- MUSIC DIDACTICS -

'THE SONG'

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1.- INTRODUCTION: Theoretical framework of music education - [Musical Education Area]

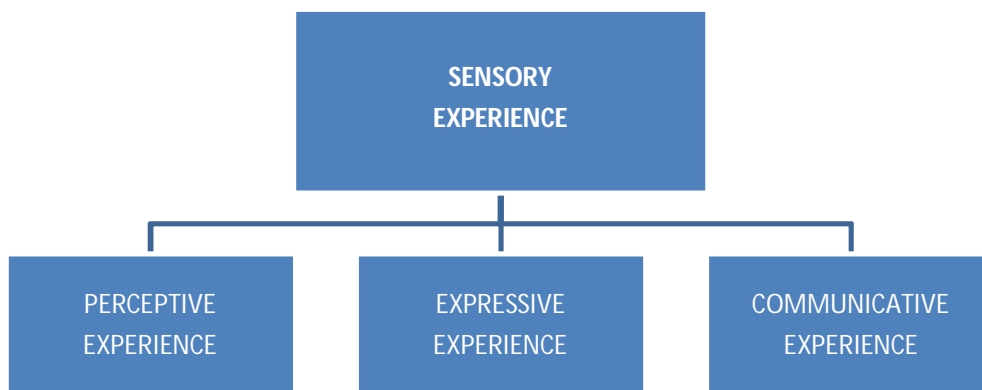|	
Question:	**¿Why do we need to teach it?**

The answer will define:	-**Proposed goals**: globals [*levels related - area didactics related*] -**Apraissal criteria** -the **Teaching/Learning Process**

1.1 Curricular bases based on musical experience:

Contains 4 ways -or relations- with the sound reality:

Sensory, Perceptive, Expressive and Communicative.

1. **Sensory experiencie**:

    It is the response of the subject to a stimulus. It manifests when an object stimulates a specific receptor that is capable of capturing sound waves and convert them into sound sensation [or vibrational].

2. **Perceptive experiencie**:

    It is the interpretation, internalization and understanding of sensory experience. The subject recognizes, through memory, previous experiences and the contrast, qualities of the sound and musical object that are recorded in their brain.

3. **Expressive experiencie**:

    It is the externalization of the subject with regards to its purest aspect. It responds to the externalization of the voice but not exclusively to it because can be accompanied by sound productions made by other parts of the body.

4. **Communicative experiencie**:

    It consists in the usage of the *sender-channel-receiver* code. It appears when the obstacles that separate one consciousness from another allow the transmission of ideas, feelings of one or different subjects towards the other or others.

Within the interrelation of experiences and taking advantage of the educational variability of the Music Area, we will have to make use of the most significant tools that our body [partially or completely] offers us. A test of the inherent musical abilities of the person constitutes, without a doubt, our hearing and all the possibilities that the clearer expression of their development [primary or contextual] offers us: **the song**.

1.2   Ear training

-Sonorous perception:

    It refers to the capabilities related to the internalization, interpretation and understanding of the sound element through the ear or any other type of body sensor.

    In most educational centers [and also in their environment] there are often obvious features of 'noise pollution'. This type of sound aggression produces different effects in people:

- *Physiological*:   hearing loss and loss of functional modification of the vegetative

system [increase in blood pressure; heart rate; respiratory movements; tension in the muscles, etc].

- *Psychological*: decreased capacity due to sleep disturbance [performance decrease; feeling of aggressiveness; anxiety, etc].

- *Psychosociological*: tendency to exhaustion; nervousness; irritability; violent aggressions, etc.

-*Sonorous expression*

Any part of our body can become an instrument of musical expression:

- Vocal tract [the voice: undoubtedly the most important]
- rest of organs and body members
- nature elements
- objects of our everyday environment

Singing is significant because it is born from the inside as well as being functional because it can be developed in any context [we will always carry it everywhere]. With the voice we can reflect anxiety and tension, tranquility and relaxation. With the song, music has the function of emphasizing and supporting the message of the text. We should know and exhaust the sonorous expression possibilities of our body to achieve the development of our perceptive and expressive capacities.

2.- THE SONG

The word 'song' comes from the Latin terms '*cantio*' and '*cantionis*', formed by the verb '*canare*' [to sing] and by the suffix '*tio*' ['-*ció*' = 'action and effect']. From '*canere*' also derived the word 'singing'.

The musical practice, within the educational process, is based, to a large extent, on the stimulation and modeling of sensibility together with the inestimable contribution of some primitive elements of sensory character that, later and little by little, will be elaborated. Therefore, music, as an artistic language, allows communication [broadcast and reception] and music, as an art, allows the expression of feelings, sensations and emotions.

