

Warming Up



Good musicians "warm-up" before performing. Making music --whether with the voice or an instrument is a physical activity. Muscles that produce sound need to be warmed up. This helps to prevent injuries. Warm-Ups tune the ears, move a person into a musical readiness by stretching/relaxing both the body and the voice, and focus the mind on music.

Warm-Ups in school music lessons also provide an opportunity for a quick "practice" session for beat, rhythm and pitch matching. Each lesson in Can Do will have ideas for warm-up. Use the ones given in the lesson or, as the year progresses, your favourites from past lessons. The first time a warm-up is used, detailed instructions will be included in the lesson. Check out the appendix for a complete list of CanDo1 warm-ups.

Enjoy the warm-ups, they're intended to be fun. Keep the pace moving and time given short.

Pitch: Roller Coaster Aahs



Your hand is the lead roller coaster car. As your hand goes down slowly, voices go down slowly, etc. It's easier to move into a singing voice when the beginning is high, so mimic this with the roller coaster.

The first time I do this with students I move my hand in front of myself talking a bit about how its a roller coaster going on a ride down and up (demonstrating), but its a roller coaster that has a voice that copies the way its moving. Then I stop my hand, sing a fairly high "aah," "here's where it starts this time." Then I move my hand down and follow with my voice.

When I'm ready to ask students to help be the roller coaster voice, I have them echo the beginning sound before starting the ride!

Keep the roller coaster rides short. Repeat several times.

Ask a student to take the class on a roller coaster ride.

This is an activity where you, or the student conductor, don't need to be able to "sing in tune." Just pick a note and begin and have fun. It may take several days of roller coaster rides before the collective class sound follow the ride --but persevere and it will work.

This warm-up works on student pitch, singing voice and ability to follow conducting cues --- simple but multi-purpose!

Pitch: Echo Hellos

Sing the word "Hello" or play the first "Hello" from the CD and hit the pause button. Ask children to sing what you sing after they listen. Repeat several times with different tunes for "Hello".

If you speak another language, use the "Hello" word from that language for a few new tune echos. Remember, it doesn't matter what tune you use!

Ask students if they know how to say "Hello" in another language. Take one or two ideas and make up tunes for students to echo. Next music class this activity will be repeated, so assure students there will be opportunities for their "Hello" another day.

Bonjour	French
Hola	Spanish
Kalimera	Greek
Ai	Inuktitut
Nameste	Hindi
Salaam	Arabic
Jambo	Swahili
Shalom	Hebrew
Wei	Cantonese

*Nameste
Hola
Jambo
Bonjour*

Canada
LJ Clare
2011

Hello Warm-Up

Key D, first note D(do)
a capella count-in: 1,2,3,4, He...

Pitch: Hearing Highs and Lows

1. Being able to sing in tune requires being able to hear differences in pitch. Today use your voice. Make a high sound to a syllable, e.g. "ma" and raise your hand up high. Then make a low sound and put your hand down low. Ask: **"What was the difference between the two sounds I made?"** (student response)
2. **"Yes, one sound was up high, close to the ceiling and one sound was down low, close to the floor. When you echo the sounds I make, echo with your hands as well."** Make several high/low sounds using your hand for students to echo. Congratulate students.
3. **"Good work!** (Even if some students are still not matching their hand height with pitch, continue.) **Ready for a challenge? I'm going to sing two sounds, but I'm not going to use my hand to show high/low. When you echo the sounds, use your hands to show the change in pitch."** Keep the pace moving quickly so that students don't have long to dwell on whether their hand response matches the pitch. Each time congratulate one student who has the correct hand response. Hearing differences in pitch is a preliminary to being able to match voices to pitch. Continue to use this warm-up with music lessons until everyone in the class is able to show differences in high-low pitch with their hands.

Pitch: Hearing Highs and Lows

This warm-up was introduced last week. Today another challenge is added. Instead of listening for pitches that are very different, students are going to listen for the difference between "so" and "mi." The sound of a parent calling a child to come inside, is the same as the sound musicians call "so - mi." It's the same as the pitches in the nursery song "Rain, rain, go a-way," and many other songs for young children. On the glockenspiel, if you play the bar "G" and then the bar "E," you are playing "so - mi."

In music, the difference between two pitches is called an interval.

so	B o b -	rain	go a-
mi	by	rain	-way

so	G	OR	C	D	No matter what musical alphabet letter you choose as "so," "mi" is always going to be lower.
mi	E	OR	A	B	
do	C		F	G	

1. Choose a note to be "so" (G, C or D). Play the note. Sing the note to "high" while holding your hand up high. Ask students to sing "high" with you --their hands raised as well. Choose the "mi" that goes with your "so." Play "mi." Sing the note to "low" while holding your hand down low. Ask students to sing "low" with you --their hands move down also.
2. Next sing or play one of the two notes. Sing "high" or "low" to match the note. Students echo. Repeat several times.

