic representation, with an emphasis on the arts, offered new ways of thinking about curriculum (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1993). While some educators have focused on the importance of using the arts to communicate content in ways accessible to a variety of learners, others, like Maxine Greene and Elliot Eisner, write of the intrinsic value of the arts themselves. Aesthetic education, they argue, develops multiple perspectives, helps young people grow into fully realized human beings, and builds citizens well prepared to participate in democracy (Eisner, 2002; Greene, 1995).

Music and movement have long been associated with early childhood. Children are musical from birth, as Patricia Campbell points out. Children’s music, she says, is playful, communal, and expressive (2005). The effect of music on cognitive development has been exhaustively explored, with research devoted to its connection with memory, mathematical thinking, spatial reasoning, concentration, language

development, imagination, cultural awareness, affect, and social skills (Bilhartz, 2000; Campbell, 2005; Deasy, 2002; Hetland, 2000; van der Linde, 1999). Everyone who works with young children knows they need to move; research suggests that creative movement and dance are powerful modes of expression and communication, and that they build cognitive and social skills as well as strengthening and refining motor skill (Bradley, 2002; Lobo & Winsler, 2006; Lorenzo-Lasa & Ideishi, 2007).

Barriers to integrating the arts

At the same time that a general consensus has developed that the arts provide positive learning experiences for children, the space for the arts in schools has narrowed. For three decades, as school budgets have been squeezed, the arts (along with physical education and early childhood programs) have been reduced and often eliminated (Campaign for America's Future, 2011). A report from the National Center for Education Statistics in 2012 documents the decline in the availability of theater and dance in U.S. schools, from 20% in 2001 to 4% and 3%, respectively. In many cases, according to the report, participation in the arts has been relegated to after school or community programs. The schools most affected by drastic reductions in arts access are those with the highest concentration of low-income students (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). Although the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) includes the arts as one of its core standards, the emphasis on assessment and accountability, and the practice of rating schools based on achievement in academic subjects, have resulted in increased time and money spent on building skills that will be tested, offering additional periods for reading and math, and minimizing or eliminating arts education (Campaign for America's Future, 2011).

Teachers, under steadily increasing pressure to address new curriculum demands and prepare students for standardized tests, find it increasingly difficult to include the arts in their classrooms. They also receive little support for doing so, as schools respond to a culture of assessment that judges educational quality solely based on student achievement as measured by testing within a narrow academic range (Oreck, 2006). Teachers with a real commitment to implementing arts standards and using the arts to engage students face obstacles in the form of time constraints, lack of support, limited autonomy, and inadequate resources (Oreck, 2006; Spearman, 2000).

Pre-service teachers and arts integration

Despite the abovementioned limitations, there are teachers who maintain a commitment to integrating the arts into their classrooms; these teachers are primarily motivated by the perceived benefits to their students, and by their own experiences and connection to the arts. According to Oreck (2004), the strongest motivators are the desire to reach students with diverse learning needs, to address multiple intelligences, and to engage students in learning that is enjoyable. Teachers who utilize the arts regularly often have positive personal experiences with the arts in their lives (Hennessy, 2001; Oreck, 2006). Efforts to provide arts experiences appear to be connected with self-efficacy, defined by Suzanne Garvis as a teacher's belief in his or her capacity to succeed at particular teaching tasks in specific situations (2009). Oreck (2004) also refers to self-efficacy as a central component in teachers' willingness to offer arts experiences to their students. A related element of critical importance is training and professional development; teachers report that their confidence in creating curriculum around the arts is strengthened by guidance in specific approaches to arts facilitation, as well as by their

own experience as learners (Garvis, 2009; Hennessy, 2001; Oreck, 2006).

Additionally, the school environment appears to be important in creating a culture that supports arts integration (Garvis, 2009; Hennessy, 2001; Oreck, 2006). In Oreck's case study of six New York City teachers who regularly incorporated the arts in their curriculum, all had made career choices based on their needs to exercise initiative and autonomy. As well as illustrating the importance of a supportive school culture, this correlation "suggests that being independent and taking initiative is an important characteristic in being able to express one's creativity in teaching while withstanding external pressures to conform" (2006, p.9).

Pre-service teachers, many of whom have grown up in a school system with diminishing exposure to the arts, may have little experience with music and movement themselves. According to both Hennessy and Oreck, the quality of arts experiences in teacher training affects student teachers' attitudes towards arts integration (Hennessy, 2001; Oreck, 2004). Garvis (2009) points out that negative personal beliefs may lead teachers to marginalize the arts in their curriculum. In one study of pre-service teachers at Athens State University in Georgia, coursework in art education correlated with more positive perceptions of the value of arts integration (Woodruff, Bolen, & Thomas, 2013). Another study at the same school revealed improvement in pre-service teachers' opinions after participating in an arts education experience with arts educators and children (Hutchinson, Bolen, & Ratliff, 2012). Oreck also emphasizes the role of personal experience in stimulating student teachers' creative approach and willingness to take risks in implementing arts experiences (2004). Beyond experiences that reinforce the positive role of the arts in learning, however, teachers need to develop skills that support

their efforts and develop self-efficacy (Garvis, 2009). Pool, Dittrich, and Pool, found that when students in Educational Psychology classes participated in integrated curricular activities, they were able to express their understanding of multiple intelligences and arts-based practice, but had difficulty translating their understanding into developing their own lesson plans (2011). Both Garvis (2009) and Oreck (2006) conclude that a combination of personal experience, ongoing training in specific approaches to curriculum development, and a sense of self-efficacy contribute to the formation of attitudes and confidence that enable teachers to implement arts integration in the face of external pressures.

Inquiry

In my exploration of the experience of student teachers with music and movement activities at their fieldwork sites, I interviewed two student teachers from the Early Childhood Program at Dutchess Community College (DCC) in Poughkeepsie NY. I also met with a graduate of the DCC Early Childhood Program, who has been teaching in the community for 7 years in a preschool program, and observed her at her work site.

