Music EdVentures
An Association of SongWorks Teachers

News & Notes
December 2014

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From the President

fren·zied
adjective wildly excited or uncontrolled.
synonyms: frantic, wild, frenetic, hectic, fraught, feverish, fevered, mad, manic, intense, furious, uncontrolled, out of control. "frenzied holiday shoppers"
antonyms: **calm**

Leah R. Steffen
Shafer, MN

December is a frenzied month on so many levels! Several locations in the world are covered in white fluff and it is COLD. If you work with children in this type of environment you will see "frenzied" as a verb. When students get ready for recess or to go home, the scene is frenzied beyond description! Not all of you get to see the donning of snow pants, boots, hats, gloves, and whatever else you can think of to assure you are warm in the outside elements.

As the days move closer to December 25th we will see a different type of "frenzied" from children and adults alike. We dig deep into our reservoirs to find the most engaging tunes, lyrics, song maps, ideographs, formbooks, song dotting, games, and drama activities to get through to the last day before winter break! Nonetheless this is reality for many of us! I have no deep philosophical approach to "frenzied-December" or a handy checklist to offer you that you keep by your side to ensure sanity. I only have this, BREATHE DEEPLY . . . and take a nap if possible . . . and remember the treasure trove of resources that we have at our fingertips: *each other*, plus the wealth of website and Facebook sharings.

Truly I hope this scenario of frenzy has given you the giggles, and you find joy in all of the hectic activities of the month. My goal for December is to step back and treasure the gift I have inside of me, music. I am going to audiate the antonym for frenzied over and over: be calm, be calm, be calm.

If you are a person who practices the teaching and learning principles of MEI you have seen the gift of music in action through the many strategies developed over time. As your students map a song or study a formbook you see the calming effect it has on your teaching environment. Cling to these principles and strategies, and they will focus you on the joy of the playful, vibrant learning you facilitate every day.

Blessings to you all this "frenzied" December.

Leah

Play a Little Tune for Me:
Recorder in the Classroom

Saturday
Nov. 22nd
9:00-2:30

Location

Deerwood Elementary

1480 Deerwood Dr.
Eagan, MN
55122

Registration
9:00 A.M.

Workshop Fee
$30.00
Payable to MEI at registration

CEU's Available

Further Questions
leahrsteffen@gmail.com

Endorsed by

Music EdVentures
An Association of SongWorks Teachers

Music Edventures
Proudly presents a workshop by

Marilyn Winter

Outstanding Author of ***RECORDER EDVENTURES***

"This book may forever change your attitudes a… e role and importance of recorders in your classroom… musical lives of your students." …ennett
… I & II

POSTPONED
RESCHEDULED DATE TBA

- **Fresh ways to …**
  - Student fri…
  - Ways …
  - …
- **Too…**
  - Pla…
  - Idea…
  - Asses…
  - Formbo…
- **Hands on … …ence**
  - Improvising
  - Arranging
  - **BRING YOUR RECORDER AND PARTICIPATE!**

Marilyn Winter is a retired public school music specialist. She holds a Bachelor's of Music Education degree and a Masters of Education in School Administration. Marilyn was instrumental in establishing and is a charter member of Music EdVentures, Inc., a network of teachers throughout the United States, Canada, and Japan. She has taught summer courses accredited through Montana State University, University of Montana, Oregon State University, University of Idaho, and University of British Columbia. She continues to dedicate many hours to children and how they learn.

Music EdVentures Inc 2015 Conference

Thursday - Saturday, April 9 - 11

Holiday Inn at DIA

Denver, CO

Conference Chair
Samantha Smith (OH)
MEI President-Elect

SongWorks: Discover Your Pathway

2015 Conference Sessions

It's All about AIR: Energize and Focus Voices for Beautiful Tone

Theresa Derr, CO

Demonstration with 4th and 5th grade students for achieving optimal vocal sound in classrooms and choirs

Song Dotting: A Sound to Symbol Process

Marilyn Winter, AZ

Song dotting from sound to symbol

Copland's Fanfare for the Common Man

Douglas Bartholomew, MT

Creative movement and language to explore instrument interactions

Ripples: Ways We Affect Each Other

Peggy D. Bennett, MT

Reflecting on ourselves and schools as ecosystems of constant interaction

"Gypsy in the Moonlight": A Caribbean Mixer

Beth Gadbaw, CO

An irresistible game with content study to delight children

Reading by Ear: Using Duets to Develop Listening and Reading Skills

Douglas Bartholomew, MT

Using Duets on the MEI website to explore music reading as a listening skill

Beethoven, Egmont, and Inside Out Teaching

Susan Kenney, UT

The power of a lead map with music and story

Pathways to Musical Literacy: Ways My Students Make Music Study Their Own

Vicky Suarez, TX

Videos and photographs show literacy as a naturally evolving process

Pathways from Folk Dance to Form Study

Anna Shelow, VT

Pairing of movement and phrases make musical form visible to students

Meanwhile . . . Helping Students Think *Beyond* What is Written and *Into* What Can Happen

