

Instruction is further shaped through additional training in music. A postgraduate course in conducting may direct a teacher's attention toward potential movement and expressive gestures that children may learn to use as they listen and perform a song. A clinic in improvisation may inspire lessons in creative musical thinking and doing. A string of workshops in technology-oriented instruction or in the music of world cultures will provide a teacher not only with new musical materials but also with innovative instructional techniques. A graduate course in ear training, theory, or analysis will hone a teacher's listening skills, while also providing approaches for training children's ears. The development of musicianship is an ongoing process. To use colloquial expressions, when we don't (continue to) train, we don't gain, and when we don't use it (the musical skills we may have earlier developed), we lose it.

Training in classic and contemporary methods of music instruction for children can greatly enhance the development of a personal teaching method. Summer courses in Kodály, Dalcroze, and Orff are provided at universities throughout North America and abroad, with certification available following extensive coursework and demonstration of selected proficiencies in music, teaching, and planning. Also, summer courses are available on the approaches espoused by Gordon, Weikert, Education through Music, and Music in Education. Training in these methods leads to the adaptation of aspects of their philosophies, goals, and techniques, for these all are logical pathways that have been tested with children. In the end, however, the teacher's interests, strengths, and classroom needs emerge again to bring about the blend of a newly acquired layer of skills with those that the teacher has used for some time.

A personal method of music instruction does not preclude the opportunity to find affinities with certain established methods. More than likely, the teacher who strives for greater musicianship will seek out the set of techniques that appeal to his or her personal interests. But does the provision of movement experiences classify her as a follower of Dalcroze? Does an emphasis on folk song and the great art music make him a Kodály teacher? Does the rhythmic chanting of poetry brand them followers of Orff? Or is there variation among the practices of teachers who have been influenced by the pedagogical emphases of Dalcroze, Kodály, or Orff? How are culturally based pedagogies blended with standard instructional methods when teaching a Zulu song or a Brazilian samba? All teachers make choices in the techniques and musical materials they select for use with children, and most might conceivably be judged as showing an inclination toward one or another known method. Still, the personalization of these techniques and methods following training is the true test of the teacher's independent musicianship and ability to lead children in their own musical development.

## Scenario

AS A FINAL-SEMESTER MUSIC education major attending her first regional meeting of professional music teachers, Carly Thompson was intrigued by the conversation she was hearing. She had entered a workshop session early, had found herself a seat about midway in the room, and was opening her iPad for some note-taking ahead when she overheard a conversation behind her between two teachers. It was an animated one. The first teacher's remarks were introductory: "I'm looking forward to this session. What about you: Are you Orff, Kodály, or Dalcroze?" The second



teacher replied, “Orff, absolutely. That’s why I’m at this session. This guy’s great. I had him in my Orff training, and he does just what I believe we should do as teachers—music and movement, with singing, chanting, body percussion, the instruments. It’s all about the integration of so many music-making ways. My kids stay focused with Orff. What about you?” She heard this reply: “I have my Level I Kodály training, and that’s been a blessing. I learned so much about kids’ singing voices, and the songs that fit their voices. And kids love the singing games that are so Kodály. Since I’d been a clarinet major and not a singer, I really needed to up-the-ante on singing, so this was it for me.”

Carly wondered why it seemed that they were “one-method-only teachers” and not involved in a mixed-methods way of teaching. She had every reason to respect any experienced teacher who would know more than she did about any method, but there had just been a lecture-discussion in her methods class this week about the importance of a “personal method” that was not to be tied to any one school of thought. She turned around, smiled, and politely introduced herself. She raised her voice while speaking to get their approval before asking the real questions on her mind. “Hi. I’m finishing my music education degree this year? And I overheard you talking about your Orff and Kodály expertise?” She pressed on. “So, do you think Orff and Kodály are equally valid? Is one better for certain circumstances than others? What about the other methods, like Dalcroze and all?” There was a grand pause as the two experienced teachers smiled back at her and (knowingly) at one another. “Well . . .” began the Orff teacher. “It all depends.” The Kodály teacher nodded, and continued, “Really. It does. The method you take on is really you. I don’t teach the same way the next Kodály teacher teaches. We have our own interpretations of Kodály teaching.” The Orff teacher added, “. . . and of Orff teaching. You teach the way it feels right for your kids and for yourself. I’m not pure Orff, and she isn’t pure Kodály. I’m glad I took some Orff workshops, because they offered me specific materials and ways of teaching them that I never learned in college.”

Carly was following them now. “So, do either of you teach any parts of the other method?” Both teachers were nodding as affirmative, as the Orff teacher clarified: “I’d say that we do what other teachers do: We teach using whatever works, and that is usually a combination of our training, a lot of sharing among our teacher friends, and some of the interests and needs we figure out that are specific to our students and the school and community settings.” The Kodály teacher pitched in: “Some of what we teach goes back to our college methods classes, too. So,” she shook her finger, “Pay attention! You know what, the methods are not so far apart from each other, either, so I may be calling myself a Kodály person, and she’s an Orff-er, but in reality we’re probably not so different from each other. We sing, we dance, we play.” Carly laughed, thanked the teachers, and turned around to face the clinician, who was just starting into a session that was promising “singing, playing, moving, listening, and creating, all with the aim of teaching children musical skills, understandings, and values.”

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## Questions

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1. Did Carly have reason to be concerned about the dialogue between the teachers? Were they “one-method-only teachers”?
2. How did the teachers develop their particular pedagogical approaches?
3. What shapes the method that a teacher employs?