Dutchess Community College primarily serves students from Dutchess and Putnam counties, although some students travel from Ulster, Orange, and Westchester counties, and some from as far away as the Bronx and Queens. Education students who graduate with an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree can move directly into the jobs in the field, usually as teachers in day care centers and nursery schools, teachers' aides, after-school program directors and staff, or family day care providers. All students in the Early Childhood Program take practicum courses, in which they are placed in local

schools as observers and participants with gradually increasing levels of responsibility. Their fieldwork sites are scattered throughout the surrounding communities of Poughkeepsie, Hyde Park, Wappingers Falls, and other suburbs. They may be placed in a day care center, Pre-K program, nursery school, Head Start program, or a kindergarten classroom in a public school.

I chose the two student teachers based on the enthusiasm they expressed for integrating the arts in education, as I felt they would be more likely to be aware of and responsive to arts curriculum at their placement sites, and be more willing to reflect on their experiences with music and movement integration. Both students expressed interest in participating in this exploration, and spoke with administrators at their fieldwork sites to arrange opportunities for observation.

The teachers

Karen is 22 years old, and has just completed her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education at DCC. I met with her during her final semester, when she was participating in her off-campus placement in a 4-year-old classroom at a local nursery school. Karen worked in the classroom two mornings a week, and was required to plan and implement one week of curriculum, acting as head teacher, to complete the course.

Ana is a non-traditional student, returning to complete her studies after starting a family. She has completed all the requirements for her major, including both on- and off-campus fieldwork (with a week of head teaching in both), and is currently finishing the general education credits she needs for her degree. In addition to taking classes and raising three daughters, she works part-time as a teacher's aide in a local Head Start program, a job she was offered after completing her off-campus practicum there. Ana

works 5 days a week from 8:30 – 12:30 in a classroom with 3- to 5-year-olds. Although her supervisor initially agreed to allow me to observe Ana in the classroom there, shortly before my visit she changed her mind due to new enrollments and changing classroom pressures.

Lynn graduated from DCC in 2007, and shortly afterward began working as the head teacher in a preschool classroom in the day care center on the campus of a nearby college. I observed her with her small, mixed-age group of preschoolers.

The interviews

In our meetings, I began with a list of questions that I shared with the teachers ahead of time, using them as a basis from which to expand conversation (Appendix A). As we talked, their responses led to further exploration and questions. First, I asked all three teachers to reflect on their experiences with music and movement in their own early years, both at school and within their families. I asked them to describe how music and movement was implemented in their settings, and how they approached music and movement experiences. I asked them to describe experiences that had felt successful, experiences that were difficult or unsatisfying, and what they perceived as obstacles to integrating these activities into their classrooms. I also inquired about the support they received from administrators and supervisors, in the form of encouragement, opportunity, and training. I encouraged them to imagine how they would like to see music and movement activities implemented in their settings. Finally, I asked them to think about what resources, training, and additional support would be useful in their attempts to include music and movement in their curriculum planning.

Karen's memories of her own experiences with music and movement were

positive, but circumscribed: there was “not much in the classroom”, but she enjoyed the music classes in her school, where she remembered enjoying playing the drums and singing in a chorus. She said she felt children should have some experience with music and movement activities “every day” for a variety of reasons. Participating in these activities “gets children involved with each other”, helps them to notice each other and supports interaction, and helps shy children “come out of their shell.” She also noted their importance in providing large motor activity, especially on days when it is impossible to get outdoors. These experiences engage children; one reason she enjoys participating in them is, “I just love the children’s reactions...they get so excited.” Music and movement could support learning in other areas: “Doing a song with it helps them remember it more.”

In her nursery school placement, Karen observed that her mentor teacher planned for “some kind of music and movement every day” and that the teachers participated with the children (“they’re always there doing it with them”). But she wished for more variety; the teachers usually put on a music CD and followed the movement instructions, rather than singing with the children or incorporating music and movement elsewhere in the curriculum. On the day that I observed in the classroom, the head teacher gathered the children in the group area, put on a CD, and led them in following a song about the days of the week. The song involved repeating the days over and over, faster each time, marching and jumping. When it was over the teacher said, “Take a bow,” and then they all sat down to listen to the story. Karen noted that the teachers occasionally did yoga with the children, but didn’t think the children were especially engaged (“they just lay there on the floor”). She also said that the school had a music specialist who came on

Tuesdays. She said, “I think sometimes she brings instruments,” but wasn’t really sure what the experience involved, as there was no follow-up or repetition on the days she was in the classroom.

Karen said she felt that her mentor teacher would support her efforts to include more music and movement in her own head teaching plans. She looked forward to choosing a familiar song and adapting the words to support her curriculum theme, something she had enjoyed doing in her on-campus fieldwork. She felt confident adding movements to her song and singing with the children, saying, “You have to be enthusiastic about it. If you’re not, they’re not going to be.” The important thing, she said, is to know the group and their abilities. She would use the song on the days she acted as head teacher in her classroom, but did not think that the teachers would sing it on the days she was not there unless she asked them to. She hoped they would. As far as exploring movement, she would plan an activity to be used “on days you can’t go outside”. For ideas, she turns to the computer and to resource books provided by her field supervisor and feels comfortable adapting them to suit her needs and her group.

Ana grew up in Honduras, where she says, “Music is a big deal.” She remembers “lots of special days” in school, where the whole school would turn out to parade with drums, and “you make your own instrument if you don’t have one. Beans in a little can, you’re gonna be marching outside with something, making noise and following the rhythm...and of course there’s all the bands playing music...I loved that.” She remembers her mother singing in a choir in church, and growing up with music. “You have to have music in your life. That’s how you experience those memories – ‘do you remember we used to sing those songs?’ ” All three of her daughters and her husband

play instruments, and she plays the keyboard, although she doesn't read music. "So we all have music... It's funny cause we're all like, 'Do you want to do a quartet or something?' They can all read notes, except me. I just play along. I just follow them...I don't think I'm that great but they are...it's like I have an ear for it."

