

Inclusion of the Deaf in a Multi-Ethnic Music Education: The Core of Human Expression in Our Multifaceted World

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INTRODUCTION

Music is our innate ability to express what is human in all of us. Edward B. Nitchie, who published a handbook for lip-reading in 1916 said, “Music from silent things has long been a theme of the poets ... it is the soul that sees, the soul that hears all the true beauties of God’s universe” (Edwards, 12). It may not be possible to know the exact origins of music, but in the very first moment of our own existence comes the pulse of life, the rhythms of breathing, and our primal sense of movement. From the essence of life comes the need for communication, which soon develops in the form of sounds and gestures. We begin life with the beating of our own hearts and the rhythms of the body in relation to each other and our environment.

At the very core of music, dance, and drama lies a vital link of human communication unlike any other. In light of the present world socio-political climate, we must make certain that our students experience widely diverse cultures within our own community. This will contribute to more understanding and tolerance for those different from ourselves. The performing arts will always provide a means of “knowing” peoples of many different origins. Our human desires for truth and beauty may be found in the pursuit of the art and discipline of music: art in service to our souls, so to speak. Our expression is brought into existence by the will, our natural impulse to create, even when it is suppressed by society or insufficient education. Plato said that “rhythm, [i.e. the expression of order and symmetry], penetrates by way of the body into the soul and into the entire man, revealing to him the harmony of his whole personality” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 58).

Indeed, by using the human body as “an instrument,” music will allow the student free expression of will, creative impulse, and control over muscles, nerves, and emotion. Through rhythmic movement, the student experiences tempo, tone quality, syncopation, phrasing, groups of beats, note values, independence of control, and rhythmic counterpoint. Attention to detail creates an environment where the dancer can be an interpreter of music through the laws of balance and bodily movement. In short, “plastic [moveable] music renders sound visible” (Pennington, 8, 12, 16, 79). In this curriculum unit, students will learn about themselves and others by exploring a whole realm of musical activities. They will begin to understand that the arts can help bridge the gap between all cultures, including deaf and hearing. As they study historical and cultural information about South Asian and West African cultures, they will “own” another way of knowing the universe through dance, music and theater.

We must teach each other our own ways of expressing ourselves by emphasizing what is unique in ourselves. In the deaf culture, for example, an entire system of symbolic meanings has emanated from thought in the form of visual representations, or gestural symbols, rather than through sound language. This system, known as American Sign Language (ASL), represents the strength of the deaf world and one key to understanding its culture. For the gifted and talented, a curriculum based on depth and complexity serves to expand knowledge and understanding to enhance their giftedness. By increasing a student's critical thinking capacity to decode the world, identify patterns, explain the rules of a given order of things, resolve ethical issues, become flexible by knowing many points of view, and conceptualize main ideas, the gifted and indeed, *all* students, will increase their intellectual capacity. In addition, by knowing how various cultures express themselves through music, dance, and pantomime, all of our students will be able to communicate effectively with each other.

THE STUDENTS

I teach at the T.H. Rogers School in the Houston Independent School District. We serve a multi-ethnic population of gifted and talented, hearing-impaired, multiply-impaired, and multiply-impaired deaf students in pre-kindergarten through the eighth grade. Given the fact that the deaf students at T.H. Rogers have not had the opportunity to participate in regular music classes until this school year (2001-2002), it is vital that an innovative approach be initiated to meet their needs and to maximize their learning in this subject. One purpose of this curriculum unit will be to focus on the ways that the deaf can be included and thrive in the existing music program for the hearing, specified by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) objectives. Several components of the music education program, including dance, playing instruments, pantomime, reading notation, and learning eurhythmics, are naturally adaptable to populations of hearing-impaired.

In addition to being designed to serve the deaf population, this curriculum unit is designed to greatly enhance the level of depth and complexity comprehension for the gifted and talented students. As with the deaf students, the unit will provide an opportunity for them to better understand the power of gesture, communicate with their deaf/hearing peers, and express multiple musical concepts in the context of multi-ethnic experiences. This curriculum will also provide opportunities for critical thinking, which is a skill so important in education today.