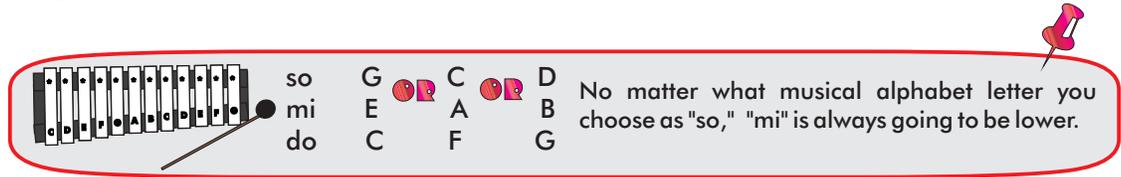
high	high high
low	low
3. Now ask students to listen to the note and WITHOUT hearing you sing, students are to move their hands either "high" or "low." Repeat.
4. The final step is for students to listen to the note and then sing the word "high" or "low" to match the note while moving their hand either up or down. Repeat.

OR



Check the video warm-up resources for "high-low so-mi."

Pitch: Hearing Highs and Lows (review warm-up) (using "so" = high and "mi" = low)



so	G	C	D
mi	E	A	B
do	C	F	G

No matter what musical alphabet letter you choose as "so," "mi" is always going to be lower.

Choose a note to be "so" (G, C or D). Play the note. Sing the note to "high" while holding your hand up high. Ask students to sing "high" with you --their hands raised as well. Choose the "mi" that goes with your "so." Play "mi." Sing the note to "low" while holding your hand down low. Ask students to sing "low" with you --their hands move down also.

Now sing or play one of the two notes. Sing "high" or "low" to match the note. Students echo. Repeat several times.

Now ask students to listen to the note and WITHOUT hearing you sing, students are to move their hands either "high" or "low." (Hide the glockenspiel so that students do not have the visual cue. Repeat.

The final step is for students to listen to the note and then sing the word "high" or "low" to match the note while moving their hand either up or down. Repeat.

If your singing voice is pitched too low to work as a model for young voices, you may want to try:

- 1. borrowing a student from a higher grade to be the model
- OR** 2. using the warm-up tracks from the mp3s or mp4s
- OR** 3. choose a student from your class who sings easily, practice before music time with this student so she/he may be the model

Whatever method you use, if you tie it into playing the glockenspiel, then soon students will be able to match pitch with the glockenspiel notes for echoing. It takes a bit of practice for students to match their voices with an instrument voice. The simplest, and best way to teaching children how to sing, is to sing for and to them.

Pitch: Singing Highs/Lows Using So-Mi and Handsigns

In December, Lesson 14 (page 90), students listened for "high" and "low" using the interval between "so" and "mi." Now "high" is being named as "so" and "low" as "mi".

Ask students to listen. Play the "so" on a glockenspiel.
Now make the "so" handsign as you sing the word "high."

Play the "mi" on a glockenspiel. Make the "mi" handsign as you sing the word "low."

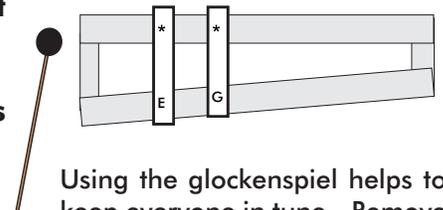
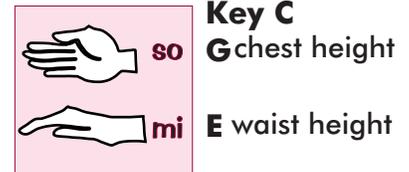
"Sometimes musicians call "high" "so." Its handsign looks like this. (Sing "so" making its handsign several times.) Try it with me."

"Sometimes musicians call "low" "mi." Its handsign looks like this. Try it with me."

Sing, or if needed, play and sing a few patterns for students to echo.

high	high	low	high
so	so	mi	so
high	low	low	high
so	mi	mi	so
high	low	high	low
so	mi	so	mi

Begin with "so" as it is easier to sing "so-mi" in tune (versus "mi-so").



Using the glockenspiel helps to keep everyone in tune. Remove bars that aren't needed to simplify playing.

There is a mind-body connection that helps the voice to follow pitch when our hands change with the pitch. 

Pitch: Matching Solfa "so" "mi"

Following the method outlined in the last lesson, sing several patterns using "so" and "mi," with their handsigns, for students to echo.