The Head Start program where Ana works follows the High Scope curriculum, and music and movement activities are incorporated into the planning for every day, although they don't always get to them: "sometimes, it just doesn't happen." When the head teacher, Maureen, says there isn't time for music, Ana says the children are disappointed. "They're looking forward to it. They want to do it. Music just makes you happy." She feels that music and movement activities provide opportunities for self-expression, exploring the voice and the body, developing language and memory. The High Scope trainings she has attended also emphasize learning content through the arts. Maureen includes songs that support her curriculum units, but most of the music and movement experiences she presents are built around using CDs of songs and movement activities. Ana says, "It's always the same. I've been there for a year and a half and it's always the same CDs the whole year and a half. So the music hasn't changed. They stand up, they dance, they pass things around...which is nice. But it's always the same songs. It's like a shuffle thing throughout the whole year, but it's always the same music. I feel like somehow we can incorporate new music."

Ana described an incident in which Maureen put her in charge of the music and movement activity. She gave her the basket of CDs and told her to choose one. When Ana put the music on, "It was horrendous. The music was going so fast. I didn't know what they were saying. I felt really... embarrassed... You're kind of just on your own."

The children began to run, and she felt they were out of control. “I felt like, OK let’s turn this off and just sing. So I just started singing. I asked them what other song do you want to sing? All the children were telling me, ‘I want to sing The Wheels on the Bus’ or ‘Twinkle Twinkle’...I felt so much better that way.” Ana felt she hadn’t had time to review the CDs and choose an appropriate one. The activity went much better when she was able to communicate with the children and follow their lead. “And that was amazing because I felt comfortable, they’re telling me what to do...they were engaged, they were singing, they were laughing, they’re having fun.”

In addition to times in the daily routine devoted to music and movement, Ana feels it’s important to include them in other areas. Maureen occasionally incorporates music into other classroom activities, such as “belly drawing” in which children lie on their stomachs on the floor and draw to music. On one occasion Ana found a dinosaur song and came up with movements for it during a unit on dinosaurs. Another time she brought in a spring song with movements, and Maureen encouraged her to prepare it for music and movement time, but she never got the chance to lead it. “There was no time,” she said. Ana sings and plays games with the children throughout the day, during transitions and waiting times, but is anxious about Maureen’s reaction. She doesn’t receive encouragement, and doesn’t see Maureen doing it. “She’s not smiling and I don’t ask her. But I can’t let those children go crazy.”

When I asked her about her own approach to arts experiences in the classroom, Ana said, “I would enjoy it more if I was more comfortable.” For her, this would include time for preparation, knowing the songs and movements, and having a selection of developmentally appropriate music and activities from which to choose. “I don’t like

music from the shows they watch on tv...there's so much other...music. I love the (nursery) rhymes, the old music. I think every child should learn those.” She finds the High Scope trainings useful because, “They actually model for you: This is how we do the song, this is the all movements we do. You stand up and do it with them. ‘How would you feel if you’re a child? Can you follow all of this?’” She also thinks the computer is a valuable resource. “They do help you, because *everything* is there.”

Lynn also grew up in a household full of music; several people in her family play instruments, and they frequently sing when they gather. She learned to play piano when she was young. She remembers her mother singing all the time, and still sings songs she learned from her. She also studied dance as a child; when I observed her class, she energetically marched, jumped, and skipped with her group, demonstrating sincere enthusiasm and pleasure. It was the end of the day, and she had a small group of children. She put on a CD of lively children’s music, and danced with the children, singing along, encouraging the children to use different parts of their bodies and to pretend to play instruments, and reminding them not to roll on the floor so they wouldn’t get stepped on. It was an unstructured, joyful experience, and Lynn seemed to enjoy herself as much as the children did. During one song about dinosaurs, she invited them to roar as loudly as they could, as she opened her arms wide, then, when she brought her hands together, they quieted and continued dancing until the end of the next verse, when they roared again. This was obviously a signal Lynn had established when they danced to this song before.

Lynn and her co-teacher, Brenda include one and sometimes two music and movement activities every day. During their morning meeting time, they occasionally

sing movement songs; they usually play a CD and do a structured movement activity. One of the most frequent is “Going around the alphabet,” in which the children move around in a circle using different kinds of movement on a rug that has the letters of the alphabet, and when the music stops, they tell what letter they are standing on. Other activities she mentioned included exploring rhythm instruments, and doing bean bag games to music. Late in the day, just before the children are picked up, she sometimes puts music on, and encourages them to dance, as she did on the day of my visit. She admits that she tends to “rely on recordings, rather than my own personal voice.” She feels more comfortable singing along to the CD than introducing a song on her own (although she has a lovely voice). She does, however, sing “silly, impromptu” songs throughout the day, during routines (like washing hands and cleaning up), transitions, and when they come up in play (she described singing a song about ice cream when the children were playing ice cream vendor on the playground). Lynn observed, “It’s important when you’re three and four years old to figure out ‘How far can my body jump?’ and ‘How high can my body jump?’ and ‘How does my body really move?’” While rough and tumble play is also valuable, she emphasized that it’s not the same as moving to a rhythm, following directions, and developing physical control, all skills that are developed in structured movement activities. She also feels that music and movement experiences build memory, and that “some children learn better that way.” She likes to use rhyming songs and games, adding, “Nursery rhymes and fairy tales aren’t getting read.” She loves music, and wants to share her engagement with music. When children are restless at rest time she will draw their attention to the music that is playing: “Do you hear the piano?” She says, “In every culture there’s music...at celebrations there’s some

kind of music, and there's music in your car every day on your way to school." She is delighted by the different kinds of songs her students sing, from popular songs to *The Sound of Music*. "It's something that brings us all together, yet it's so diverse."

There is a piano in one of the classrooms; Lynn described a group of children who loved to sing and explore the piano keys. She labeled and color-coded the keys, and created sheet music to match, so the children could pick out simple songs themselves on the piano. She enjoyed supporting them in becoming music-makers and scaffolding their learning. She also felt that a visit from students from the college with their guitars had gone especially well. They had played for the children, and talked about string instruments, and Lynn followed up the visit by playing music and showing children pictures of different kinds of string instruments.

When I asked her to describe things that made it difficult to offer music and movement activities, Lynn recalled times when the children were distracted and it was difficult to engage them, despite her most enthusiastic efforts. In those cases, she would "nix that plan. It's not working...everyone can go back to building with blocks because they are clearly not into it. I've never forced the second song on them." She also worried about managing the group, noting that there's a "fine line" between moving freely to music and being unsafe. In a large group, if "you have a child who wants to just plow down anybody in front of them, and then a limit has to get set...and then sometimes that can get discouraging." Another concern is children who refuse to participate, even if they need the physical release. She acknowledged the difficulty of doing movement activities with the whole group in their small classrooms, and wished she had access to a gym or other large space.