Only for the reasons mentioned above, the inclusion of the Music Area in the curriculum of the compulsory education stages is justified. But, in addition, there are a series of habits and attitudes that are goals of all areas and that in music are even more inherent:

- • Externalization and compartment of states of mind.
- • Cooperative work [e.g.: collective singing].
- • Habits of posture, relaxation, breathing and diction.
- • Knowledge and respect for the cultural heritage of our environment.
- • Continuous work, for learning the technique of the chosen musical instrument [in Primary school, the recorder is usually used).
- • Importance of silence [when singing, during class time, at auditions ...]

2.1   Benefits of the song

Some of the benefits available to us that we can achieve with children through the continued practice of the song would be the following:

- • Improve attention, concentration and memory capacity
- • Develop creativity and imagination
- • Improve language and increase vocabulary
- • Improvement of the rhythmic control of the body and coordination
- • Stimulate different senses as well as balance
- • Improve the ability to solve mathematical problems and / or complex reasoning

To all of this we can add the fact by the music, and within music: the song, constitutes the first and most constant form of approach to art contemplated by our students. The contents of the Music Area for the stages of Early Childhood and Primary Education come, for the most part, from

the nature of their specific language and allow us to guarantee a broader musical education from two very specific aspects:

1. From the point of view of individual and collective musical practice
2. The assimilation of knowledge, a fact that takes into account aspects such as creativity, aesthetic sense, critical capacity, taste for music ...

These contents are specified in 5 large blocks:

Song and voice; Ear training; Music and psychomotricity; Musical language and Audition.

We will work under the principle of **learning music 'making music'.**

Also, your Teaching/Learning should follow the principle: *singing, playing instruments, dancing, creating and listening.*

The song, in Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education, offers an excellent channel of musical expression and becomes a true **'vertebral axis'** of almost the entire methodological process as well as constituting the fundamental basis for musical practice in the school. With the song come together a series of aspects that make it irreplaceable as a **tool for musical learning:**

• A Way to make music more spontaneous and accessible to the child.
• Manifestation of sensitivity.
• Synthesis of the basic knowledge of the musical language [rhythm and metric, melody, phrasing, structure, harmonic basis, etc.].
• Vehicle of cultural transmission, knowledge of the idiosyncrasy of its own environment and approach to other cultures.
• Means of expression that rediscover and enhance the language.
• 'Warehouse' of linguistic, popular, traditional and musical treasures.

Singing has to constitute a daily and habitual activity in the school.

The song can be a procedure within any other area and can also serve as a starting point to link with other activities, or vice versa. Thus, the song is an excellent means of human formation as well as being a spontaneous form of expression.

We will start from the fact that **all children have the capacity to sing** and that, in addition, this constitutes a necessity for them [as the movement, the game or the word can be]. That is why we will often find these 4 elements united by the same activity:

Movement; Game; Word and **Song**

The child must experience the song as a kind of element added to the game, but, as teachers, we must help them discover the aesthetic dimension that the song entails.

In the School, the collective singing will invigorate the group as the only expression, an entity where responsibility and protagonism are shared equally for each of the students. In this way the song will become an everyday element of coexistence and formation.

Within this section, we could synthesize our task in the School under the principle by which **the song will be the skill in order to be able to send the voice in the most correct way possible.**

2.2   Structure of the song

Interpreting a text from a melody and vice versa has been the most used compositional form throughout history. In traditional music, the song usually has a 'strophic structure', in other words: it is sung on different texts that have similarities with regards its metric and its rhyme.

We will join several elements to build the structure of the song. These elements are usually:
Introduction - Stanza - Chorus - Musical bridge - Interlude - Ending.

- Introduction: *Unique part that we will use at the beginning of the song. We use it Toanticipate 'what is coming'.*
- Stanza: *Section that is repeated several times throughout the song with the same music but, normally, with different lyrics. This part is what 'explains in detail' the story.*
- Chorus: *Group of small verses that are repeated throughout the song. It includes the main idea of the song, as well as the title. The melody and the lyrics rarely change.*
- Musical bridge: *Part of the song that leads to another. Connects two different parts of the song [e.g.: to start the song again or to finish it]. In 'the musical bridge' they change the melody and the lyrics and the song have a higher musical tension.*
- Interlude: *Also called 'Pre-chorus'. Connects the Stanza with theChorus.*
- Ending: *Last section of the song. Drives it towards the end. Usually uses the Chorus until, little by little, fades out and concludes.*

2.3   Types of songs

The following is a very tight division into three large groups although the various ramifications are much more diverse and wide if we are located at: local, national and/or international levels:

- Traditional songs:

  They belong to rural societies and have been transmitted by orally. The ethnomusicologists have studied and collected them in songbooks.

- Folk songs:

  They have developed in urban societies and their repertoire responds to the musical needs of its inhabitants. The channels of communication have been fundamental at the time of its dissemination and transmission.

- Cultured songs:

  From the Middle Ages and for more than five hundred years [in the West], they had a religious content. Little by little the 'profane songs' (non-religious) increased. At the level of the so called 'cultured music', it is worth mentioning 'the lied', a composition for a single voice with an instrumental accompaniment.