As they bridge the gap between the deaf and hearing cultures, the main objectives of this curriculum unit will also touch on all four strands of TEKS music objectives outlined in *The Music Curriculum Framework*, developed by the Center for Educator Development in Fine Arts (CEDFA, 2001). These four strands include perception, creative expression/performance, historical and cultural heritage, and critical evaluation. It is interesting to note that all four of these strands emphasize some precepts from Howard Gardner's *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Perception, for example, may use rhythmic, visual, spatial, bodily, and kinesthetic ways of learning,

which are particularly ideal for the deaf students' ways of knowing. Interpersonal intelligence may come into play in the process of sharing activities based on cultural experiences. At the Houston Ballet Academy, for example, deaf students showed greater understanding when they could *feel* the pulses and quality of the leaps and jumps through the vibrations of the platform they were sitting on. Greater interest among the deaf students was generated as they shared the experience with their hearing peers. Musical/rhythmic intelligence would be emphasized in the performance and creative expression mode. Using objectives from critical evaluation would bring into play verbal/linguistic intelligence, in whatever form it may take, including using sign language to describe activities and concepts, or keeping a journal about traits of a particular culture.

The tenets of this curriculum unit could thus be delineated by use of four major objectives. The first objective is that the student will demonstrate an understanding of musical concepts, through use of a variety of learning modes. The second objective is that the student will demonstrate knowledge of several major cultures prevalent in American society. Another objective is that the student will communicate with members of another culture using gesture, dance, and pantomime. Finally, using a journal as a tool for personal expression, the student will record perceptions, evaluate experiences, and identify relevant materials.

My challenge as a music teacher will be to bring the richness of our diverse Houston community to a large percentage of students at our school. In such a school environment, the development of performing arts curriculum centered on cultural diversity will not only validate each individual, but also serve as a model for bringing us together. Whether it be for deaf, gifted and talented, primary, or secondary; for people of African, Latino, Asian, European, Native American, or Middle Eastern descent, the focus of my curriculum unit will center on the theme: *The Core of Human Expression in Our Multifaceted World*. And just what is this "core" of human expression? Perhaps Nature itself spins it out in the design of the Universe; rhythm and movement become symbols of who we are, and music displays "universal language" in its own elaborate design. Perhaps Gardner explains it best with his theory of "multiple intelligences," his explanation of our unique capabilities. It may be that the "core" of human expression is evident in the practice of Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics, a unique system of rhythmic movement. Finally, if it is all of these things, then it is also the very nature of our souls and the manner in which each of us finds our own way.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences: Philosophical Approach

Howard Gardner argues that individuals have combinations of intelligence that include linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic modes. Although his theory has been widely debated and at times is considered controversial, I am convinced that even if it does not explain human intelligence definitively, it becomes a blueprint for our ways of knowing the world. As

stated earlier, multiple intelligences can be exploited by using our innate impulses to express musical ideas. Using the bodily-kinesthetic approach in synchronization with music, our knowledge will be rooted with a deeper, cross-cultural understanding. Evaluation of the process will be realized through linguistic means. Multiple Intelligence Theory (MI) focuses also on the use of symbols. Gardner states, “It is through *symbols* and *symbol systems* that our present framework, rooted in the psychology of intelligences, can be effectively linked with the concerns of culture, including the rearing of children” (Gardner, 300; emphasis added).

Theory of Multiple Intelligences: Practical Applications

In this curriculum unit, symbols and symbol systems will be explored through experiences in South Asian, West African and Deaf culture. Students will develop a common vocabulary of gestures, visual cues, and sound sources. The vocabulary might look something like this: with the guidance of the teacher and an interpreter, the hearing students will pick up on the sounds of West Africa and show the deaf students rhythm patterns on the drums and other percussion instruments. After practicing these rhythms, the deaf students will invent gestures that mirror the quality of sound. Together, all students could choreograph a dance, complete with the native dress, visually representing an expression integral to that culture. The exact dance forms may be replicated, performed in musical forms such as a canon form, in which a melody or tune is imitated by individual parts at regular intervals, or as a simple ABA form, which contains an A section and a contrasting B section followed by a repeat of the A section. Many video sources would be provided for students to imitate dance steps, movements, and instrument techniques.

Bhangra dance of South Asia will be used to introduce the idea of ostinato, as rhythm patterns are performed repeatedly on instruments and as dance steps become the kinesthetic models for the ostinati. Gestures as symbols are vital to the art of classical Indian dances called *bharata natyam* and *kuchipudi bharatam*. Under the tutelage of local teaching artists, students will be immersed in a culture that effectively links spiritual or religious practice with dance and music (Kumar, 2002).