Lynn occasionally attends workshops, “looking for a couple new songs,” but has not been satisfied with most of them. She feels that most of the activities that are presented would not work with her children; they have unrealistic expectations of what can be expected of young children in groups. She described one activity using hoops on the floor, and remarked, “How soon before somebody has picked up the hula hoop and is winging it around their arm?” thereby wrecking the activity for the group. She did, however, describe a couple of games she learned in workshops that she had adapted and used occasionally in her classroom.

Findings and Themes

All three of the teachers I interviewed indicated enthusiasm for including music and movement activities in the classroom, despite varying levels of experience with the arts in their own lives. Karen had the least history of music or movement instruction, remembering separate music classes and chorus in elementary school. Both Ana and Lynn came from musical families, played instruments, and had fond memories of music infusing their childhoods. Ana in particular felt that a connection with music had been a part of her school and culture when she was growing up. None of the three had taken a course on the arts in their teacher training, although one class session is devoted to music and movement in the curriculum course taught at Dutchess Community College. All three had gotten their experience in this area through their fieldwork placements, from other teachers they had worked with, and from their own childhoods.

The Role of Music and Movement in the Classroom

While Karen acknowledged that songs could support curriculum content, she

focused on music and movement as a way to encourage interaction, and felt these experiences were fun for children. Movement activities were useful as a large motor activity when children couldn't get outside. Ana and Lynn, who had more extensive experience with music growing up, had much more to say when asked why it was important to include them in school: they included opportunities for self-expression, building physical skills and self-control, playing with language, and developing memory. Both Ana and Lynn also raised the idea of building community in the classroom by sharing musical experiences together, an idea Karen seemed to be approaching when she said music "gets children involved with each other."

Lack of Models

Karen and Ana are *novice teachers* within the framework of the stages laid out by Steffy and Wolfe (2001). They have had some experience in the classroom, and have had some opportunity to lead the class, but are under the supervision of mentor teachers. They appear to correspond to qualities of teachers in this stage described by Steffy and Wolfe; they are enthusiastic and open to new ideas. Both described a setting that made some effort to address music and movement as part of the daily curriculum, and both expressed dismay at the lack of variety in selection and presentation of experiences. Karen noted that while her fieldwork classroom had a visiting music specialist, she had never observed any follow-up activities that might extend the experience or provide continuity, despite spending two mornings per week in the classroom. Both Ana and Karen reported that if time was short, or something had to be cut from the schedule, music and movement were not considered a priority. Ana, in particular, felt that it was often left out: "Some days, we go without music." In addition, what they observed were

not carefully planned experiences, with specific goals in mind. Ana asked the head teacher, “How come we always sing the same song?” at the morning circle, and was told, “It’s just the way the kids feel comfortable.” Karen felt her mentor teachers made some effort, but wished “they’d do a little less of the recorded stuff.”

Lack of Supportive Environment

When it came to implementing music and movement activities themselves, the interviewees had very different experiences, related in part to what they hoped to accomplish. Karen had enjoyed introducing a song when she did her on-campus practicum, and planned to do the same in her off-campus fieldwork. She felt confident finding a song to go with her curriculum theme on the web, and was prepared to “tweak” it to adapt it to her needs. She felt confident of success if she chose something within the range of abilities of her group, and presented it enthusiastically. She felt that her mentor teacher would be supportive and encouraging, although she suspected the song would not be used on the days she wasn’t in the classroom. She planned to prepare a movement activity as a back-up, in case the class didn’t go to the playground because of the weather.

Ana had made an effort to look up songs and come up with movements for them; although the head teacher in her classroom had offered to let her present them, there hadn’t been enough time. Ana expressed disappointment that she had lost that opportunity. She has a sense of music as an integral part of her life and culture; her instinct is to use music incidentally throughout the day, to ease transitions and keep the children occupied when they have to wait. But she expressed concern that her head teacher might not approve of this practice; she was unsure about whether this was viewed positively or not. The one time the head teacher asked her to run music time, she had

thrown her in with no preparation, a “sink or swim” situation, which Ana described as “horrendous.” Unprepared, and unable to follow the instructions on the CD, Ana felt the children were getting out of control, and felt embarrassed at her inability to run the activity and handle the group. But when she abandoned the plan, and turned instead to a group sing, something that felt comfortable and natural to her, she not only felt that the children responded positively, she also felt confident enough to follow their lead, and let them suggest songs. Asked what would make her feel successful in using music and movement, she was able to identify elements that would contribute to success: confidence that she knew the material, time to prepare ahead in advance, and familiarity with the resources at her disposal.

Of the three, Lynn was not an apprentice teacher; she would fall into the *professional phase* of the categories developed by Steffy and Wolfe. Through her years of experience in the classroom, she has developed a confidence in her approach that is built upon her positive relationships with children, and her perception of their respect for her (2001). Music and movement are a part of her daily routine, and she presents activities with confidence and enthusiasm. While she mentioned occasionally using musical instruments or props (e.g. bean bags), she too relies most frequently on CDs, although privately she loves to sing and plays the piano. She described two experiences with pride; one was the visit of the college students to her classroom to play for the children, and the other was marking the piano keys to allow a group of children who had expressed interest to pick out familiar songs. It is worth noting that many schools do not have pianos in the classroom, and that the location of her school on a college campus provided access to students who were delighted to perform for the children. It is likely

that Lynn's own comfort and experience with the world of music enabled her to take advantage of these opportunities.

Challenges

Steffy and Wolfe observe, "When new teachers begin their work, they often believe that they will quickly become outstanding teachers, making an easy transition from the novice to the expert phase" (2001). Karen, in her cheerful expectation of success, exemplifies this statement. When asked about resources that would be helpful to her, she expressed confidence that she could find what she needs online and in resource books, and figure out how to adapt what she finds. But her parameters are narrow; she limits her plans to introducing a song with lyrics that connect to her curriculum unit, and will plan a movement activity to be used only if the children cannot go outside. Because her own understanding of the possibilities for using music and movement in the classroom is limited, she would benefit from the opportunity to observe mentor teachers implementing a variety of arts experiences. In her fieldwork placement, she is aware that she has been exposed to a limited range of experience, and is aware of the preponderance of "recorded stuff."

