

LET'S SING!



Goal

- A simple but unique way to bring students closer together by activating musical heritage.
- Added value comes from getting acquainted with different linguistic backgrounds by singing songs.
- The notion of sharing every kind of personal input, will encourage understanding.

Target Audience

Fifth grade pupils (10 – 11 year-olds)

Getting organized

- Family questionnaire on songs in the children's maternal language, actually questioning whether children can bring their shared knowledge of songs they 'inherited' from parents and grandparents to the music classroom.
- Acoustic potential: a spacious location (a multipurpose space, a sports hall...) will not only have them singing but will also invite them to move to the music, to dance.
- Suitable accompanying instruments (piano, guitar, accordion...) are your classroom ambient. Put those chairs and desks aside.

Getting started

How to begin?

The teacher (Hans Helsen) stresses the importance of introducing children to some personal songs of his, just to have them singing and feeling more comfortable. "It is very important that children feel at ease while singing. It is all about body awareness (cf. Information sheet 'Mind your Body'), singing is all about the air that you breathe, isn't it?" Subsequently, he had them freestyle on their own musical heritage, known to them through parents, grandparents, et cetera.

How to plan ahead?

There is no need for an intricate plot but including this practice in a basic timetable will allow for a successful musical adventure.

How to overcome initial restraints and other difficulties?

Don't forget to be inviting in a visual way: there are numerous examples out there that show how togetherness and performing music through songs are universal.

Timing

Your basic timetable allows you to repeat this gathering of music material a few times throughout the school year without adding too much to your workload. Adding folksongs in different languages to your curriculum as a music teacher can be a multipurpose source of information and inspiration.

Future perspective

Allow some time to build on this initial experience through tips - reactions - reflections.

Make sure you keep up a system of references and quotes that gives credit to your students' input. Not only does it systematize your class experiences, it will also be perceived as appreciative by your participants.

Credits

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