Mary Springer, WA

Dramatic play links with folk songs as a powerful playground for story development

How SongWorks is Special for Special Needs Children

Molly Feigal, MN

Activities that connect with children who have special needs

Making Sense: Helping Children Find Their Pathway to Literacy

Betty Phillips, OR

Icons to notation chunks to composing show correlations between writing and music composition

Ah, non! Le coq est mort!

Kate Smith, BC

French language song games provide opportunities to explore melody, harmony, movement and rhythm

The Big World of the Little Ukulele

Judy Fjell, MT

Empower students to sing and play independently with two, three, and four chord songs

Songwriting through SongWorks: Creating with Ukulele and Guitar

Angelie Timm, CO

A longitudinal curriculum in songwriting for 2nd through 5th grades

Sourwood Mountain

Esther Campbell, WA

An Appalachian folksong with hand jive and dance

When "Do" is Not a Deer OR the Key: Playing with Modes

Judy Fjell, MT

Explore modes using solfa, hand staves, and specially constructed modal rounds

Spiraling Pathways: Keeping a Song Alive and Fresh for Years

Jake Harkins, VA

Use and study of a song as it evolves from Kindergarten through 6th grade

From Fear to Courage: Educating the So-called "Non-Musician" Educators

Taryn Raschdorf, VA

How music evolves from scary and unnecessary to treasured and indispensable for classroom educators

History Moment: Cross Fertilizing the Curriculum

Fleurette Sweeney, BC

What we have learned from classroom teachers

Rabbit Run!: A Singing Game and Form Book Study

Anna Langness and Angelie Timm, CO

A simple and thrilling game is the perfect segue to tone syllable and form book study

Playing with Language: SongWorks for Learning English

Michiko Nitairi, Japan

Playing with language and song helps Japanese children learn English

A Musical Journey from Slavery to Freedom

Esther Campbell, WA

A 5th grade music and social studies unit that culminates in a program for Black History month

SongWorks Around the World

Ruthanne Parker, PA

Traditional SongWorks practices take a trip around the world

REGISTER EARLY
Online or Mail
Registration Form
next page

Hotel Reservations
Holiday Inn at DIA
Direct link next page

FLYING TO DENVER?
WATCH FOR LOW FARES!!!
Arrive Wednesday, April 8
Leave Sunday, April 12

2015 Music EdVentures Conference
April 9-11
REGISTRATION FORM

Registration at 9 a.m. Thursday, April 9
Conference ends at 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 11

CONFERENCE LOCATION
HOLIDAY INN AT DIA
6900 TOWER ROAD
Free Shuttle to/from Denver International Airport

REGISTER EARLY

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Address_____ **City**_____

State/Prov _____ **Zip/Postal Code**_____ **Email**_____

I teach *__Music __Classroom __Preschool __ELL __Other (_____)*

1. **CONFERENCE FEES:** *(Luncheons included in this fee) (All fees payable in US Dollars)*
   - _____ $175 2015 Members (choose membership below)
   - _____ $225 Nonmembers
   - _____ $100 Retirees (choose membership below)
   - _____ $ 75 Students (choose membership below)
   - _____ $110 One Day Only *(Includes sessions, luncheon, 1 year complimentary membership)*

2. **2015 MEMBERSHIP DUES:** ___ $45 Regular ___ $20 Student

3. **FRIDAY NIGHT BANQUET:** *Great opportunity to dine, enjoy conversation and music-making with friends.*
   _____ $40 *(includes gratuity and tax)*

3.* **My diet requires:** ___ No restrictions __ Vegetarian __ Vegan __ Dairy Free __ Gluten Free

4.? **TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION:** I am including $_____ *(for the MEI Scholarship/Travel Grant program)*

Register ONLINE at www.musicedventures.org/conferences.html **with payment via PayPal or**
Mail your registration form and check in USD by March 1 to:
Anna Langness, 1179 Lilac St., Broomfield, CO 80020; Questions? alangness@gmail.com

TOTAL PAID: $_____ CHECK NUMBER _____ *(Checks payable to Music EdVentures, Inc)*

SCHOLARSHIP AND TRAVEL GRANTS: Inquiries about a scholarship or travel grant to the 2015 Conference: contact Leah Steffen, MEI President, at leahrsteffen@gmail.com for information and application process.