Ana exemplifies the self-doubt of a *novice teacher* making the transition to *apprentice teacher*, as described by Steffy and Wolfe: "The reality of the transition from a teacher-preparation program to full-time employment almost always produces feelings of anxiety, self-doubt, and withdrawal...many new teachers have to adjust to a new culture as well as a new job" (2001). Ana is worried about Maureen's approval, and embarrassed when her attempt to implement a music activity doesn't go well. She likes workshops that help her understand the child's experience and guide her through the

steps of presenting an arts activity. She feels strongly that training and familiarity with resources would make her feel more confident. Ana is a beginning teacher, and according to Bandura, forming beliefs about her self-efficacy as a teacher (1997). Her efficacy beliefs may affect the likelihood that she will include arts experiences in her classroom, and how she perceives and addresses challenges in doing so (Garvis & Pendergast, 2011).

Lynn, however, was more critical about the workshops she has attended. She expressed skepticism about implementing the activities offered at workshops and conferences. Her concerns seem to center on issues of classroom management; she said that while the adult participants in a workshop did everything they were asked to do, trying to transfer the experience to a group of children might result in chaos. Someone might run away from the circle, someone might start playing around with the hula hoop that is supposed to stay on the ground. Likewise, her most difficult experiences with music and movement involve children who exhibit disruptive behavior, or refuse to participate. According to Steffy and Wolfe, the teacher in the professional phase develops confidence as she experiences the respect of her students (2001). Difficulty capturing and holding the children's attention, and the effort to maintain order, may diminish the positive feedback Lynn gets from her students, so necessary to her sense of herself as a professional. Lynn's approach when confronted with these challenges is to abandon the activity ("nix that plan") and reopen other learning centers. It is interesting to note that, with more years of teaching experience, she is quick to discontinue an activity that isn't going well, whereas Ana, new to teaching, described her effort to change the activity and engage the children in a different way. Lynn seems reluctant to reflect on and address a situation that calls into question her established practice, and may be resistant to new

ideas introduced in workshops that ask her to explore what her tacit understandings and assumptions are. Schön (1983) refers to “knowing-in-practice” in which a practice is so “over-learned” that it becomes automatic that may inhibit teachers from reflection and growth.

Needs

The teachers I interviewed identified a lack of models, institutional support, and training that would enable them to more effectively integrate music and movement in their classrooms. In addition, the two preservice teachers demonstrated limited understanding of the kind of learning children gained from these experiences. None of them had experience or instruction in planning music and movement activities grounded in child development and a focus on children’s learning. They lacked those qualities which Garvis (2009) and Oreck (2006) pointed to as critical to teachers’ willingness to attempt to integrate the arts: personal experience, education in specific skills, and a sense of self-efficacy.

The support that they need falls into two categories. First, new teachers need environments that provide modeling and encouragement for their own efforts. The teachers I spoke with expressed a desire to see more arts experiences in their classrooms, and more variety in those experiences. They need encouragement to attempt the implementation of arts activities, time for planning, and a sense that the arts are a priority in the daily schedule. Schools also need to make professional development available and encourage teachers to participate in ongoing training. On a deeper level, schools can support new teachers’ efforts by building opportunities for reflection with peers and mentor teachers, in order to build a sense of self-efficacy and support professional

growth. This must be a result of an institutional stance that views the arts, and music and movement in particular, as valuable, enjoyable, and an integral part of young children's learning.

Second, training and professional development should provide a deeper understanding of children's learning in the arts, instruction in specific approaches and skills, and opportunities to practice and develop confidence. In order to develop music and movement curriculum that is engaging and purposeful in the face of a challenging environment, teachers must develop a sense of self-efficacy grounded in a conviction of the value of music and movement for young children, a reflective orientation, and practical knowledge. One-time workshops are inadequate in creating new habits and dispositions; effective professional development must be ongoing, experiential, and collaborative in order to build a practical knowledge base and create the conditions for professional growth.

Next Steps

A Professional Development Curriculum

In this section, I present a professional development curriculum to address the need I observe for training pre-service and new teachers in integrating music and movement in their early childhood classrooms. The proposal describes a professional development series that it could be adapted for use as a mini-unit in a college course for pre-service teachers.

My inquiry found that, while new teachers often feel that music and movement are important and should be a part of a young child's experience in school, they lack the

knowledge, resources, and confidence to provide these experiences. Yet, while elementary schools may employ art and music teachers, the responsibility for integrating the arts in most early childhood classrooms falls primarily on the classroom teacher. Workshops offered at conferences are often presented by performers whose purpose is to promote their CD, or their performances. Teachers attending these workshops may leave without an understanding of how to use the new material with their children, or the courage to try new approaches. This curriculum will offer an alternative to teachers who want to include music and movement as a daily element in their classroom routine, and will reinforce the conviction that, despite the demands of a curriculum focused on testable academic skills, the arts are a critical component of early childhood education.

Because professional development is most effective when it engages adults experientially, this series is built around many experiences with music and movement. Because teachers will need to adapt their practice to different settings and groups of learners, it focuses on looking at what children experience and learn, and creating curriculum that is flexible and responsive. Because one-time workshops, no matter how engaging they are, may be ineffective if the participants move on and forget about them, this series gives the participants a chance to try out new skills and ideas, and then return and reflect on them together. My goal is to build a strong sense of the power of music and movement by giving teachers the experience of being learners, and beginning to understand more viscerally the value of the experience for children. Creating a collegial, supportive, and engaging atmosphere is also central to my purpose, to make the learning environment safe and support risk-taking. I believe that teachers need to experience the

way in which music and movement can build community and a culture of cooperative exploration.