Children's songs [from 0 to 12 years old] can be classified by the type of function they develop. So, we can find the following division:

- *Songs to Play*:

  Designed to accompany games. Boys and girls will sing them while they play and move to the rhythm of the song.

- *Lullabies*:

  They are sung to the little ones [those who use nappies onwards] manifesting a kind of bond between them and their parents and/or next of kin. They are also often called 'sleeping songs' and have a 'calm and placid' effect that keeps children away from fear, stress and diseases.

- *Playful Songs*:

  They develop an entertainment function in the empty moments of the day or leisure.

- *Didactic Songs*:

  They are usually used in school as a way to learn. Its theme is based on concepts such as: colors, names, values, body parts, etc.

- *Skill Songs*:

  Based on word plays that seek to improve the development of verbal skills [e.g.: pronunciation]. They can be riddles, tongue twisters, etc.

2.4   The song in history

We will consider the song as a work tool in the most natural way possible as something truly ancestral.

All cultures have used the song to carry out various events, reaffirm the everyday nature of the passage of time, accentuate past events, maintain daily routines and establish ties of union between different cultures.

In Europe, in the Middle Ages, the 'profane songs' of troubadours and minstrels emerged. In France,step by step, the polyphonic songs were developed giving way to 'the madrigals'. Later on, the songs were developed under one voice and accompanied by instruments. The song will evolve in the eighteenth century although it will be with the 'lieder' [nineteenth century] when it finds its maximum musical expression.

♫ *The folk song* ♫

We will consider 'folk music' which is sung by the people, from long time ago, to celebrate events of a special nature in their lives.

Transmitted orally from generation to generation, the folk song does not have a 'known author'. Since its character is collective, the people make it their own from the moment they transmit it orally, a fact that will allow substantial modifications from its origins.

Within a long period of time, music, as such, was subordinated to dance and poetry. The humming of those melodies and their interpretation with various instruments made it independent of its poetic and dance aspects, resulting in a dynamic tonal form with their own characteristics.

♫ *The Valencian folk song* ♫

Within a wide range of popular manifestations in our land, music, and song in particular, is a primordial vehicle for the externalization of feelings. Produced in connection with the arts and popular tradition, musical folklore contains, in all its forms, 'the way of being of the people', picking up the spirit of specific environments according to regions, demarcations or diverse places.

♫ *The current folk song* ♫

Despite the rapid and radical changes of our society, children continue to approach music through song. Presented, in our days, under digital and audiovisual formats, the songs manage to maintain the defining features that 'make them unique and special' as well as 'different' according to the context where they occur.

We talk about songs created by authors under specific orders [cartoons, TV series, movies, musicals, etc], songs that drag a massive diffusion [globalization and publicity] after being translated into different languages. That is why this' new type of song(s) 'are no longer specific to a particular culture but, in one way or another, are part of the musical ideology of a huge part of humanity, in other words: 'of the first world. '

3.- METHODOLOGY TO BE USED, MUSICAL REPERTOIRE AND ASPECTS THAT CAN BE DEVELOPED FROM THE SONG

3.1 Methodology to be used

The newest pedagogical theories are based on the social and cultural reconstruction of what we [teachers] understand by 'learning'. This didactic model is especially relevant for those areas of knowledge that, as in the case of music, are strongly related to the social and individual development of students.

We will have, as learning objectives, the development of three concrete phases:

Development, Synthesis and Application

1. In the Development phase, the new contents have to be presented and manipulated.
2. In the synthesis phase, what has been learned must be structured.
3. In the Application phase, the student must be proposed to identify and/or apply the new contents in different scenarios that previously has done.

We have to make special mention about the didactic materials used, always starting from the base on which each student will be more familiar or not with certain supports, that is why we will have to expect a great number of different materials such as: images, sound, text, musical instruments, new technologies, etc.

3.2 Musical Repertoire

To select a representative repertoire of the work developed in the classroom we will have to have abundant material and 'sufficient wisdom' to be able to choose at any time those songs that contribute to the formation of our students, of the specific person(s) that responds to its point of view and understanding the world.

The following criteria must be taken into account at the time of the triage:

- General criteria:

  The teacher will search for songs that respond to interests and/or experiences of the students according to their age. To facilitate their motivation, they should be known songs [recognizable, in any case].

- Musical criteria:

  We will take into account the vocabulary, the rhythm, the melody, the tone and the accompaniment [if that's the case]. We will start from the premise that everything will have to be simpler, clear, usual and 'nice'.

- Psychopedagogical criteria:

  The central theme of the song must respond to the interests of children and the text must be consistent with the vocabulary used in each stage of the development.

We have to obtain an adequate repertoire and, above all, that motivates the students as well as containing a progressive difficulty that allows them to enrich the knowledge of the closest cultural heritage [geographically and in time] in order to expand it step by step. The repertoire that we will sing to the students must be directly related to their vital state. We will then choose the songs according to the age of the students, taking into account also the difficulties of rhythmic, melodic, comprehension and pronunciation of the text.