RESERVE HOTEL ROOMS ($99 plus tax, Suite $129 plus tax) Use the direct link for MEI at Holiday Inn at DIA
http://www.holidayinn.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=hi&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=DENMF&_PMID=99801505&GPC=MEV

Terolle Turnham
Eagan, MN

From the Executive Director of SongWorks Certification

A little update...

Dear Santa,

This year I have been very good. Every day I have gone to work with a smile on my face, ready to share music with over 300 children—all on your nice list, I'm sure. I love my job and wouldn't want to do anything else. The problem is, no matter how many hints I drop to my principal, I still end up sitting in meetings, analyzing data, and receiving training on reading programs that I don't even have access to!

This year for Christmas:

a. I wish for some professional development that is relevant to my job as a music teacher.
b. I wish for one that aligns with my principles and practices of teaching, challenges me to grow, and allows me to think critically about how and why I teach the way I do.
c. I wish to gain a deeper understanding of the activities I use in the classroom like mapping, dotting, and antiphonning.
d. and I wish it to all fit in 10 days.

Oh! And Santa, you know how important it is to have experienced professionals in charge (do you let the rookie elves work Christmas Eve??) so veteran professors teaching the course is a must.

One last thing...could you please make it in Minnesota? This is my only Christmas wish, Santa. Well, this and a towel warmer for the bathroom. Thank you!

Love,
Ruthanne

Ruthanne Parker
Wyncote, PA

My Dear Ruthanne,

I read your letter and have the perfect gift in mind for you... it's a SongWorks Certification Course!!! They are offering the very first one in summer of 2015 and there is even graduate credit available. And, since you walk away with so many new ideas to use in your classroom, it will be a gift you can unwrap day after day. Ho ho ho!

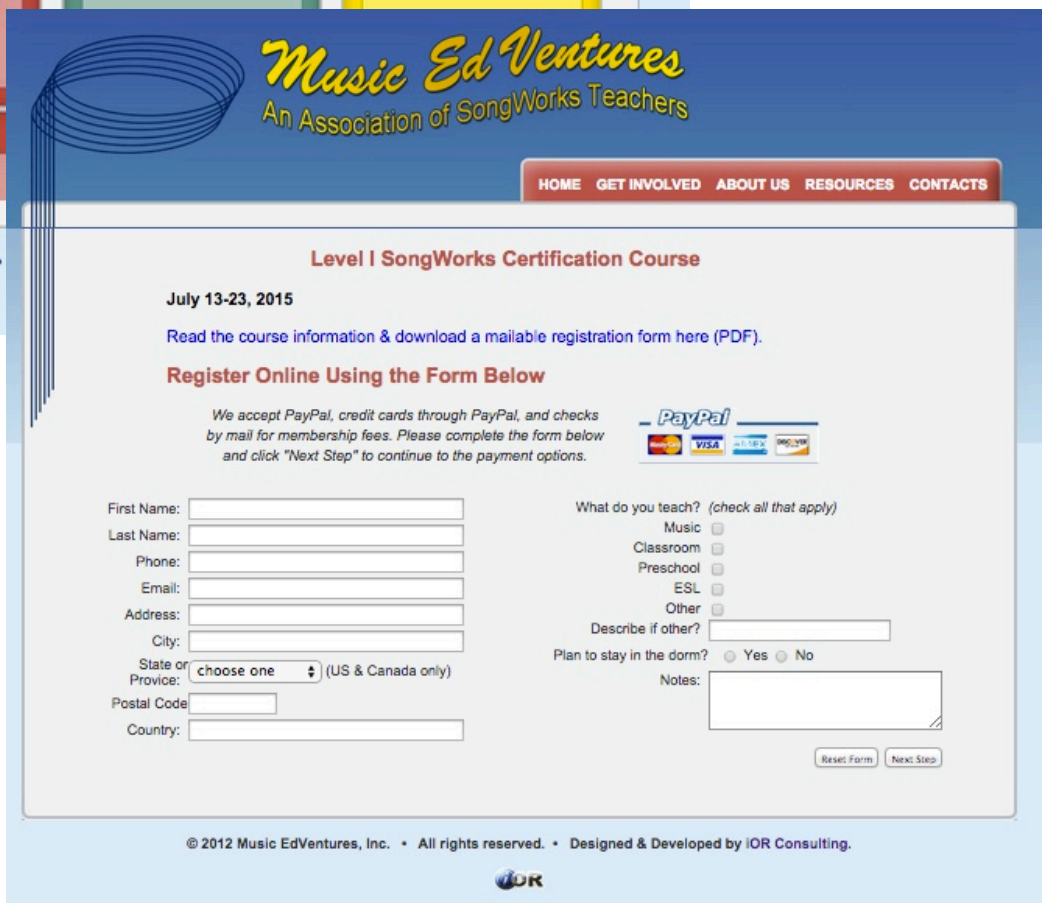
Love,
Santa

P.S. Enjoy the towel warmer, ours is a must up here in the North Pole ...brrr!