As we interpret the use of MI, there is much room for expansion. In his introductory remarks for the tenth anniversary edition of his book, Gardner says: “While from my present vantage point the best way to start to understand the human mind is to examine its different frames, its separate intelligences, in the end we must also learn how to yoke those intelligences together and mobilize them for constructive ends” (xxv). This curriculum unit is designed to capitalize on the varied learning styles of students by expanding their musical and kinesthetic experiences in the fine arts. Using dance and music as tools, students will experience traditions of each culture and reflect through their journal entries just how those traditions relate to them.

JAQUES-DALCROZE EURHYTHMICS

The basic tenets of Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics enable each student to bring forth very personal modes of expression in their understanding of music. The practice of Eurhythmics benefits each student by validating motion as musical expression. Emile Jacques-Dalcroze's philosophy and educational principles were set firmly in place by his commitment to careful observation of students of all ages and backgrounds. His techniques are particularly suited to addressing the needs of the individual. In the case of the deaf students, motion implies rhythm in music. Without sound, the visual representations of that sound become paramount. In the case of many gifted students, that motion of sound has been left underdeveloped, in favor of a strictly intellectual approach to learning musical notation.

Jaques-Dalcroze started teaching in 1891. Through the course of his career, he developed what is today known as "Eurhythmics." Focusing on *solfege*, (ear training), improvisation, and rhythmic gymnastics, he brought into practice the unification of components of musical training that had previously been taught separately. At early levels of training, eurhythmics is used as a tool to develop each student's awareness and musical ability (Landis and Carder). In 1914, Margaret Naumburg described the benefits of the new techniques espoused by Dalcroze:

Eurhythmics differs fundamentally from dancing by translating musical values into space duration, so that the body and music become one...the Dalcroze method of eurhythmics never becomes an automatic group of exercises, because this series of movements is only the means to expressing musical ideas, which are infinite (Naumburg, quoted in Dale).

This new method of musical training became an essential component not only in music education, but also in the training of artists of various disciplines.

In this curriculum unit, the beauty of Dalcroze Eurhythmics will be fully explored. As commands are given either by sight or sound, the student will experience musical ideas in time, space, and motion. Through rhythm experiences, the spiritual, the "plastic," and the technical domains all come together. "The aim of rhythmic gymnastics is to develop mind and feeling in everything connected with art and life" (Jaques-Dalcroze, 108). Expressed through modern educational theory, activities that access the affective, psychomotor, and cognitive domains are most effective in teaching practices.

Jaques-Dalcroze does not neglect the blind or deaf student, but seeks to include them in his methods. He believes that in spite of any impairment, we must develop students' imaginative powers, self-confidence, and "diverse sensations...music, for instance, is not only the art of sound, but also that of accentuation and development in time; rhythm is not only the outcome of some intellectual process, it is a vital instinct" (108, 149). He devotes an entire chapter to the blind, outlining specific techniques for their development.

My purpose in this curriculum unit is to further his intentions of working with the handicapped by creating an appropriate system for the hearing-impaired.

THE POWER OF GESTURE

From the core of our humanness comes expression in many forms, particularly in our gestures and facial expressions. From gesture comes meaning; from meaning comes gesture. Each of us carries an inner impulse to communicate with others, regardless of our innate abilities. We embrace this impulse as a need to connect with the world in whatever form we are uniquely able to express it. It could start as a simple gesture: the blink of an eye or a sideways glance, and develop accordingly into a word, a song, or a dance. “All gesture is the result either of an immediate exaltation or of a persistent state of emotion or conscious thought voluntarily pursued” (Dalcroze, 65).

From basic gestures come extensions of those impulses which emanate from within. These gestures may be in the form of American Sign Language, a symbolic system of gestural meanings created for those who are hearing-impaired. The flow of hand movements and facial expressions show us the shape of ideas, just as the notes of a musical score represent the shape of sounds and silences. Certainly, with no hearing ability, the articulation of patterns, thoughts, and concepts must be presented in a different way.

In all of the arts disciplines, gestures may also come in patterns and shapes. These may be formed by a paintbrush on canvas, the bow of a violin gliding across its strings, or the technique of a pianist. We may use gestures to tell a story, whether it be to emphasize certain words or ideas, or in the form of an entire pantomime. Dance is an extension of gesture. In classical dance of India, for example, gestures are used specifically as religious expressions, symbolizing words or concepts (Kumar, 2002).