Taking into account the origin of the students of each center, and with a view to a better integration of these in the concrete sociocultural environment, each school should complete the repertoire with original songs from the same town or region, and with other sources [the ones of foreigners or newcomers from abroad], in the original language if possible or with translations. We must also remember that many traditional Central European songs are already part of the universal repertoire of children's songs.

Vocal education must be progressive always starting from the fact that the youngest have to learn to sing within a reduced range [extension intervalided of a fourth, approximately] in order to increase it as they grow as human beings. Only in this way will we achieve a formally correct development of the voices of our students.

The difficulty must also be progressive from the point of view of tuning, rhythm, tempo and dynamics. We will start from the simple monophonic songs to other polyphonic [last courses of Primary Education] to conclude the process, if it is possible, using polyphony according to the level of the voices.

We must bear in mind the fact that the songs already sung in the first levels of Primary can later be recovered, redone and sung in voices and/or develop further with instrumental accompaniments changing them in this way, a change that will give them other nuances regarding difficulty and musical richness.

It would be advisable to make a summary of folk and traditional Valencian songs due to being the most representative of our popular culture and the most appropriate for the voice of our students, content that would serve us as an axis to build a repertoire of each school and as a support material for the teaching staff as well as representing a varied and significant sample of the popular heritage of our environment.

The recommended songbook [for Early Childhood and PrimaryEducation] we would structure it in the following way:

- 10-15 songs for the Early Childhood Education cycle
- 3-6 Christmas carols for the Early Childhood Education cycle

- 5-10 songs for the Primary Education cycle
- 2-4 Christmas carols for the Primary Education cycle

- Songs in other languages spoken in the countries of newcomers students which came to our educational system.

According to Edgar Williams, there are different kinds of songs that intervene in the musical education of the child:

- Traditional folk songs:
  They are usually learned at home. Words play a determining role due to they also constitute the daily recognizable auditory base.

- Songs that prepare for instrumental technique:
  They are simple songs formed by diverse and progressive intervals.

- "Mimic" Songs:
  They establish a link between the meaning of words and mimicry.

- 'Rhythmed' songs:
  They develop the instinct of musical rhythm based on the natural movement of the body.

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3.3 Criteria to choose songs

In order to choose a song in the best possible way, factors related to the same students [age, speech level, learning needs, social environment of the school, etc.] must be taken into account as well as the learning conditions [context of learning, number of students, programming, working projects, etc.].

Osan and Walkman [1978] considers a series of fundamental questions and parameters when choosing a suitable song:

- Are words, phrases, verses or choruses repeated?
- Can the melody be easily learned? Is it 'sticky', sweetened?
- Doesit have a marked rhythmic pattern?
- Is it useful in terms of vocabulary?
- Does it reflect aspects of the culture, customs, traditions, events or historical periods that would be useful in the classroom?
- Has it had an international projection, has a cultural interest or is it part of the national or international school repertoire?

Once the questions are raised, we realize that all the criteria can be adjusted within two fundamental points:

- The interests of students [in the classroom] and ...
- The timely adaptation of the teaching situation

3.4 Aspects that can be developed from the song

♫ *Regarding to text* ♫

Playing a song also aims to learn the language. Likewise, working the songs will develop the memorization faculty that will result in a better verbal fluency, in the acquisition of security in the use of language and in a progressive increase of the communicative potential of the student.

The following didactic proposal can be adapted by each teacher within the possibilities and demands of their students:

1. *Initial understanding of the lexicon:*
   -Initial understanding of words.

-Comprehension of the meaning of expressions.

-Comprehension of the text set.

2. *Correct pronunciation [phonetic]:*

-Differential phonetic characteristics of Valencian Language.

-Fonic links and contractions.

-Take liberty due to rhythmic issues that can affect the phonetics.

3. *Intonation and expressiveness.*

♫*Regarding creativity*♫

1. The song as a language game:

-Cummulative songs:	exercise memory
-Enummerative songs:	determine the student's knowledge
-Chained songs:	facilitate the speed of memory reflexes

2. The spontaneous singing

-It stimulates communication inside and outside the school.

-In class, when playing and as a reason for joy and fun.

-The actionitself of singing.

-The songs that involve a game.

-The songs that serve to jump and dance.

3. Animation of popular celebrations held at school:

-As an extraordinary element of animation.

-As a show: artistic expression, singing, dance, performance, play ...

4. Performance:

-Mimic representation, popular dance, game, dramatization.

-As an element of corporal expression: invention of dance movements or games of expression.

5. Reconstruction of a framework:

-Historical, legendary, geographical ...

6. Illustration:

-Making drawings of some passages of the song.

-Making an allegorical [general] song drawing.

7. Auditions to songs:

-Listening to songs of all kinds as a reference.

-Finding radio and TV programs where songs are broadcasted.

-Recording songs interpreted by students.

-Assisting to song recitals.