Register for the SongWorks Course online today!
It's easy! *Go to www.musicedventures.org*
Or follow this link: *http://musicedventures.org/2015-SongWorks-Course-Level-1.html*

Click GET INVOLVED

GET INVOLVED
SW Course



SongWorks Sessions at 2014 - 2015 State Conferences!

Peggy Bennett, Clinician
with Emerging Pioneers as Assistants

COLORADO
CMEA
January 28-30, 2015 in Colorado Springs

Peggy Bennett, PhD

Thursday, January 28, 3:20 - 4:10
Imagine That! Cultivating Imaginations through Music Activities
Peggy Bennett, assisted by Beth Leachman Gadbaw (CO)

Friday, January 29, 3:20 - 4:10
Mirror, Mirror on the Wall:
Reflections on How Our Behaviors Affect Our Students
Peggy Bennett, assisted by Betty Phillips (OR)

Saturday, January 30, 4:30
Colorado Children's Honor Choir Concert
Including six singers of Theresa Derr's choir

SongWorks Sessions at 2015 State Conferences!

Peggy Bennett, Clinician
with Emerging Pioneers as Assistants

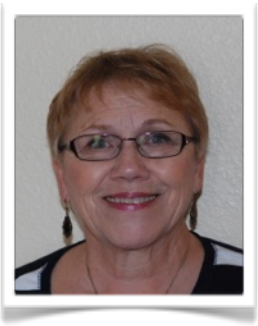
Peggy Bennett, PhD

TEXAS
TMEA
February 13-15, 2015 in San Antonio

Friday, February 13,
Feedback That Feeds: Connecting What We Think and Say
Peggy Bennett, assisted by Danielle Solan (Hong Kong)

MARYLAND
MMEA
February 19-21, 2015 in Baltimore

Saturday, February 21, 9:00 - 10:00
Playing with the Classics: Music Masterworks for Children
Peggy Bennett, assisted by Jake Harkins (VA)



Marilyn Winter
Sun City, AZ

My Home's In Montana: New Beginnings

After reading Leah's article, *Starting a Local Group,* in the November newsletter, I began thinking about people who live as many as 100 miles apart and how they could meet and support each other. This is what we did in Montana.

Early in the 1990's a cluster of 8 Montana educators, 2 classroom teachers and 6 music teachers, were invited to Betty Hoffmann's home for the weekend. Since we were so far apart geographically we had to stay overnight to make the time worthwhile. AND if anyone has experienced Betty Hoffmann's Montana hospitality, you know that we had a wonderful-productive weekend.

After that first meeting, we met at least twice a year and spent the weekend eating, dreaming, eating, catching up, eating, and collaborating. Much was accomplished in those years. First, we became very close friends and provided support for each other both professionally and personally. Second, we began dreaming of an organization for educators with common understanding of how children learn. Third, we compiled a body of classroom ideas in writing.

First, our support for each other rendered life-long friendships and made each of us better teachers. The understandings of how children gain knowledge that the classroom teachers, Ann Shaner and Jerrie Boksich, brought to our group had a rich and deep effect on each of our classrooms.

Second, the dream of forming a new organization for our network of teachers came to fruition during those years. This Montana group wrote the bylaws for what is now Music EdVentures, Inc. and the eight Montanans of that group became charter members of the new organization. Still fresh in our memories is the scene of Tomi Kent and others preparing dinner in her kitchen with Ann Shaner and Marilyn Winter sitting around the fireplace hammering out the final details of the MEI bylaws.

Third, each time some one brought a new idea to our group, Betty Hoffmann said, "Put it in writing." (Can't you just hear her!) Well we did just that! This collection of ideas eventually became *SongPlay* compiled by Peggy Bennett and published by Hal Leonard Publishing.

Logistics of our meetings: We met and stayed in various members' homes throughout Montana. We left after school on Friday, arriving late at the designated meeting place, and left at noon on Sunday in order to arrive home late Sunday night. Those living in close proximity carpooled and had an additional 3-5 hours of laughter and collaboration. Individuals were assigned to prepare a lunch or a dinner, and we all helped with preparation and cleaning.

Hopefully, this may become the seed of an idea for those of you in a locale within driving distance of each other. Perhaps a meeting of the minds is in your future.