We may extend our gestures in the playing of rhythms on instruments, articulating not with speech, but by communicating pattern, tempo, and intensity of emotion. In African culture, for example, drum language holds significant meaning as the performance of a drum implies a specific pattern or code. Even more important are the language analogs, or phrase patterns of sounds (Lange, 2002). The habit of playing language analogs is passed from one generation to the next as oral history. When the content of the analogs is passed from adult to child, the history is clearly understood.

DESIGN OF THE CURRICULUM UNIT

As a humanist, I am particularly interested in developing teaching strategies and methodologies that will bridge the gap between different cultures, including between the deaf and hearing. Respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration is paramount as we study cultural differences. We can then begin to realize the intrinsic values of the arts and appreciate all human expression as our own.

One way for the deaf and the hearing to communicate is to focus on the way that we use gestures and facial expressions. From these basic means of human contact come more elaborate bodily movements in the form of dance, pantomime, and the discipline of Dalcroze Eurhythmics. “Rhythmic gymnastics attempts to set up relations between instinctive bodily rhythms and those created by the senses and the will” (Dalcroze, 5).

In studying many ethnic traditions, my unit will emphasize musical concepts such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and style. The power of gesture, facial expression, and body movement will be reflected in a comparison of American Sign Language (ASL) and pantomime. The significance of telling a story with actions instead of with words will be demonstrated in the traditions of West Africa and South Asia. Dalcroze Eurhythmics will serve as a means of engaging students in learning how, at the very core of their own being, there is a way to express thoughts, feelings, and values. The use of the human body as a “musical instrument” will allow the deaf and hearing students alike to understand basic musical constructs.

In order to ensure inclusion, the first step in developing my curriculum unit will be to schedule deaf and hearing classes together, at least periodically. In doing so, the amalgamation of cultures will be possible, and the means of teaching the unit could be uniform in nature. A large room with a smooth dance surface and full-length mirrors would be desirable. Musical instruments from all parts of the globe will be available for use in activities. In addition, consistent collaboration with classroom teachers, other fine arts teachers, community representatives, and teaching artists from the Texas Institute of Arts in Education (TIAE) would provide enrichment activities and support for research projects related to Houston’s varied cultural life. An important component of my unit will be the use of field trips to enhance learned aspects of music, dance, and theater. Guest artists will be invited to speak or demonstrate concepts and themes studied in the course of the semester.

The design of the curriculum unit ensures that all students will be represented, and will have the opportunity to share the traditions of music, art, or dance from their own backgrounds. Several days will be used for student presentations of artifacts, traditional dress, or music from the home environment. The classroom teacher might wish to coordinate the social studies curriculum with the fine arts unit to add depth and complexity. Then, enough time will be allotted for focusing on the musical-gestural-visual format of learning during the 45-minute music class. By definition, a “musical-visual-gestural format” will be having students feel the impulse of the music as expressed in either sound or silence. They would be able to see that impulse in a visual representation of notation. They could also use either Curwen (solfege) hand signs, each representing a pitch, or ASL signs to express characteristics in the music – fast or slow, high or low, or smooth or rough.

Within the time frame of the curriculum unit, which will be at least eight weeks in length, professional videotaped performances will be played during class, representing South Asian, West African, and Deaf cultures. These will be varied from semester to semester, depending on countries or cultures that may be focused on in the regular classroom. These videos will be used to discuss similarities and differences in gesture, rhythm of body movement, or the way that instruments are played.

South Asian dance uses specific gestures to relate religious contexts of meanings. The talking drums of Africa relate codes or messages through their articulations of certain rhythms and tonal languages, and pantomime essentially tells a story during the enactment of deaf theater. Discussions of the materials presented will be germane in correlating the *meaning* of gesture in American Sign Language (ASL) and the *meaning* of gesture in dance traditions. Similar comparisons will be made with regard to tempi, pitch vibrations, style, mobility, texture, timbre, and harmony. During the course of the unit, I will expect the students to keep a journal. Students might want to write about class experiences, places visited, or guests they have met. They may choose to draw pictures of concepts learned, and keep lists of music they like, and videos they enjoyed.