♫*Regarding music*♫

Through the song, children will learn basic elements that make up music [musical language and others], elements that will help them to appreciate it.

- Rhythm: beat, tempo, rhythm, beat ...
- Melody: melodic line, scope, formal structure, tonality and modality ...
- Dynamics: intensity, dynamic changes ...
- Interpretation: expression, vocal technique, knowledge of the gesture of direction ...

4.- SONG DIDACTICS

The song is the ability to transmit the voice in the most correct way.

There are different and numerous procedures to teach a song. From the beginning of the process we must take into account the following parameters:

- The difficulty of the text.
- The musical difficulty [melody, rhythm, ...].
- The duration of the song.
- The age of the children.

Each teacher has to grasp [taking into account the time and circumstances] what will be the appropriate formula to teach the song, but we could start in the most normal [natural], which is: **from direct hearing**. This implies that will be the teachers themselves who, with their nearest instrument [their voice] will transmit and present the songs to the students.

♫*Required Prerequisites **to teach** a song*♫

- To choose the song taking into account the age of the children to whom it is addressed.
- To transmit illusion to learn it and the necessary emphasis to make them see the importance of singing well and singing together and united.
- To know from memory the song.
- To respect [in a rigorous way] the text, the rhythm and the melody.
- To take into account the musical and grammatical phrases, the appropriate places to breathe, the tonality and the tessitura.
- To know how to explain the origin, vocabulary and plot of the song.

♫*Required Prerequisites **to choose** a song*♫

When choosing a song, we will take into account the following points:

- The teacher will ensure that the fact of learning and singing the song becomes "the most important musical fact of our students."

- To take advantage of the resources that the song can incorporate into our educational work, we will have to establish a careful programming that makes compatible and integrates the logic of music with the logic of learning.
- It will also be necessary to contextualize the song looking for information of a cultural nature, its origins, geographical or social context, in what situations it was sung, what kind of song it is, etc.
- To prepare properly the plot and to establish a good use of the vocabulary.
- Musical elements to be highlighted: melody, rhythm, structure, tonality.
- To be careful with interpretive criteria, such as dynamics, instrumental accompaniment, who will be the soloists, mark the breaths, etc.
- To program various teaching/learning activities such as: introduction, development, inter-application and evaluation [initial, of process and synthesis].
- The music teacher must be an 'example' regarding the use of the voice due tothey must possess an adequate vocal technique [spoken and/or sung] as well as a good musical training that allows maximum possible musical correction regardin: tuning, rhythmic rigor and expressiveness.

♫ *How **to teach a simple song**. Steps to follow* ♫

- The teacher sings the entire song
    >>>>>>>*Children will listen to it and, once finalized, they will comment the text*
- The teacher will sing the first sentence [3 or 4 times]
    >>>>>>>*Children will repeat it*
- The teacher will sing the second phrase
    >>>>>>>*Children will repeat it*
- The teacher will sing the two sentences
    >>>>>>>*Children will repeat it*
- And so on until the end of the song.
- Following this, the phrases will be linked together until the song is memorized
    >>>>>>>*The children will sing it and the teacher will listen without singing to know if the children have learned it well.*

*♫How **to teach a complex and higher level song**. Steps to follow♫*

1. We should achieve that the studentsobtain minimum work habits, such as: adequate body posture; appreciation of silence; Respect and willingness to do it well all together.

2. Create an environment that motivates, that excites the students to learn any song through:

   - Presentation of the activity and objectives
   - Explanation of the plot in the form of 'story'
   - Representation of the text through puppets, draws, mimicry ...
   - Audition to the song played by the teacher [first of all]
   - If was it posible, it would be convenient to watch the video with the dance corresponding to the song
   - Registration or interpretation in public once the song has been learned [external motivation].

3. The process that will be followed to complete the learning of **the most difficult songs** will be based on the 'imitation process', repeating successively small fragments or musical units, text and music at the same time until they are completed. We will have individual attention for those students who present some kind of difficulty [attention to diversity].

   It would be convenient for students to become accustomed [in spite of learning the songs from memory], to have the corresponding scores and thus be able to have their own repertoire or summary of songs. Depending on the availability of the center, we can make a kind of songbookwith each song endorsed in a worksheet or as an activity to be completed later.

   In this way our students will make 'more personal and unique the different songs' and will be able to remember them over time.

   On the other hand, this will allow parents or close family and friends to follow the repertoire worked in the classroom, reinforcing the student's motivation. In another separate file, a technical section could be included to record some musical contents worked: compass, tessitura, formal structure ...

*♫To learn a song where appears **loads of images**♫*

   - To draw reminders drawings of the text
   - To mime [mimicry] the text without abusing

- To take advantage of dialogues of the song [if there were any]

♫ *To learn a song which **explains a story**♫*

This way of learning the song will be given by the text itself [it would be like a story or a kind of story explained].

