

Improvisation Starters for Music Classes K - 5

# THIS IS WHAT I CAN DO!

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BPP-PTWD

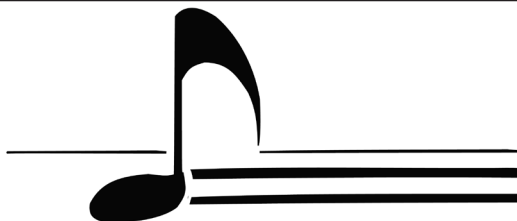


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## ICON EXPLANATION

**Improvisation icons** provide a quick reference to the mode of improvisation used in each piece. Icons appear at the top left of each piece and the bottom right of the teaching process page.

### Body Percussion



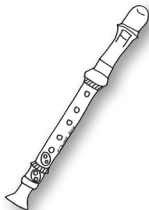
Improvisations with body percussion should focus on what students can do, not what students can't do. Emphasize patting, stomping and clapping. (Be aware some students are unable to snap their fingers. Encourage students, but don't focus on snapping.)

### Creative Movement

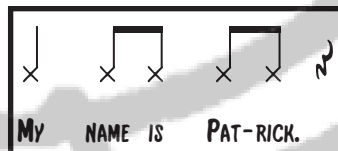
Improvisations with creative movement can take the form of self-space exploration (*This Is What I Can Do!*), shared space exploration (*Just from the Kitchen*), partner work (*Beth's Drum*), or group self-space exploration (*Get It!*).



### Recorder



Students are eager to "make up their own songs." Give them a framework and a limited pitch set to help them to an aesthetically pleasing result. Because *Welcome to the Music Room* is based on *Sol, La* and *Mi* and a known rhythm, students can improvise comfortably within the given structure.



### Vocal

Improvise vocally using chant or rap as in *Barber Shop* or *Soup, Soup*. Improvise a text using a given melody (*Sittin' on the Porch*). Improvise both melody and text (*You Ride Behind* and *Step Right Up*).



### Unpitched percussion



Improvise using unpitched percussion divided into metals, woods, membranes, and shakers. Students can improvise question and answer sections, sound carpets, or instrumental breaks (free improvisation for the length of the phrase).



# BARBER SHOP

ARRANGED BY P. L. WARE

## LATIN SWING

VOICE ALTO  
XYLOPHONE

SKIP, SKIP TO THE BAR-BER SHOP. I LEFT MY HAT AT THE BAR-BER SHOP AND

ALTO  
GLOCKENSPIEL

BASS  
XYLOPHONE

Detailed description: This system contains three staves. The top staff is for Voice Alto and Xylophone, with lyrics 'SKIP, SKIP TO THE BAR-BER SHOP. I LEFT MY HAT AT THE BAR-BER SHOP AND'. The middle staff is for Alto Glockenspiel. The bottom staff is for Bass Xylophone. The music is in 4/4 time and features a Latin swing feel with syncopation and a key signature of one flat.

## C PENTATONIC

VOICE AX

5 THREE STICKS OF CAN - DY. ONE FOR YOU.

AG

BX

Detailed description: This system contains three staves. The top staff is for Voice AX, with lyrics 'THREE STICKS OF CANDY. ONE FOR YOU.' and a measure number '5'. The middle staff is for Alto Glockenspiel (AG). The bottom staff is for Bass Xylophone (BX). The music continues in the same style as the first system.

VOICE AX

8 ONE FOR ME. AND ONE FOR SIS - TER SAL - LY.

AG

BX

Detailed description: This system contains three staves. The top staff is for Voice AX, with lyrics 'ONE FOR ME. AND ONE FOR SISTER SALLY.' and a measure number '8'. The middle staff is for Alto Glockenspiel (AG). The bottom staff is for Bass Xylophone (BX). The music concludes with a double bar line.

### I do

- ✓ Introduce lyric as chant.
- ✓ Ask students what you left at the barber shop.
- ✓ Brainstorm other things that could be left at the barber shop.
- ✓ Demonstrate melody.
- ✓ Model improvising melody and lyric of Measures 3 and 4.

### We do

- ✓ Have students stand in circle.
- ✓ Speaking text only, have students take turns filling in a one-word answer to "I left my \_\_\_\_\_ at the barber shop."
- ✓ Have students repeat the whole sentence including what they left at the barber shop.
- ✓ Teach melody.
- ✓ Encourage melodic and text improvisation in repeated section.

### They do

- ✓ Measures 1 - 2 - All students sing.
- ✓ Measures 3 - 4 (repeated section) - Student vocal improvisations
  - » Repeat using two or four soloists.
- ✓ Measures 5 - 9 - All students sing.

### What's left to do

- ✓ Teach mallet parts.
- ✓ Let half play barred instruments.
- ✓ Let half sing.
- ✓ Encourage other modes of improvisation.
  - » Body percussion
  - » Mallets - C pentatonic (C D E G A C)
  - » Recorder
  - » Unpitched percussion





# YOU RIDE BEHIND

ARRANGED BY P. L. WARE

## A SWING

VOICE

ALTO GLOCKENSPIEL

ALTO XYLOPHONE

BASS XYLOPHONE

E BLUES

YOU RIDE BE-HIND AND I'LL RIDE BE-FORE, AND WE'LL STEAL A-WAY TO BAL-TI - MORE.

V

AG

AX

BX

5 YOU BRING THE BREAD AND I'LL BRING THE HON-EY, AND BOTH OF US WILL CAR-RY A PURSE FULL OF MON-EY.

## B

V

AG

BX

9 WHAT-CHA GON-NA DO WITH ALL THAT MON-EY?

### I do

- ✓ Teach rhythm of mallet parts through body percussion.
  - » BX - Stomps
  - » AX - Patsch
  - » AG - Claps
- ✓ Sing, then teach melody.

### We do

- ✓ Ask students to brainstorm what they would do with extra spending money.
- ✓ Perform A and B Sections with singing and body percussion.
  - » Half improvise body percussion.
  - » Half sing melody.
- ✓ During B Section, invite students to improvise using their ideas about spending money.
  - » The first time through just share ideas (free rhythm).
  - » The second time through rap their ideas (in rhythm).
  - » The third time through sing their ideas (sing in rhythm).

### They do

- ✓ A Section - All students sing melody.
- ✓ B Section - First time students sing question ending on G. The second time students sing question ending on B (see score).

### What's left to do

- ✓ Teach mallet parts.
  - » Prepare soprano xylophone. Swap A for B<sup>b</sup>.
- ✓ Have some sing melody.
- ✓ Have some play mallet parts.
- ✓ Have some sing their melodic responses (solo).
- ✓ Encourage other modes of improvisation.
  - » Body percussion
  - » Mallets - E blues (E G A B<sup>b</sup> B D)
  - » Recorder - E blues
  - » Unpitched percussion





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