In a world which may seem frightening because of political, social, and religious unrest, engaging students now in the tapestry of our world cultures, particularly through the performing arts, will provide them with a viable means of communication as we venture into the future. My curriculum unit of study is designed to acknowledge and embrace our basic impulse to communicate through the arts in a multivariied way. We will focus on and explore the meaning of gesture, manifested in both hearing and deaf cultures in our diverse city of Houston, Texas.

South Asian Dance

Gestures are used every day as a way for all of us to communicate with the world. The classical dances of South India will be used as a way for students to expand their linguistic-gestural vocabulary through music and movement. Not only will students be able to relate Indian dance gestures to everyday life, but they will also broaden their understanding of Indian culture in general. The classical Indian dance style called *bharata natyam* uses specific movements to praise spiritual figures, tells religious stories, and expressed various moods. This dance form evolved over a period of approximately two thousand years, and most modern interpretations of the dance include both the traditional ritual of praising ancient deities and a more secular style used for entertainment. Increases in the emphasis on *varnum* (a dance in the *bharata natyam* repertoire) have brought the use of *abhinaya* (the expressive aspect of the dance; mime expressing the meaning of a song) to the modern world. For example, the *mudras* (hand signs) depict the ritual of the priests as they circle in a clockwise direction holding a *kumbharati* (pot-lamp). Another symbolic gesture is the presentation of *pushpanjali* (flowers) in the ritual (Gaston, 322, 348, 364, 373).

Teaching artists in the community who specialize in this dance form will demonstrate how the gestures are used. These artists are affiliated with an organization in Houston called the Texas Institute of Arts in Education (TIAE). Each year, TIAE brings the fine arts to the schools with performances, field trips, and teachers who are representative of various disciplines. A field trip to the Houston International Festival will allow students to experience a live performance of Indian dances. With the aid of an interpreter familiar with American Sign Language, students will learn the similarities and differences between the *bharata natyam* and everyday signing for the deaf. In addition, the use of videotapes will show the students how the dance is correlated with musical accompaniment.

Another style of dance from the Punjab region of India is *bhangra*, now widely popular all over the world. This dance is considered a folk dance, a celebration of the harvest, with repeated rhythmic patterns (*osinati*) played by the *dhol* (drum). The dance usually depicts a story about farming or everyday activities of people throughout rural areas. Using the style of *bhangra*, students will learn the repeated rhythms on a large drum and improvise movements that follow those patterns. With access to the Internet, many *bhangra* musical examples and streaming videos are available, showing samples of artists such as Jazzy Bains and *bhangra* dance teams throughout the United States (Punjab Online).

West African Traditions

In West African countries like Mali, Senegal, and Ghana, the essence of life, music, and dance is considered one. Music and dance replicate everyday life and are also events that portray command of strong character in the society. The virtuosity of the event is “an occasion for the demonstration of character” (Chernoff, 151). In other words, music and dance become the means for expression of the individual as he relates to others. Interdependence displayed in the complex cross rhythms of the music reflects the society in which Africans live. (Cross rhythms are created when a main beat scheme is combined with a contrasting rhythm, with a feeling of continuation.) Equally as important are the tonal languages which imitate speech. These tonal expressions are imitated in the playing of drums, representing word phrases that are understood in a particular African culture (Chernoff, 80).

The system of complex cross-rhythms of the Anlo-Ewe people of sub-Saharan Africa serves as a kind of mental discipline that ensures adaptation to emotional stresses in life. Timeline rhythms, which are the main beat schemes of the music, may represent the stability of self. Contrasting repeated rhythmic patterns may represent the continual stresses of life. This flux of the rhythmic motions represents real life experiences. C.K. Ladzekpo states: “In Anlo-Ewe cultural understanding, the *technique of cross rhythm* is a highly developed systematic interplay of varying *rhythmic motions* simulating the dynamics of contrasting moments or emotional stress phenomena likely to occur in actual human existence” (Ladzekpo, 1995; emphases added).

Ladzekpo identifies another rhythmic technique – polyrhythms. In addition to what is called cross rhythms, in West African Anlo-Ewe culture, there is a drumming-dance technique of polyrhythms. According to Ladzekpo, polyrhythms are two or more rhythms played simultaneously, ending in resolution of the tension created. In cross rhythm technique, the conflict of the rhythms is expressed as “static” and then “dynamic” continuation. In the polyrhythm technique, the second line of rhythms shifts to a different starting time in the scheme, and creates a different texture resulting in a sense of conflict followed by a resolution. As applied to life, these polyrhythmic structures suggest “the highly unpredictable occurrences of obstacles in human life” (Ladzekpo, 1995).