- *The teacher sings, little by little, the whole song and explains the plot.*
    >>>>>>>*The children listen to the song and the story and will be motivated to learn it, that is why they are supposed to be willing to sing it next*
- *The teacher will repeat the song as many times as necessary until the total comprehension of the text is reached.*
    >>>>>>>*Children must be able to learn the song through inner listening, a song that the teacher has already repeated several times*

♫ *To know if a song **has been learned**♫*

1. If we want to verify if a song has been -or not- well learned we will use a procedure similar to a game, a fact that well thought out can provoke in our students certain enthusiasm:

    - The teacher starts the song and ...
        >>>>>>>At a signal from them, a row of childrenwill have to continue it, or those who occupy a table or an individual only…

This game [in addition to serving as an evaluator control for the teacher] is a good way to maintain the attention of the whole class. This will mean that each child will sing the corresponding fragment and, if possible, in the same tone as the one used by the peer who preceded him.

2. If the teacher considers that the children already know the song and have already assimilated it entirely, the following game could be proposed to ensure and internalize the song as a whole:

    - At a certain moment, the teacher makes a signal and the children sing the song moving their lips without any sound being heard, as if something prevented them from emitting any sound

>>>>>>>*At a signal from the teacher it will return to the normal situation and the song will be heard again*

In this way we will assume that the children have internalized the melody and the text, in other words: they have learned the song. As a methodological resource to group the group, the teacher will have to mark [always] the pulse of the song with the help of clapping their hands, a keyboard or a small percussion instrument.

♫*Choir performance*♫

At the curricular point where you can create and develop a choir in the same school, the main objective of choral singing would be the enjoyment of the beauty of the songs interpreting them with musical taste and feeling.

That is why we should motivate our students to sing with enthusiasm and being very aware of taking great care of the musicality in general.

Among many other advantages, the choral song brings the group together in a single expression in which responsibility and protagonism are distributed equally among all the students, demanding from each one of us predisposition to join the group. So, we will work to:

- To give the song the air it demands [happy, melancholy, fun...]
- Take to take care of breathing pauses and dynamic variations...
- To start and finish all at the same time and control the end of phrase.
- To ensure that the tessitura is the most appropriate to the vocal capacity of our students, trying not to force the extremes, neither in the low pitched register nor in the high-pitched one.
- To motivate our students by offering the result of their work through a concert in public, in the same school, institute, cultural activities of the center's environment, etc.

♫***To assess*** *the songs*♫

The evaluation activities must be similar to the rest of those employed within the teaching/learning dynamic and must be integrated into the educational process.

The students must know WHAT we will evaluate, HOW we will do it and WHEN.

All the resources that we will use to work the song are tools that will help us to assess this process:

- To observe with 'what interest' and with 'what attitude' they sing collectively, in small groups or individually.
- If they interpret "with musicality and character" or not
- If they 'memorize' the songs

- If they 'tune' and show 'precision' in tempo and rhythm ...

With the following we propose some evaluation activities [exactly as we have done previously to know if they had learned the song or not, similar but in a more careful way]:

- At a signal from the teacher, the students internalize the song [singing it to themselves].
    >>>>>>>With another signal, they will continue to sing it in that moment. In this way we will observe if, when the moment arrives, they maintain the tone and the pulsation.
- To sing the song by phrases in a row, in a group, one by one as if they were links in a chain.
- To recognize the song in the middle of an improvised melodic series played with an instrument other than the voice.

It is also essential to prepare follow-up sheets [individual or collective] as well as observation sheets.

It should be remembered that the purpose of the evaluation must be to give elements of criteria to the teacher to improve the performance of students and not only to certify what they have already learned.

5.-   THE CHOIR

The next step to the continued practice of the song in the classroom would be, when the time comes, the formation of a vocal group.

We would form a choir, in other words: a vocal musical group, formed by singers who act collectively and, often, directed by a conductor.

The word 'choir' is synonymous with 'choral' and 'choral group', although there are differences regarding the composition of the group as well as its function.

The 'choir' has different meanings:

- Musical group composed of singers and dedicated to the interpretation of choral repertoire. This repertoire can be for a choir only [e.g.: 'a capella'] or with the collaboration of an instrument, an instrumental group or even an orchestra.
- Musical composition intended to be sung only by a choir.
- Site of the church for the singers, where the divine office is prayed and sung. It is usually located in the part of the central nave of the temple, just opposite the altar and, often, it is also the place where we can find the pipe organ.

The components of a choir are distributed in different strings according to their tessitura [distance from the lowest-pitched note of their voices to the highest-pitched one]. The range of each voice is defined by factors such as extension, registration, color and thickness.

♫Typesof choirs♫

There are different types of choirs according to the vocal characteristics of its members, characteristics subject to hormonal changes due to the growth that each age entails within the corporal development of the children or of the adults themselves.

According to the number, age and gender of the members, the choirs are classified as follows:

-*White voices choir*:
- Formed exclusively by infants [male children's voices; female child voices and mixed choirs with female and male voices].