Our Montana group stayed together until each of us retired, about 10 years. Members of the Montana group: Betty Hoffmann (Deer Lodge), Judy Suvak (Bozeman), Jerrie Boksich (Whitefish), Ann Shaner (Bigfork), Tomi Kent (Missoula), Gina Adoff (Missoula), Sandy Verschoot (Ronan), and Marilyn Winter (Butte).

GROWING SINGERS THROUGH FEEDBACK THAT FEEDS

Young children sing as spontaneously as they speak their mother tongue, and we want this joyful spirit to stay alive as they grow up. We want our students to sing their hearts out if they have the urge, without worry, competition, or fear of judgment. But we all know singing "drop-outs"— children, adolescents, and adults who love music but shy away from singing in the presence of others.

Danielle Solan is in her second year as a music teacher in the Lower Primary division of Hong Kong International School. Prior to moving abroad, she lived in Texas, where she taught music at Bluebonnet Trail Elementary and directed the youth choir at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Music Education and Bassoon Performance from The Oberlin Conservatory in 2005, and her Master's degree in Music & Human Learning from The University of Texas at Austin in 2008. Danielle is a 2011 EP.

When I was a less experienced teacher, giving feedback about the singing voice made me anxious. It was easy to give encouraging praise for lovely singing. But what about corrective feedback to individuals? I worried that my feedback would backfire, making kids self-conscious. Then I realized something about singing drop-outs: Some of them were once criticized or publicly singled out, but others were merely passed over, and never got the feedback they needed to develop good singing habits and choices.

So, I asked myself what type of feedback would help our students become confident, willing singers? What type of feedback would help them build a deeper understanding about singing and performance?

Not all feedback needs to be complimentary or praising, but getting feedback from a teacher does have to be a positive overall experience. We can prepare students to receive feedback by 1) creating a welcoming environment, 2) doing preliminary assessment, and 3) building a shared understanding of singing goals. When we give feedback, we can craft our words in ways that leave students feeling listened to, respected, and empowered.

PREPARING CHILDREN FOR FEEDBACK

Welcoming Children
We set the stage for feedback by building good relationships with students and creating a welcoming environment. In music class, we may sing the same Hello Song and play the same Name Game at the beginning of class, which builds community and helps hesitant singers to feel comfortable. We do vocal exploration—sirens, whoops, hoots, cuckoo calls and sighs—to practice singing lightly and lifting our voice into the upper register. During our five-minute welcome routine, I often put our "Mr. Peacock" puppet on my hand and wave to children who are participating enthusiastically. Some children who are too shy to sing to me are very eager to sing to a puppet, and my classes sing with extra spirit as soon as Mr. Peacock comes out.

Preliminary Assessment
During the first month of school, I do informal singing assessments and take notes on vocal habits. I make the rounds during group singing, wearing my Mr. Peacock puppet, and I pause to listen to individuals. I also ask volunteers to take turns as "song starters." I take note of singers who will need special support and feedback throughout the year, especially children who habitually sing louder than the group, children with low or quiet participation, children who make silly choices with their voice or behavior, and children with maladaptive singing habits (i.e., singing too low, singing with limited pitches, using a forced chesty voice).

Shared Understandings about Singing
At the beginning of the school year, we encourage habits of participating, making good choices, and matching what we hear. On Day One, we begin to build our first shared understanding: how to sing "lightly in our upper register." You may use a different term—such as lifted voice or high register—but it is important to have an oft-repeated phrase that describes our desired tone for singing. I model my upper register voice and show appreciation for children who match my light tone. If a child is using a silly voice or belting loudly, I ask them to "make a different voice choice."

Over time, we build other common understandings about singing, broken down into achievable skills. Our