Developing skill in any curriculum requires the courage to experiment and take risks, a clear sense of purpose and goals, the ability to anticipate and plan for children's responses, the willingness to look carefully at practice, even when things go wrong, and learn from it. Therefore, this professional development series includes opportunities to analyze learning goals, create templates and adapt them, and reflect on experience together through discussion, writing, protocols, and feedback.

Workshop Structure

The series consists of 3 full-day workshops; each day will comprise 2 half-day sessions, with a break in the middle of the day. Scheduling them with up to a month in between will make it easier for teachers to invest the time, and will also allow for some time in between sessions to try out the ideas and resources generated in the workshops. Attendance at all three workshops will provide time to develop the confidence, skill, and understanding to adapt models to varied situations. The 3 full days could be broken into 6 smaller units, and presented as a mini-course in an academic setting (teacher education program).

Each half-day session will include time for

- Moving and singing together
- Deconstructing children's experience in order to build a deeper understanding of the value of these experiences and plan more effectively
- Addressing challenges of time, space, and support for including music and movement

- Plenty of practice to develop confidence and skill
- Anticipating children's reactions and planning for contingencies
- Handouts with lists of resources, words to songs, descriptions of games and activities

Essential Questions

1. What are the obstacles to our using music and movement in our classrooms?
2. How do our own experiences with music and movement impact our willingness to use them in our classrooms?
3. Why should we include music and movement in our curriculum?

Understandings

1. Music and movement can be used to support every area of children's learning.
2. We need to develop comfort and engage with music/movement in order to use these activities successfully with children.
3. In order for music and movement activities to be useful, they have to be planned with a goal in mind.

Standards

This series addresses the following standards found in the New York State Teaching Standards (www.highered.nysed.gov):

Standard I: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning

Standard II: Knowledge of Content and Instructional Planning

Standard IV: Learning Environment

Standard V: Assessment for Student Learning

Standard VII: Professional Growth

This series prepares educators to address the following competencies in the NY State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (arts standards related to the Common Core for the elementary grades are currently under construction):

Domain 2

2. Uses sensory information to plan and carry out movements
3. Demonstrates coordination and control of large muscles
4. Combines a sequence of large motor skills with and without the use of equipment
9. Demonstrates an understanding of safety rules

Domain 4

1. Demonstrates that they are motivated to communicate
4. Demonstrates his/her ability to express ideas using a variety of methods

Domain 5

3. Expresses oneself by engaging in musical activities
7. Expresses what he/she knows, thinks, feels, and believes through dance and creative movement
8. Responds and reacts to dance and creative movement
9. Expresses an understanding of artistic difference among cultures

Scope and Sequence

While the sessions are planned to allow participants to address various skills and themes, each session includes time to share experiences, to reflect back on previous learning, and to explore questions and concerns.

The following sequence is divided into half-day sessions:

Session 1 - Songs and Fingerplays

Session 2 - Movement Songs and Movement Concepts

Session 3 - Partner Songs, Circle Games, Cooperative Games

Session 4 - Moving with Props, Creative Movement

Session 5 - Musical Concepts, Exploring Musical Instruments

Session 6 - Elements of Planning, Presentations

Assessments

Ongoing assessment of learning will include a variety of ways for me to gauge whether the activities have been useful, to check participants' understanding, and to determine whether the concerns of the participants are being met. These assessments will allow me to modify the plans from session to session to address difficult concepts and unanticipated challenges.

1. Group reflection after music/movement experiences that allow the participant to take the role of the child will invite participants to express their understanding of children's learning.

2. Small group work on specific tasks (e.g. creating a fingerplay by adapting a familiar tune), will convey a sense of participants' level of comfort with transferring understanding to new contexts.

3. Check-in on index cards at the end of each day: What was useful? Is there anything you feel differently about than you did at the beginning of the day? Do you have concerns that were not addressed? What is one way you might use what we did today in your planning?

4. Check-in at the beginning of each new day: Did you try out any new activities? How did it go? What challenges did you encounter? Any further thoughts on your experience in the last session?

5. Performance task: On the final day, each participant will be asked to bring in a song or piece of music to work with (I will make resources available and work with each participant to choose an appropriate piece). Time will be allotted on the final day to develop a music or movement experience in which they will present an activity as they might lead it in the classroom. The final session will include time for presentations, with the participants acting as the children in a supportive and enthusiastic way.

Session 1 - Songs and Fingerplays

- Warm-up song: “Hello, Everybody”
- Share names, schools, grade levels
- Fears and Hopes protocol; document on chart paper to save and return to on final workshop day
- Review agenda for all three days, and for this session
- Starting small: fingerplays – sing “Open, Shut Them” with movements
- Reflection: What are children experiencing/what skills are children developing?
- How to introduce a song
- Discussion: How do children respond? How do we plan for a variety of responses?
- Whole group practice leading song together (“Rum Sum Sum”)
- Divide into pairs, each pair takes turns leading and following fingerplay (from familiar choices) with each other, give each other feedback
- Share: our favorite fingerplays
- Where do we find new fingerplays, how do we remember them? (Distribute handout with collection of fingerplays)
- End with Song Share
- Participants check in on index cards (see *Assessments* in description)

New teachers are often unprepared for children’s reactions to a new song or fingerplay. They usually have to sing a new song themselves the first few times while children watch silently, a performance situation that can feel excruciating for a novice, especially if other adults are present. Experienced teachers know that children are listening, engaged, and absorbing new information, even if they don’t respond immediately. Sometimes the parent of a child who has never participated in a song comes to a parent conference and reports, “She sings all your songs for the whole family at dinner every night!”

This session gives teachers a chance to practice the skills of introducing a song using facial expressions, clear movements, pacing, and dynamics (which help the children to learn it faster, as well as keeping them engaged). Working as a whole group

to identify the elements of introducing a song, and practicing together, and then doing it in pairs, is a safe way to jump into being the leader.

Teachers will also build their repertoire, by sharing their own favorite fingerplays and learning from each other. This is an opportunity to think about the importance of repetition, building a repertoire with their children, in addition to offering variety as needed. I like to end each session with a song share; I will always have a song to start it off. As other teachers bring in songs, we all learn new songs, and share old favorites. A happy release to end the session.