- Young people choir:

- Transitory stage between the *White voices choir* and the *Young people choir*. The youung peolple choir usually interprets a repertoire for equal voices, although it incorporates some children who have already made the change of voice so their voices can reinforce the most low-pitched registers.

  Some of these formations [in Central European and Scandinavian countries, above all] continue to be called 'children's choir' despite the fact that some of its components may already be 16 years old.

- Female choir:

- Formed by adult female voices, in other words, by singers who have already experienced the change of voice linked to growth. The sonorous characteristics of the female chorus clearly differ from those of the High-voice choir due to the sound and expressive maturity of the voices and for superior power and breathing capacity.

  The distribution by strings of this type of female choir is as follows:

  - *Soprano*   [women's highest-pitched voices]
  - *Mezzosoprano*   [slightly less high-pitched voices of women]
  - *Contralto*   [women's lowest-pitched voices]

- Male choir:

- Formed by adult male singers

  The usual distribution of the male choir voices is formed of 4 strings:

  - *First Tenor*   [men's highest-pitched voices]
  - *Second Tenor*
  - *Baritone*
  - *Bass*   [men's lowest-pitched voices]

- Mixed adul choir:

- The most representative of all types of choir. Formed by adult singers of both sexes.
- The women of the adult mixed choir sing with the following voices:

  - *Soprano*   [women's highest-pitched voices]
  - *Mezzosoprano*   [slightly less high-pitched voices of women]

- *Contralto*   [women's lowest-pitched voices]

- The men of the adult mixed choir sing with the following voices:

  - *Tenor*   [men's highest-pitched voices]
  - *Baritone*   [slightly less low-pitched voices of men]
  - *Bass*   [men's lowest-pitched voices]

6.- AUDITION: MUSICOGRAM

A Musicogram is an 'unconventional score' based on an active, participatory and interactive listening, very useful within the musical didactics.

Concept created and developed by the Belgian pedagogue Jos Wuytack1[1] in the early 1970s to teach classical music to children and young people without specific musical knowledge.

The Musicogram is one of the best and most spreaded pedagogical tools to teach auditions in an active way in recent years.

From the decade of the 90s suffered an exponential growth in Spain just when the LOGSE [*Organic Act on General Organisation of the Education System, in English*] generated a field to teach the subject of 'Music' in schools.

Wuytack developed an active listening method on the idea that the student may not be able to read a score, but can understand perfectly its structure, differentiate the instruments that hears, etc.

His final goal -and almost definitive - would be to validate the work of teachers in order to 'bring music to all kinds of students' making them participate (at all times), enjoy and understand it.

Considering the auditions as an important [rather, essential] part of the sessions of the music class and also considering their exceptional contribution to the enjoyment and learning of the subject, we will have to facilitate "musical understanding" using all kinds of elements that serve our cause: visual elements, drawings and/or schemes that bring the sound reality closer to our students.

The most important thing of the Musicogram as an educational resource is that it can be considered affordable at any level and that with *'the same audition we can create different Musicograms*' in order to introduce them and focus them on the specific musical theme that we are most interested in carrying out. In addition, it is a great resource that will give the student the opportunity to create their own drawings based on the musical elements of a specific audition and participate actively in the realization of this learning instrument.

Over the years and due to the [indiscriminate, sometimes] use of the Musicogram in the classroom it has been concluded to divide it into different meanings counting, a priori and in practice, with the validity of all of them:

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[1] **Wuytack**, Jos:Ghent [Belgium], March 23, 1935. Disciple of Carl Orff. He has been the creator of the "Songs with gestures", interactive modern pedagogy uniting verbal, instrumental and corporal vocal expression. He has also developed an Active Musical Hearing system with the help of the so-called **Musicograms** [termand concept of which he is also the author] and which consists in the visualization of everything that can be heard in any musical work. He has been head of the Lemmens Institute [Leuven] and has taughtmorethan 500 courses around the world. He is also the author of numerous vocal and instrumental works as well as various books on musical pedagogy.

1. A Musicogram 'is a written analysis of the structure of a song' or a symphony or a part of them.

   The Musicogram can be carried out in a simple way:

   - Indicating if the song has introduction or not.
   - Noting when the stanzas and the chorus begin.
   - Noting if the piece has a coda or not.
   - Indicating if, at any given time, only the singer is heard and/or there is no music, if there were whole silenced measures, etc.
   - Information on instrumentation, dynamics and harmonic processes can also be included.

2. A Musicogram is 'any scheme' [or graphic] that helps to follow a musical work.

   The Musicogram can have:

   - A timeline to follow the bars.
   - Concrete musical themes represented by rectangles of different colors.
   - Placement of the instruments following the order of an orchestral score.

3. A Musicogram is 'a way of writing music or a representation of the elements' that intervene in a musical work [rhythm, phrases, pitches, measures ...]

4. Musically speaking, a Musicogram is also 'a musical work written with unconventional spellings'.

♫Purpose and pedagogical validity of the Musicogram♫

The primary purpose of the Musicogram is that aims to reflect on paper as many musical elements as possible.