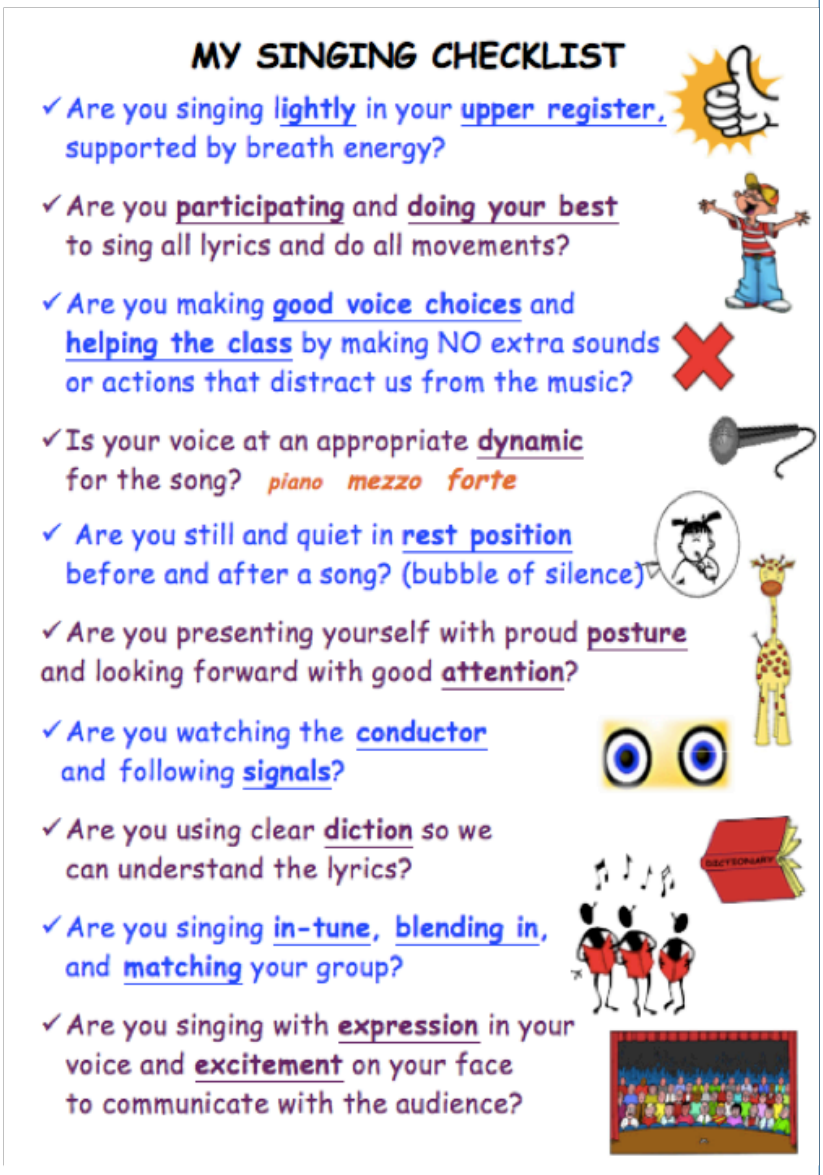
"Singing Checklist" lists the Top Ten ways we can achieve excellence as singers. We work with this checklist throughout the year to prepare for concerts, identify goals, assess ourselves, and engage with feedback. I use this singing checklist with pre-K onward, and it has revolutionized the way I teach vocal music. Students get breadth of understanding by learning varied repertoire, and they get depth of understanding about vocal performance by working with the same checklist over several years.

For three months, we work with the First Five goals, which address basic vocal habits. For Kindergarten, I find it appropriate to work with just these goals all year.

1) Sing lightly in your upper register, supported by breath energy.
2) Participate and do your best.
3) Make good voice choices and help the class.
4) Use an appropriate dynamic.
5) Be still and quiet before and after a song. (We call this our "bubble of silence.")

As the holiday season approaches and we prepare for concerts, we explore all Top Ten goals, which include aspects of stage presence and performance practice:

6) Present proud posture and look forward with good attention.
7) Watch the conductor and follow signals.
8) Use clear diction.
9) Sing in-tune, matching and blending with the ensemble.
10) Sing with vocal expression and facial excitement.



8 STRATEGIES FOR CONSTRUCTING YOUR FEEDBACK

Once we build shared understandings about singing, we can give and receive direct feedback. How we communicate feedback counts a lot, and here are some strategies to make corrective feedback a positive experience.

1. **Questioning: "What did you notice about our performance? What are words to describe what you heard?"**
   - Ask children to give their own feedback. Students need to reflect on their actions in order to make good choices. If students sang particularly well, they often use delightful vocabulary to assess themselves, i.e., "Marvelous!" "I used my upper register!" "Like a concert!"

- Use student exemplars to guide children towards good habits and choices. Peers make the best models!

2. **Think-Aloud Observations: "Here is what I noticed."**
   - As the teacher, describe what you notice, using specific vocabulary that recycles the language of the "Singing Checklist." For example, comment on a student's "bubble of silence" or "expressive dynamics."
   - Relate your own observations to the big picture of musicianship by making statements like, "I noticed you listening with full attention like great musicians."

3. **Corrections: "I think we have a misunderstanding."**
   - Anticipate misunderstandings, and do not assume that students are intentionally disruptive. Have you ever noticed that children often confuse three high-energy states in music: "high," "loud," and "fast?" If a child is not matching a pitch, and we tell her to sing higher, she may start belting louder instead. Say, "I think we have a misunderstanding. I did not hear your upper register. I heard a shouting voice. Let's try again using a high, light sound."