Session 2 - Movement Songs and Movement Concepts

- Review agenda
- Exercise: Think back to earliest memories in school. How did you move? What did your body love to do? What scared you? Free write for 5 minutes. Pair share.
- Participation in movement song: “Rock My Soul” (begin sitting, move to standing, then to locomotor movement around room)
- Reflection: How do we feel? (Effect on mood, focus, physical sensation, attention, sense of community) What skills are children developing/using in this activity? How was this activity structured? (sequence, verbal instructions, built-in stops, regulation, opportunity for teacher evaluation of children’s participation)
- Distribute handout on movement concepts
- Go over activity suggestions for each section of handout, invite and explore contributions from participants’ experience
- Small group work: each group create movement activity to a familiar tune using basic movements sitting, standing, moving around room
- Share – we all participate as each group leads their song
- Reflection and feedback: What worked? What was difficult?
- Protocol: Affinity Mapping: How might children react? What could go wrong? What might make it difficult to do movement songs in our classrooms? What are we worried about?
- End with Song Share.
- Ask participants to check in before they leave.

This session asks participants to really move. Getting a whole group of children moving in creative ways (as opposed to following directions on a recording) can be daunting, and requires purpose and planning. After an exhilarating song and dance that allows group participation without performance anxiety, we carefully deconstruct children’s experience to think about learning goals. Then we look at how the experience was structured to include sequencing, scaffolding of experience, descriptive language, opportunities for improvisation, guidance in self-control.

The “sitting-to-moving-in-place-to-moving-around-the-room” template is a safe one for teachers to start with; it warms children up gradually, allows teachers to

evaluate how the activity is going, and allows them to end it at whatever point their judgement or comfort level dictates. It is easily adaptable to a number of familiar tunes. Because there is so much material to work through, the teachers work in small groups to create an activity based on the template, then share with the whole group.

Verbal reflection as a group, followed by a protocol, allows them to raise questions, express fears, imagine what could go wrong, and think about obstacles to trying out these ideas in their classrooms. The work of this session underscores the real learning and joyful expression that music and movement can generate, if planned and implemented with intention – not as a filler!

Session 3 - Partner Songs, Circle Games, Cooperative Games

- Check-in: questions, concerns from last time?
- Review agenda
- Share experiences from our classrooms; did you try anything new? How did it go? What were your expectations? What changes did you notice?
- Participation in movement game: “Jump Jim Joe” (partners and rules)
- Reflection: What new skills are involved? How was the activity structured to combine movements, teach rules, support interaction?
- Songs and games for introducing partners: “Mr. Beamus,” “Rig A Jig Jig,” Mirroring, Shadowing, Moving Back to Back (developing awareness of each other, focusing attention)
- Circle Games handout with list of resource books – review games, invite and explore contributions from participants’ experience.
- How to introduce a game – a piece at a time. Anticipating and planning for children’s responses.
- Pair share: What could go wrong? List 5 things. What scares me? What overwhelms me? What do I need to feel confident?
- Whole group discussion: How do we set a tone of safety and respect?
- Parachute play
- End with Song Share
- Participants check in on index cards

Teaching partner and circle games/songs to young children is challenging, despite books filled with the words and instructions for them. New teachers struggle with getting children to hold hands, work with partners, remember sequences of movement. Learning how to introduce these skills opens up questions about how teachers can create safe, cooperative spaces in their classrooms. The question, “How do we set a tone of safety and respect?” is at the center of this session.

What we ask of children needs to be grounded in an understanding of their development and capabilities. What are our assumptions? Young children have difficulty understanding how to “face your partner” or “walk in a circle.” Teachers need practice breaking these concepts down and teaching them incrementally. Trying them out

ourselves helps us think about how we learn them, what needs to be clear, and what gets figured out as we go along.

Session 4 – Moving With Props, Creative Movement

- Review agenda
- Movement activity with props (scarves) – “Little Johnny Brown”
- Reflection: Look at two parts of experience, structured exploration and open exploration. How did they feel different?
- Props can be distracting for young children. Why use them at all? Why might using props be valuable? How can we plan for using props effectively?
- Brainstorm as a group moving with streamers. How can we structure exploration? How can we use them for creative movement? Can we build in collaboration? Create a group template for movement activity with props. Use movement concepts from Session 2 handout.
- Divide into three groups. Using template, each group use a prop (provided) to create an activity that includes structured exploration, collaboration, and creative movement.
- Share: We all participate as each group leads their activity.
- Reflection: How might children react? Anticipate possibilities, imagine how we might respond. Are we satisfied with our template for movement activities with props? (I will reproduce and distribute)
- Movement exploration: Freeze Game. Use movement concepts from Session 2 handout. Try in silence, with instrumental music.
- Group activity: Chart developmental expectations for creative movement, ages 3-5 (developmental issues, physical skills, areas of movement exploration, unrealistic teacher expectations, what is important)
- Handout: Suggestions for creative movement exploration
- Discuss final performance task (presentations during Session 6)
- End with Song Share
- Ask participants to check in before they leave

When teachers introduce props (scarves, hoops, bean bags, balls, rope pieces, elastic bands) they often count on the props themselves to engage the children, without planning carefully. Then they find that the children want to play with the props, and the movement activity devolves into chaos. New teachers may wonder why to bother trying to use them in the classroom, rather than offering them as accessories to active play outdoors. But props can expand exploration of a movement concept, introduce new ways

of interacting with others, and challenge children by adding another element to their movement.

In this session, participants experience the way in which guided exploration helps them explore the possibilities of a new material, and builds a repertoire of ways to use it. Then, they move into more open-ended exploration having acquired some mastery with the new material. After seeing how this process works with scarves and then streamers, the group creates a structure that they can adapt for use with a variety of props. Working in small groups allows them to work with more props, and to experience different approaches, when different groups share their plans. Reflection is important here, as the teachers think concretely about how they could use these plans in their own settings.

Once participants have had some experience moving together with props, they may be more comfortable moving on their own, with and without music. The Freeze Game has been used by movement teachers for many years to guide creative movement exploration. It helps children (and adults) explore different qualities of movement, become aware of themselves and each other in space, and develop self-control. It offers many possibilities for problem solving. Most important, it can be as simple or as challenging as the teacher feels is appropriate and comfortable. The movement concepts handout from Session 2 can be used as a reminder of qualities to explore (e.g. body shapes, space, time, shape, movement types).