In order to understand these techniques and honor the philosophical approach of many African people, Ladzekpo suggests practicing what he terms the “main beat scheme.” Traditionally, two schemes are adhered to. In the first one, beats are measured together in a group of four main beats with each of those beats divided into three pulses. Another main beat scheme practiced is a group of four main beats, each of those beats divided into four pulses. Therefore, the scheme consists of a total of twelve beats, with many variations. The contrasting rhythm, or secondary beat scheme, follows a pattern of six even pulses. When played against the main beat, a composite rhythm is created (Ladzekpo, 1995).

Because gesture has been an integral part of this curriculum unit, it is now appropriate to extend that gesture to the playing of musical instruments. The timing of rhythmic gesture could not be more important than in West African drumming techniques. In this study of West African music and dance, students will learn about polyrhythms (two or more rhythms played simultaneously) played on a *dondon* (tension drum), replicating tonal patterns of speech, the *axatse* (rattle), and the *gangokui* (double bell). The *dondon* is shaped in the form of an hourglass, with taut skins on each end, pulled by leather strings from one end to the other in order to create various pitches when squeezed under the arm of the player. The stick used with the *dondon* is shaped with a curved end, which allows even more variety in the tones produced (Chernoff, 43). A large *tom-tom* drum and two pitched *conga* drums will be added so that the deaf students will feel the vibrations more readily. A *tom-tom* is a large African tenor drum, held around the neck or shoulder with a rope. The *conga* is a pair of tall cylindrically-shaped drums, which may be tuned to complimentary pitches. Because the polyrhythms are often confusing to the inexperienced, the deaf students may have an advantage in keeping the ostinato patterns consistent. They will not be distracted by the sounds of other instruments playing contrasting patterns at the same time.

Deaf Culture and Its Unique Possibilities

Deaf students are visual learners. Sounds are but one way to express the music within us. Using visual cues to recognize patterns, feel the motion of the body, and express the traits of other cultures will allow students to understand music and the role it plays in their

lives. If we expand each student's ability to relate to others, we will enrich the lives of both hearing and deaf alike. A unique quality of Deaf culture is the use of pantomime as an expressive language in everyday life. In American Sign Language, for example, hand gestures and facial expressions represent communication. When we emphasize the importance of communicative gesture in music, dance, and pantomime, the self-esteem of deaf students will be raised, as we will capitalize on their strengths. For the hearing population, visual acuity will be enhanced and an increased awareness of deaf culture will develop their sensitivity to the world around them. Using inclusion practices will allow for a symbiotic relationship to develop between deaf and hearing individuals. Knowing the differences between us will provide us with the knowledge we need to find common ground.

LESSON PLANS

Gesture and the Pulse of Life

Materials Needed

(2) large hand-held drums with soft mallets
(1) brightly-colored scarf per person
video camera and film
a spacious room, preferably with mirrors

Objectives

Based on principles introduced by Jaques-Dalcroze, this warm-up lesson will focus on gestures as it relates to a given pulse rate. There are three main objectives for the lesson. The student will respond to the steady beat of the music with body movement (TEKS: MUS.3.3.c), will recognize aurally (for the deaf, *visually*) a tempo as fast or slow (MUS.3.5.g), and will accent the first beat of music divided into groups of twos and threes (MUS.3.3.m).

Activity One

In preparation, a circle will be formed and each deaf student will be paired with a hearing student. This will facilitate teamwork and provide a method whereby the deaf can follow the beat as demonstrated. Standing in the middle of the circle, the instructor will tap a large hand drum with a mallet so that the deaf can see the drum as it is struck. On each beat, the students will walk to the steady pulse in a clockwise direction. The tempo, or speed of the beat, will be changed periodically to include both fast and slow paces. In this exercise, the feet will always keep the steady pulse. In order to experience the pulse, the drum will be played on the backs of the deaf students in order for them to feel the vibrations. Hearing students will also have that opportunity so that they will make the connection between sound and vibration.