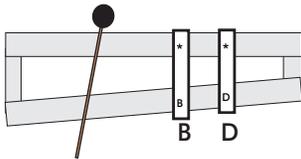


Key G

D

B

so	mi	so	mi
so	so	mi	mi
so	mi	mi	so
so	so	so	mi
so	mi	mi	mi



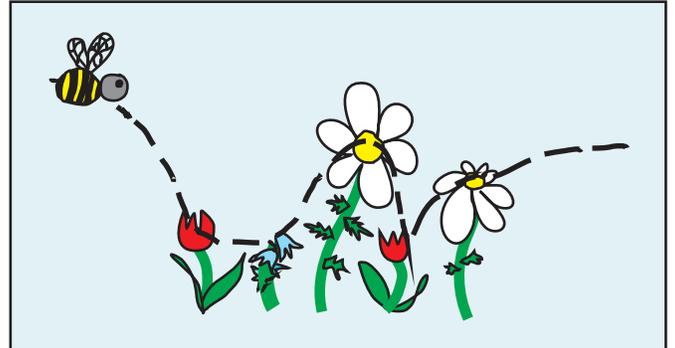
Using the glockenspiel helps to keep everyone in tune. Remove bars that aren't needed to simplify playing.

The first song today is in the Key of G. Use this Key to pitch match and it tunes the voice and ear for singing 

Pitch: Singing Shape Cards

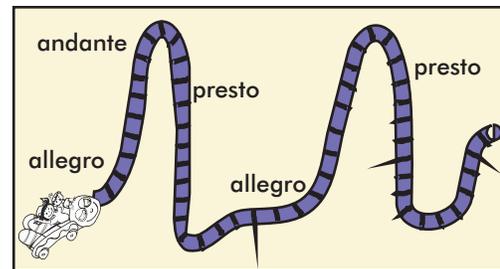
Show a shape card (filed under “flashcards-shape”). Point to the bumblebee and either sing a beginning pitch (bzzzz) or play one of the glockenspiel bars 4 times. Sing the words “One, two, ready, buzzz”. Students follow the bee/finger as it visits the flowers, moving the pitch of their voices up and down with the bee. Some of the shape cards have cues to vary the sounds.

This activity is a transition between singing an imaginary roller coaster ride in the air, and reading pitch changes from paper.



Pitch: Singing Shape Cards

Help students to make the cognitive connections between the two warm-ups today; i.e. reading the roller coaster “hand” as it goes up and down in the air AND reading the roller coaster car as it goes up and down the track on the shape card.



Pitch: Matching Solfa "So-Mi"

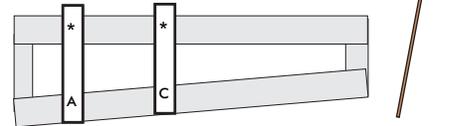
so	mi	so	mi
so	so	mi	mi
so	mi	mi	so
so	so	so	mi
so	mi	mi	mi

Key F

C

A

The first song today is in the key of F. Use this Key to pitch match and it tunes the voice and ear for singing



Using the glockenspiel helps to keep everyone in tune. Remove bars that aren't needed to simplify playing.

Pitch: Matching Solfa "So-Mi-La"

so	mi	la	so	mi
so	mi	mi	so	la
so	la	la	so	mi
so	so	la	so	mi
so	mi	so	so	la

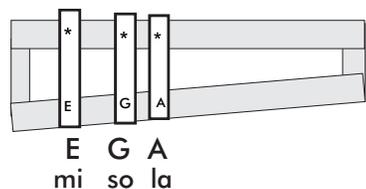
Key C

A

G

E

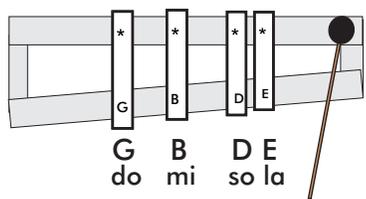
The is in the key of C. Use this Key to pitch match and it tunes the voice and ear for singing the first song.



If you use the recorded solfa warm-ups, include a live performance of the handsigns for students to copy. OR use the warm-up videos.

Using the glockenspiel helps to keep everyone in tune. Remove bars that aren't needed to simplify playing.

Pitch: Matching Solfa "Do-Mi-So-La"



Key G

E

D

B

G

The first song today is in the key of G. Use this Key to pitch match and it tunes the voice and ear for singing the first song.

so	mi	so	mi	do
so	la	so	mi	do
so	do	mi	so	la
so	so	mi	do	mi
so	la	so	do	do

Using the glockenspiel helps to keep everyone in tune. Remove bars that aren't needed to simplify playing.

If you use the recorded solfa warm-ups, include a live performance of the handsigns for students to copy. OR use the warm-up videos.