4. **Guidance: "Let's make a different voice choice."**
   - Talk about students' "voice choices" instead of labeling them or labeling their voice. During instruction, practice making different voice choices like whispering, speaking, singing or shouting. Experiencing a range of possibilities helps students to make musical choices. Say, "Last try, I heard some students singing *piano* and others singing *forte.* This time, let's all make a different voice choice and sing *mezzo forte*."

5. **Self-Correction: "Check in with yourself"**
   - Use the "check in with yourself" technique to remind students of a previously stated expectation or a shared understanding. For example, say, "Check in with your body to make sure you're standing with proud posture."
   - Give students a chance to assess themselves and initiate self-correction on their own. The "check-in" technique lets students know that we assume the best of them and can trust them to correct their own behavior.

6. **Invitation to Participate: "I wonder who?"**
   - Try inviting students to do things rather than stating it as a direction. For example, we can say, "Let's try that again. This time, I wonder who will follow the conductor's signals and end the note together?"
   - Try inviting students to participate instead of insisting. Be patient and keep offering invitations until students feel ready to join in. Know that students have different comfort levels for trying something new, and may need to observe more repetitions before they are willing to join the ensemble.

7. **Invitation: "How about you take a Listening and Watching Turn?"**
   - Sometimes an opportunity for reflection is even more meaningful than corrective feedback. If a student needs a break, invite her to stand next to you and "take a listening and watching turn." This lets the child see and hear the effect of what her classmates are doing. After observing her classmates being successful, the child will usually make better choices once she rejoins the group. A "listening and watching turn" is both positive and powerful. It is framed as a positive opportunity rather than a consequence, and it ends with student re-engagement rather than disengagement (as opposed to a "time out").

8. **Show Genuine Appreciation and Pleasure: "That was a musical moment!"**
   - Musicians are musicians because we have a taste for beauty. We crave musical pleasure, and we love how good it feels to make beautiful music with an ensemble. Give your students a taste of that sweetness! If you feel authentic, genuine emotion, share it. Tell your students about the tingles and shivers you feel, and the flutter in your heart when they sing beautifully. Let them see the real tears in your eyes. Don't let truly magical moments pass by. Use appealing language like "yummy" or "splendiferous" to describe their musicianship. Once they feel the tingles too, they are on their way to being life-long music lovers.

cont'd

FEEDBACK HELPS US “WALK THE LINE”

In musical performance, there is a sweet spot between showing individual expression and leadership, and blending in to match the ensemble. When students demonstrate too little energy, we may ask them to turn up the volume and contribute more energy. When students take charge and sing *forte or fortissimo*, louder than everyone else, we acknowledge them for their enthusiasm, then encourage them to listen and blend in. When students split the difference and sing with *mezzo forte* voices, we thank them for being leaders who help the class with their musicality and confidence.

One of my mentors called this learning to "walk the line." Just like learning to walk on a high beam, learning to sing requires trial and error for both teacher and students, supported at first by a guiding hand to develop the right sense of balance.

The difference between what is musically appropriate, or not, can be pretty subtle and tricky for students to learn. Children learn to "walk the line" in music through trial and error, supported by teacher feedback. If we go "too far," we can always try again and make a different voice choice. Mistakes are okay, because it's understood that we need many tries and chances to find the sweet spot. Our goal is to create shared understandings about singing, while still making children feel safe expressing themselves and finding their own voice.

Feedback that feeds provides the nourishment that children need to grow as musicians. Now that I have strategies to help children learn about their voices, I no longer feel anxious when I talk to them about singing. I trust that my words and attitude will let children know that I care enough to really listen to them and will leave them feeling respected and empowered. §

Emerging Pioneers complete four assignments to fulfill their Fellowship award. In assignment #3, Erika DeMonner shares her conversation with another teacher.

Erika DeMonner, a 2014 Emerging Pioneer, is the Music Specialist (K-5) at Saint Lawrence Catholic School in Santa Clara, CA. She holds a Master of Music Teaching degree from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music. After receiving her BA degree, Erika spent a year teaching a creative arts/improvisational group approach that combined music and dance.

After returning from the 2014 MEI Conference, I was inspired by the idea of the Sound to Symbol process as a means to teach Kindergartners more about letters, syllables, words, and reading. During one recess after we finished a unit on Punchinella, the Kindergarten teacher and I had a discussion about mapping. Ms. C told me how cool she thought it was that the kids were tapping the dots while singing, practicing splitting their sounds into word and syllable chunks. I, excited by her enthusiasm, mentioned seeing some of our troubled or troublesome students really get into tracking the dots and lines of song maps, and how excited they were when they had a personal victory. We talked about how putting words to a rhythm seemed to really help their tracking abilities. Ms. C said tapping the syllable chunks was great reinforcement, since her students were practicing putting together vowels and consonants. During our next lesson, the Kinders and I discovered what letters make up Punchinella’s name by listening to their sounds, and discussed which letters would go in each of our syllable dots. We had a great time wondering where to split up the letters, and eventually decided on a few different variations. Ms. C was delighted when her students shared with her what we discovered about Punchinella! §

Emerging Pioneers complete four assignments to fulfill their Fellowship award. 2014 Emerging Pioneer Erika DeMonner of Santa Clara, CA completes her final assignment.