As the lesson progresses and a steady beat has been established, conducting gestures will be added, using patterns developed by Dalcroze. For a two-beat group, the arms will start to the side of the body with the hands closed in a fist. On beat number two, arms will be raised overhead with hands stretched out. Once the pattern can be performed in synchronization with the drum, students will walk to the beat as they conduct with their arms in groups of twos. By bending their knees and dipping slightly as they walk, students will perform the accent on the first beat. As the students become proficient, a three-beat pattern will be introduced. Again, the first beat will be accented by bending knees and dipping slightly. Another gesture will be added to the conducting sequence. It will now consist of fists held at each side for beat number one, arms outstretched to each side with palms facing upward for beat number two, and arms stretched up with hands open above the head for beat number three (Harasim, 2002). Using the gestures of ASL, all students will sign with numbers as they conduct themselves: one (one finger pointed downward), two (two fingers pointed upward), and three (thumb and two fingers out and upward).

Activity Two

Standing in the circle, facing inward, each student will share a gesture that represents something personal that he likes to do for fun. This gesture will become their individual “sign name.” This gesture will be the rhythm of an activity that has short and long patterns. By comparison, each student will share his counterpart ASL sign name, using the first letter of his given name. After each gesture is made, the whole class will imitate it and be responsible for remembering it. The second time around the circle, each student will use a larger, more dramatic extension of the initial gesture, involving his whole body. This will be a chance to introduce the concept of pantomime. Everyone will pantomime an activity that he likes to do. An extension activity would be to form small groups to demonstrate a highly stylized version of the gesture in the form of a dance sequence.

Activity Three

For the next activity, each student will find a different partner this time. One hearing child and one deaf child will sit cross-legged from each other. As if facing a mirror, one student will create small gestures that will be imitated by the partner. Then the students will reverse roles. Finally, divided into small groups of four, two hearing and two deaf; a brightly-colored scarf will be used as a prop in order to expand all of the created gestures into a whirlwind of color, rhythmic movement and cooperative display of designs. Accompanied by the drum, each small group will present their dance combination, so that the students can visualize the rhythms and the pulse of life. A videotape recording of the entire project will then be produced, which will be viewed by other classes and placed in the school library.

Evaluation

After a brief class discussion of this lesson, each student will write a journal entry which summarizes what he has learned. The student will provide information about the completed dance combination, draw what it looks like, or write what each gesture means by itself and when combined in a pattern. The completed videotape recording will be viewed and discussed.

West African Vibrations

Materials Needed

instruments such as the conga drum, *gangokui* (double bell), *axatse* (rattle), xylophones, and *dondon* (tension drum)
videotape recording of West African dance called the *lamba* (Kaiser, 1980)
(6) large-sized poster boards and colored markers

Objectives

While acknowledging the many components that make up West African music and dance, this lesson will focus on native instruments and authentic replication of cross rhythms. In this lesson, students will perform a steady beat on classroom instruments, (TEKS: MUS.5.3.e) and perform a rhythmic or melodic ostinato with voice, body sounds, or classroom instruments while the class sings a song (MUS.5.3.f).

Activity One

Using what is called a musical timeline, an ostinato pattern of twelve beats will be demonstrated by the instructor on the *gangokui* (double bell). This baseline might consist of the following sound patterns:

Short long__ long__ short long__ long__long__(repeat) OR
Low high__high__low high__high__high__(repeat)

Students will take turns clapping the rhythm with a partner and performing it on the *gangokui*. Once this rhythm has been established, the secondary rhythm will be added, using the *dondon*:

Short short short long____ short long____short long____ short (repeat) OR
Low low low high____ low high____ low high____ low (repeat)

After students have mastered clapping this pattern, each will have a turn on the *dondon*. Rhythm sticks may also be distributed in order to facilitate rapid learning. Each pattern should also be performed using syllables. For example, *ga* would represent the

short beats, and *ba* would represent the long beats. Using the *axatse*, some students would play an eighth note pattern of four groups of three for a total of twelve beats, comprising another secondary scheme:

Short short short Short short short Short short short Short short short

When combined, these ostinato patterns will represent what Ladzekpo refers to as the “composite rhythm scheme.” Depending on the competency level of the students, this will be performed as other students create body movements to fit each pattern that is repeated. For example, the arms will be used to demonstrate the rhythms played on the *dondon*; the legs and feet will copy the rhythm of the *gangokui*. A small group of four to six students will each design rhythmic symbols that represent a chosen ostinato, using colors, shapes, or Western musical notation. A visual representation of each ostinato pattern will be displayed on a large poster board to share with the class.

