

## DEVELOPING PART-SINGING SKILLS IN ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Cynthia Crump Taggart**  
**Prof. of Music**  
**Michigan State University**  
**e-mail: taggartc@msu.edu**

I. What do students need to have in order to part sing with accuracy and understanding?  
(National Standards, Content Standard 1: Grade 4 should be able to sing in two parts. Ostinati, partner songs, and rounds.)

A. Audiation v.s. Imitation: The better students can audiate, the better they will part sing.  
Students must hear the music in their heads rather than imitating you or others.

The less you sing WITH your students, the better your students will learn to sing.

This required that students sing without you and sing individually on a regular basis.

1. Patterns through games or pattern instruction.

2. Phrases through call and response or dialog songs. (Tongo, John the Rabbit, Muffin Man, Polly Put the Kettle On, Hole in My Bucket)

3. Entire songs. (Can take a lot of time to get to everyone.)

B. Students must have a sense of meter, steady beat, and consistent tempo.

C. Students should hear harmonic underpinnings of the songs that they are singing.

This is one of the ways in which they musically organize and evaluate their own performances.

Provide a wide variety of tonalities in repertoire will facilitate this process.

II. Sequential steps that facilitate part singing. Students must be audiating (not imitating) at each of these steps.

A . Audiation of tonic

1. Performance of tonic by pausing during song and having students (as group first and then as individuals) perform tonic.

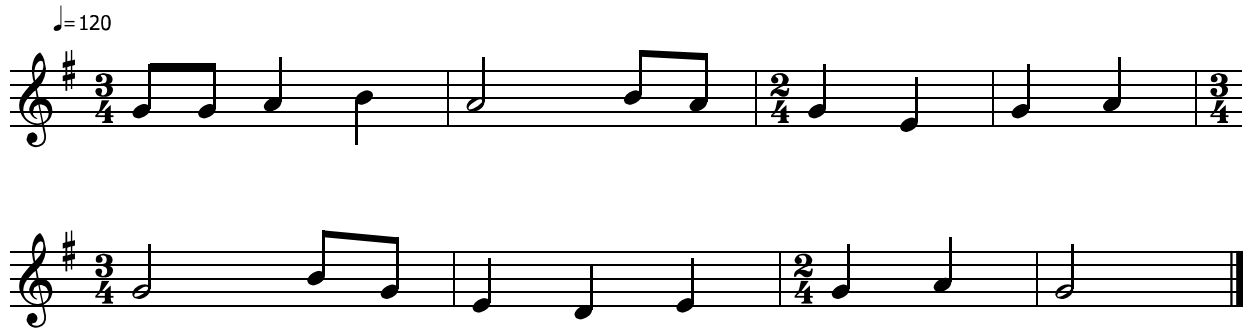
# Russian Folk Song



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2. Performance of tonic drone. Sing at a volume that facilitates everyone hearing every part.

# Children's Lullaby



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## TEACHING AND EVALUATION STEPS FOR EACH PART OF SEQUENCE:

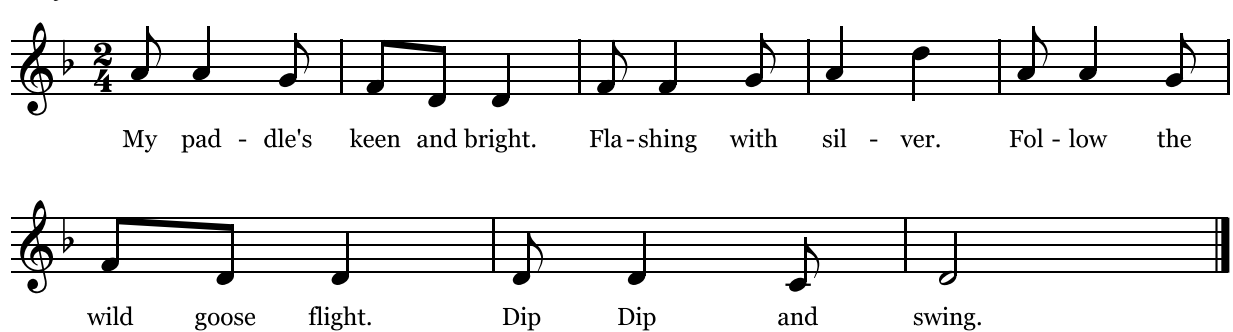
- a. Teacher on one part and all students on the other.
- b. Split students into two groups.
- c. Have individual students perform in parts with you.
- d. Have students perform in small groups and with one on a part.

Best not to use notation first. Make the students concentrate on audiation.

3. Performance of tonic ostinato (Works best with rounds)

## Canoe Song

$\text{♩} = 120$



My pad - dle's keen and bright. Fla - shing with sil - ver. Fol - low the  
wild goose flight. Dip Dip and swing.

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4. Suggestions for remedial support:

Provide instrumental support by teacher or strong students playing tonebar instruments.

Sing, rather than speak, directions to the students on tonic.

B. Performance of ostinati to songs (Brother John)

1. Tonic and dominant first
2. Other ostinati
3. Create multi-part arrangements

C. Performance of chord roots taught by rote first and then through audiation

1. Begin with tonic and dominant (Skip to My Lou, Long Long Ago, Love Somebody)

# Five Cents Have I

♩ = 120

The musical notation for 'Five Cents Have I' consists of two staves. The first staff is in 3/4 time and contains the melody: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The second staff is in 3/4 time and contains the bass line: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), F2 (quarter), E2 (quarter), D2 (quarter), C2 (quarter).

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2. Add subdominant, and eventually other functions (My Little Ducklings, Twinkle)

# BELL HORSES

Traditional

♩ = 120

The musical notation for 'Bell Horses' is in 4/4 time and contains the melody: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The lyrics are: "Bell hor-ses Bell hor-ses, What time of day? One o'-clock, two o'-clock, off and a-way."

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# Button You Must Wander

Traditional

$\text{♩} = 120$

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the song 'Button You Must Wander'. The first staff is in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. It contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff is also in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time, containing a second melody. The lyrics are written below each staff.

But-ton you must wan-der, wan-der, wan-der. But-ton you must wan-der ev' - ry where.

Bright eyes must find you. Sharp eyes must find you. But-ton you must wan-der ev' - ry where

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D. Performance of partner songs (Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, All Night, All Day, and Mama don't 'Low)

E. Performance of rounds (Canoe Song, Libana collections)

F. Performance of more difficult harmonies parts and traditional two-part music (descants, etc.)

## III. Conclusions