We could consider the Musicogram as an alternative to the conventional score as well as a very didactic resource.

The advantages of the Musicogram are evident at every level:

- It presents a global and simple visualization of the work, facilitating the understanding, the follow-up and the analysis of the piece treated.
- It is presented within a spatial representation.

- Students can also develop it according to their capacity for musical discrimination. The teacher will be able to elaborate Musicograms adapted to all the educative levels but taking into account at all times the level that is working on, because a too complex Musicogram can resemble so much a score that can create rejection on the part of the students.

7.   THE GAME and THE SONG

♫Benefits of the *musical game*♫

Music has a double aspect:

- Artistic side: manifested through vocal interpretation [thesong]

- Playful side: close to what we understand by 'game'

The games where the song appears create the playful aspect of the music. Also, the interpretation is relegated to a second term.

Among other musical aspects, 'the musical game' allows us:

- To break the daily routine by placing everyday reality in the background.
- To involve ourselves in an activity. Few activities ask us for as much involvement as games.
- To think, to feel and to act at the same time. Through the musical game we will put into practice all our abilities: intellect; emotions and motor skills.

♫Relationship between *musical games and musical learning*♫

The reasons for using music and sounds are varied:

- The games make the participants come into contact with elementary musical ideas such as: low-pitched and high-pitched notes; loud and quiet sounds and fast and slow tempos.
- Children become familiar and comfortable with the musical elements, exploring their musical potential spontaneously and without prejudice..
- Using various instruments, they get a real experience in musical creation.
- Playing with music helps children overcome fears related to musical creation.

♫Reasons that explain the social nature of *the games*♫

In addition to dance, music is the most social of the arts. The musical games are designed so that their participants work in groups, fact that will allow them to enhance

- The integral learning of children.
- The creativity.
- The development of fundamental skills such as: attentive listening; the great capacity for concentration; the personal creative expression within the group and the social and respectful behavior towards the others.

♫Goals of *the games*♫

We will develop the goals of the games in 3 sections:

1. *Games that develop personal skills.*
2. *Games that develop social skills.*
3. *Games that develop creativity* [two examples related to the song].

The personal ability [1] to listen and concentrate is fundamental in all learning processes. The large number of stimuli that they receive simultaneously require a greater capacity for concentration. 'Personal skill' games help develop listening skills, memory skills and to develop and maintain attention.

We could consider the following games that develop the 'personal skills':

Hearing games; Concentration games and musical tests.

Games that develop social skills [2] help strengthen and increase group unity and communication.

They allow to integrate an individual within the group more easily. Depending on the objectives we are looking for, these games can be used to help group members get to know, relax and relieve stress.

Through an appropriate choice of activities, these games help a new class or groups of games work as a well-matched team and not as a set of individuals who are together by chance.

The games that 'develop social skills' would be the following:

Games to introduce yourself or meet; Interaction games and games of confidence

Developing creativity [**3**] allows to increase the confidence of its members when creating. Since we are all creative but it is not always easy to show our creativity. This is accentuated much more within the educational environment where thirst prioritize activities that enhance cognitive skills versus those that stimulate creativity.

This type of games have to be presented in the long term since individuals will only be able to recognize a work with an evident lack of creativity and will only be able to free themselves if they are able to experience their own creativity in the most spontaneous way possible.

The games that 'develop creativity' would be the following:

Games of expression and improvisation; Riddles and musical board games.

When we explain each of the games we will have to offer more information about their characteristics and specific conditions.

However, working with the games must allow introducing several variants. According to its development, some of the games presented will allow us to take on changes and various objectives regarding the attitude of children before the game itself.

♫Examples of games related to *the song*♫

Games that develop creativity:

1. Act out a song: [Group Play]

- • Material: files with known songs and a group formed by -at least- 9players.
- • Description: the teacher will organize the students in teams of 3 or 4 components and distribute a card to each with the name of a song known by all.
- • The teams will have ten minutes to prepare the first fragment of the song they must represent.
- • Players can not use any word but can represent the song in the form of charade, farce or various gestures.
- • The teams will take turns to represent their compositions while the rest of the classmates will try to guess what song it is when the performance ends.

2. To draw songs   [Group Play]

- Material: *a blackboard, chalk or markers.*
- Description: the teacher will divide the players into groups of 3 or 4 children.
- After the preparation time, a member of each of the groups will go to the board and draw something representative and/or allegorical of a famous song [for example: drawing some mountains of the *Serra de Mariola* song [*Mariola's Mountains, in English*] or a face with a big nose for the song *Mon pare no te nas* [*My father doesn't have a nose*]. Then, the rest of the group's companions will try to guess which song the drawing refers to.
- The first team to guess the song will score a point.
- It will not be necessary to wait for a partner to have finished the drawing in order to respond.
- When all the children have drawn, the teacher will count the points to verify which one has been the winning team.

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