Activity Two

Dance is as much a part of West African life as music is, so it is appropriate to view African dancers in action. Using a videotaped recording of the *lamba* (Kaiser), students will watch and imitate the particular movements associated with this dance. We will talk about the quality of the movements, i.e., fast or slow, rough or smooth, large or small. Since this is a dance of greeting, we will discuss how the music and the rhythmic movements express what it is about. Working with a partner, students will create gestures that represent their own greeting to someone. While the *lamba* is demonstrated and practiced, they will incorporate their own gestures into the dance. Whenever the class meets, this activity will be used as a warm-up, and instruments added as it evolves.

Evaluation

In addition to designing a poster of musical symbols as a member of a small group, each student will also copy all of the work into his journal. After several sessions devoted to independent practice, each group will perform the West African rhythm schemes for the entire class. Students will also be able to name the instruments they have used for these activities. For a culminating event, a short program will be performed of the songs, dances, and instrumental accompaniments, adding traditional African dress and serving samples of food from a West African country.

South Indian Music and Dance

Materials Needed

a videotaped recording of *bharata natyam* and *bhangra* (Itchikawa, 1990)
a field trip that will allow students to observe South Indian dance styles such as *bhangra* or *bharata natyam*

an expert in Indian dance to visit the classroom and demonstrate access to Internet websites that provide video streaming of *bhangra* dance styles (bhangra.org)
a pair of *tabla* (Indian drums) or similar percussion instrument
a large classroom, preferably with mirrors

Objectives

Based on a field trip to a community event that supports Indian dance traditions, the student will cultivate a recognition of how the fine arts disciplines are created, performed and supported within our multicultural society (MUS.4.6.a). Using videotaped recordings of Indian dance style, the student will create dramatizations and movements to songs (MUS.5.1.d) based on what they see. After certain gestures and styles have been studied, the students will perform an original musical work that was created individually or collectively within a group (MUS.5.1.i).

Activity One

Depending on availability, materials and experiences used in this portion of the lesson will demonstrate to the student that gesture is an essential component of classical Indian dance. After viewing either a live performance or a videotaped recording of *bharata natyam*, an explanation is given by the instructor about the meaning of each gesture used in the dance. The students will identify at least five gestures that are repeated, will practice each gesture and memorize the meaning. Deaf students will be asked to show others in the class the corresponding gesture in American Sign Language (ASL). Students will then divide into small groups and create their own original stories using the five word gestures with both ASL and in the tradition of *bharata natyam*. Once these new story dances have been developed, students will present them to the class.

Activity Two

In an effort to include the use of technology, this activity involves accessing several websites that provide valuable information about Indian culture and dance traditions. All students will research background information by finding the following web pages:

www.bhangra.org
www.delhitourism.com
www.punjabonline.com
www.webindia.com
www.indianest.com

Depending on the grade level of the student, a three to ten page research paper will be completed, reporting significant aspects of Indian culture, music, and dance. Students will include a brief history of dance and religious beliefs, clothing practices, geographical

data, and a description of some of the more commonly played musical instruments. This report will be presented orally to the class as well as submitted in writing for teacher evaluation.

Evaluation

In order to emphasize the traditions of Indian dance and acknowledge the importance of gesture, students will record in their journals a list of new gesture vocabulary, complete with illustrations. The story that was created in class will be written in the journal, replacing certain words with gesture drawings. Students will also summarize in a paragraph or two their personal impressions of what they have learned from accessing the websites given. The instructor will be able to evaluate student performance by watching class presentations, reading the research reports and perusing the journals.

CONCLUSION

As we focus on several multicultural aspects of music, dance, and drama, we will provide an experience for both hearing and deaf students alike which will satisfy their innermost need to be understood, recognized, and expressive. This curriculum unit validates each student as an important member of the community because it acknowledges gesture and facial expression as viable means of musical expression. We know that response to vibrations, performance of symbolic movements, and playing instruments in an ensemble all enhance understanding of what it means to be musical, and therefore, human. Sounds are but one component of the core of human expression. It is our challenge to teach the other aspects that bring us closer together in our world community.

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A list of “channels” leads the researcher to a variety of topics including Indian culture, artist biographies, instruments, films, compact discs, audiotapes, and dance traditions.

www.123india.com/arts_and_culture/performing_arts

Dance. Instruments. Personalities.

Articles, personality biographies, and information on a variety of media are provided through this website.