The group discussion returns to the question of assumptions: what do young children know, and what are they figuring out? How many elements can they combine? What kind of supports, limits, language do they need? If you tell a group of children, "Pretend you're a cat," they will drop to all fours and meow loudly. If you ask, "What is

a pounce? How does a cat pounce?” you invite children to share prior knowledge and engage their imaginations, while expanding both language and movement concepts.

Session 5 – Musical Concepts, Exploring Musical Instruments

- Check-in: Questions, concerns from last time?
- Review agenda
- Share experiences from our classrooms; did you try anything new? How did it go? What were your expectations? What changes did you notice?
- Instrument circle: early childhood rhythm band instruments – pass around circle, listen, play in groups, explore pitch/tempo/dynamics
- Story: Max Found Two Sticks (Brian Pinkney)
- Brainstorm: How could we follow the story up with activities in science center, literacy center, art center, dramatic play? Create a theme web.
- Mathematics concepts: matching sounds, sorting sounds, counting songs, accumulation songs, pattern songs and games
- Exploring rhythm in pairs: clapping patterns, using rhythm sticks, moving to a beat
- Exploring instruments in three groups: wood, metal, skin
- Simple activities with instruments: handbells, chimes, keyboard
- Instruments from around the world: How do we collect, introduce, and explore them?
- Activity: making instruments with recycled materials
- Discussion: How do we use recorded music? How would we like to use recorded music? Distribute handout on music sources.
- End with Song Share
- Participants check in on index cards
- Allow time for participants to explore resources in preparation for performance task in final session

While most early childhood classrooms have at least a small collection of rhythm instruments, new teachers don't always know what to do with them. They frequently stick to distributing them and having the children play along with a song, or march in a circle with them. This session suggests ways to use instruments to develop listening skills, musical concepts, and knowledge about musical instruments.

The instrument circle encourages listening, to the instruments and to each other as we play them. Respect for the instruments and respect for each other are both

important. Here is another opportunity to talk about the learning spaces we create in our classrooms, and how music and movement activities can contribute to a cooperative and accepting climate.

Using the story of Max, who listened to the sounds he made by drumming on different surfaces, we examine both how we can put music at the center of the curriculum, and how we can use music in every area of the early childhood classroom. The rhythms and repetition in the language of the story refer and relate to rhythmic patterns in music. We also explore in depth the connections between music and mathematical knowledge.

Session 6 – Elements of Planning, Presentations

- Review agenda
- Literacy connections: Brainstorm lists of movement verbs/adjectives/adverbs/prepositions on chart paper. Moving with/on/around a chair, use 2 words from each category. Create a “movement sentence.”
- Reflection: Which words are difficult to depict? Which come naturally? How is a movement phrase like a spoken phrase? How is it different?
- Handout: Considerations in planning music/movement activities for young children. Review example together.
- Activity: Plan experience together (Hokey Pokey), based on elements in handout, including objective, context (place and time), introduction, limits, contingencies, extension.
- Group discussion: How do we use resources? Learning a song or game from the web or a recording, adapting for our settings, breaking down or extending.
- Return to Fears and Hopes chart from Session 1. What was addressed? What have we forgotten? How are we feeling?
- Planning/work time for final task. Each participant will prepare a music or movement activity to present as they would in their classroom.
- Presentations.
- End with a song: “Come Circling With Me.”
- Final evaluation of workshop series.

In the last session, we looked at the connection between music and language through our book study. Movement, too, has a strong connection with language and literacy, especially for young children, who understand concepts through concrete experience. Now, after 5 sessions of movement exploration, the participants use a group-generated list to create original pieces of choreography!

In preparation for a final activity, we look at some of the practicalities of planning a music and movement activity, and practice as a group with a familiar song. Each teacher will have her/his own curriculum planning framework, but they share common elements, which should be considered in planning music and movement, just as in other curriculum areas.

There is work time built into this session, and final presentations. Each participant leads a music or movement activity they have developed from resources that were made available, or something they found on their own and brought in. They present it just as they would in their own classroom, and we become a most enthusiastic group of children! This gives each participant the chance to work at a level that feels comfortable, on a presentation of their own choosing, so that part of the repertoire they take back to their classrooms is of their own creation.

Conclusion

Ana, a pre-service teacher, said sadly, “Some days, we go without music.” In the face of obstacles to integrating music and movement, teachers need deep conviction that they are valuable. This conviction must be grounded both in pedagogical theory and in creative, satisfying experiences making music and moving with others.

Teachers also need to develop the practical knowledge and skill to implement music and movement activities, and the commitment to persist when they encounter difficulties. The opportunity to reflect with colleagues can generate resilience in individual teachers.

My professional development proposal offers new teachers a way to develop skill and establish real authority because it is built on active, collaborative exploration. It draws on teachers’ prior knowledge, genuine concerns, and particular interests. It engages teachers in observing, describing, and questioning. It invites teachers to create models and adapt them. It asks teachers to connect their own experience to what they know about young children, their students, and their classrooms. It positions teachers as learners, and encourages them to take risks in a supportive environment.

This approach empowers new teachers to integrate the arts with passion and conviction. Further, it can be a valuable model for teacher training across a broad range of curriculum instruction. Its holistic, experiential, and cooperative approach supports creativity, personal agency, and professional growth.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

What are your memories of music and movement in elementary school (or earlier)?
What did you do? How did you feel about it?

Do you think music/movement has a role in early childhood classrooms? Why? What purpose does it serve?

What do you enjoy about doing music and movement with children in the classroom?

Can you describe a situation in which you were using music and/or movement with children that you felt went well?

What is difficult about doing music and movement with children in the classroom?

Can you describe a situation in which you were using music and/or movement that you felt didn't go well?

What experiences did you have in your training or early years teaching that prepared you to use music and movement in the classroom?

What is the philosophy of your program as it relates to the arts in general, and music and movement in particular?

Do you feel support in using music and movement in your classroom from your program?

What obstacles have you encountered (if any) in offering music and/or movement experiences in your classroom?

What resources in the arts are, or would be, useful to you?