This year I have made a concerted effort to start the year with the SongWorks principles in mind. I was set up in a new space this year-- instead of travelling from classroom to classroom, now I had a room of my my own! I finally had a space where I could create my own rules and my own culture, and my own expectations. Well, it turns out I had a bit of a struggle bringing the children on board with the new plan. My “new room” doubles as their daycare center, and came pre-packaged with its own rules and quirks that I had to learn from my students. I adapted and evolved my expectations as best I could.

It’s been about two months of our new school year, and I just now feel like my students are settling into our new arrangement. But the best part is we have room to move and play our games safely, and also tables where we can sit to make and follow maps, or play instruments. I feel able to go deeper in my lessons because I have more opportunities available in a single lesson. We can play a game to get the song in our bodies and ears, then the students can take that experience immediately to a work space and dot or draw lines to reflect the melody or rhythm we are focusing on. I feel that I have finally created an engaging environment where students are able to participate in new and different ways.

In the beginning of the year I was having some particular trouble with one of my classes, and I happened to talk to one of the teachers about the difficulties I was having. She told me that this class had had a Kindergarten teacher that did not treat them all with love and respect, and reacted severely to differences in ability; extolling some and deriding others. This was a sobering revelation, and I came back the next week determined to make sure that each student knew that he or she was a musician. I scrapped the lessons that hadn’t been working and dove into a new song that I hoped would get them going and feeling good. That week we learned and practiced Seasick Sailor with abandon, and in the next month we had many celebrated success as movers, as singers, as instrumentalists and improvisers. It was amazing how much the class turned around when I was determined to show them that they could! §

from Fleurette Sweeney, PhD, faculty and Board Chair of SelfDesign Learning Foundation, BC.

SelfDesign Graduate Institute
Fall 2014 Webinars

All webinars are one hour; ***all are free of charge.*** *To participate, register with David Marshak at:* ***davidmarshak@selfdesign.org***

December 14, 4 PM PST: Pille Bunnell— *Love and Learning*

Have you encountered the statement that “love is the only emotion that expands intelligence”? We will address this concept by exploring how both learning and love are fundamental in our human heritage. We will briefly explore the relational nature of emotions, and learning as a natural process that keeps us in relationship.

Pille is an Adjunct Professor in Environmental Education and Environmental Management at Royal Roads University; Past President of the American Society for Cybernetics; currently the Board Chair for SelfDesign Learning Foundation; College of Co-Exploration, the Canada Research Chair in Communities; on the editorial boards for *Cybernetics and Human Knowing* and *Constructivist Foundations*; and a member of the SDGI faculty.

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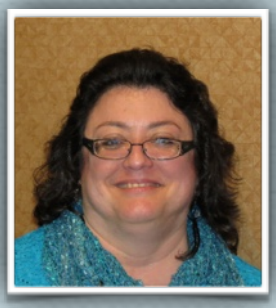

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The Purpose of Music EdVentures, Inc. is to search for and practice ways of making music and interacting with people that preserve and celebrate the dignity of both. As a guiding principle, this purpose will focus our work on:

1. Practices that foster interactive, facilitative learning environments.
2. Strategies that empower the learner within the context of music experience and study.
3. Networks that encourage collaboration between diverse disciplines, professionals, and interest groups.

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SAVE THE DATE
2nd weekend

2015 MEI CONFERENCE
April 9, 10, 11
Denver, CO

Any member of Music EdVentures, Inc. can receive a copy of the **MEI Policies and Procedures Manual** by contacting MEI Past President Terolle at t.turnham@gmail.com.

Support the Mission of MEI with your membership dues!

$45 Regular $75 Sustaining $100 Patron $20 Student

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News and Notes is the monthly communication of Music EdVentures, Inc. (MEI). Regular features will keep members and friends up to date on coming events and the latest teaching techniques, tips and strategies. Submissions are due on the 15th of the month prior to publication and may be submitted months in advance, indicating the month in which they are to be published. The committee reserves the right to select material to be published according to length and appropriateness. Articles should be 200-325 words. Visuals should be scanned and submitted as pdf or jpg files. Submissions may be sent to alangness@gmail.com and may be edited to accommodate space limitations.