



Ontario Music Educators' Association
Counterpoint 2018

*Let's Sing the Circle:
The Joy and Wonder of Canons!*

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ramowin wâsakâ / nikamowin wâsakâ / nikamowin wâsakâ



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Since Singing is So Good a Thing

Text: William Byrd circa 1539-1623

Ardelle Ries

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in 6/8 time. It consists of three lines of music. The first line starts with a repeat sign and contains the lyrics 'Since sing - ing is so good a thing, I'. The second line contains the lyrics 'wish that all would learn to'. The third line contains the lyrics 'sing. Learn to sing! Learn to sing! Since Sing! Sing!'. There are first, second, and third endings marked above the notes.

Sing twice or more times through...

After arrival at m. 6 Voice 1 sustains lower note; Voice 2 sustains a1; Voices 3 sustains d2

Dance

Stand in circles of six people.

Each person in the circle should have a partner opposite.

Practice the movement with only one pair at a time.

- 1st Phrase:** Walk into the circle to meet partner—walk slowly, with steps on each beat of each measure so that it takes the whole phrase to walk into the middle.
- 2nd Phrase:** Meet partner and raise right arms. Touch right hands together. Turn slowly with partner to change places (half turn).
- 3rd Phrase:** Walk backwards toward the edge of the circle, again walking only on each beat of each measure so that it takes the whole phrase to arrive back in the circle. Partners should end on opposite sides of the circle.

Why Canons?

- Reinforces fine unison singing
- Develops multi-part awareness which enhances musical independence, harmonic awareness and improves intonation
- Provides a satisfying musical experience

"We put special emphasis on two-part singing. I myself have come to the almost unconditional conclusion that only those can sing in tune in unison who have already been able to sing in tune in two parts before." ~ZK

"[After homework] first we sang rounds. It is wonderful for schooling the ear. It leads quite naturally to polyphonic music. The rounds teach you to 'mind your own business'; sing your part, never to mind what your neighbor sings." ~Maria von Trapp

Within A Shady Thicket

Traditional

1. With - in a sha-dy thick - et a cuck-oo sing-eth clear! A-

5. wa - ken lit - tle she - pherd, a cu - ckoo sing-eth clear! Cu-

9. ckoo! Cu - ckoo, a cu - ckoo sing - eth clear! Cu-

13. ckoo! Cu - ckoo, a cu - ckoo sing - eth clear! With-

17. **Ostinato:** clap snap clap patsch snap R L clap

~ostinato from Lucinda Geoghegan, *Singing Games & Rhymes from 9 to 99* (2014)

Teaching Process for Canons

1. Step the beat while singing
2. Step the beat & clap the rhythm while singing OR step the beat & clap the rhythm without singing
3. Sing the canon in unison: Class is divided into groups—groups clap the rhythm or beat or sing—switch parts
4. Sing the canon in unison: Teacher sings or claps the second voice; students identify what teacher is doing
5. Sing the canon: Class is divided into two groups—both sing, but sing in canon
6. Choose smaller and smaller groups to sing the song in canon until only individuals

A Sequential Approach

~adapted from Georgia Newlin, *One Accord* (2016)

1. Readiness—Comparatives: fast/slow; beat divided by two or three; same/different/similar; speaking or singing
2. Singing—Unison, echo song, dialogue song, singing games
3. Part Work
 - a. Beat while stationary, locomotor movement, body ostinato
 - b. Beat vs. beat division
 - c. Rhythm vs. beat division vs. rhythm
 - d. Rhythmic ostinato | multiple rhythmic ostinati | rhythm canon | rhythm body canon
 - e. Melody via antiphonal singing | chain phrases | call & response | drone/pedal tone | melodic ostinato | multiple melodic ostinati
4. Part Singing
 - a. Homophony
 - i. Hand sign singing in canon
 - ii. Round (harmonies at cadence points)
 - b. Polyphony
 - i. Canonic singing and ostinato partner songs

We Merry Minstrels

Henry Purcell

A We mer - ry min - strels soft mu - sic en -
B We sing so blithe - ly, we drive a - way
C Then sweet, sweet, sci - ence, hail, hail, heav - en - ly
4 joy, for mu - sic doth hat - red and
care, and with our soft har - mo - ny
sound, no plea - sure like mu - sic on
7 mal - ice des - troy. go to part B
7 bun - ish dis - pair. go to part C
7 earth can be found! go to part A

Cantate Domino

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

1. 2. 3.
Can - ta - te Do - mi - no om - nis ter - ra!
4. 5. 6.
Can - ta - - - - - te.
7. 8. 9.
Can - ta - te Do - mi - no om - nis ter - ra, can - ta - te!

Sumer is icumen in

John of Fornsete (?), c 1226

① Su - mer is i - cu - men in _____ ② Lhu - de sing cuc - cu,
5 ③ Gro - weth sed and blo - weth med, ④ And springth the wu - de nu;
9 Sing cuc - cu; Aw - e ble - teth af - ter lomb, Lhouth af - ter cal - ve
14 cu; Bul - loc ster - teth, buc - ke ver - teth, Mu - rie sing cuc - cu.
19 Cuc - cu, Cuc - cu wel sing - ges thu cuc - cu, Ne swik thu na - ver nu.

Accompaniment | Pes

① Sing cuc - cu nu _____ ② sing cuc - cu.

Wade in the Water Melodic Ostinati

Arr. Mary Geotze

Ostinato I

Wade child - ren, wade on! Wade child - ren, wade on!

Ostinato II

Wade on child - ren wade in the wa - ter. Wade child - ren, wade on!

Ostinato III

Wade on child - ren wade in the wa - ter. Wade child - ren, wade on!

Three Spirituals in Quodlibet

1
When you plow, don't lose track. Can't keep straight when you're look - in'
Oh, roll on clouds in the morn - in', roll on clouds in the
Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the

5
5 back. Keep your hand on that plow, hold on. Hold
5 morn - in', roll on clouds in the morn - in'; let the sun shine down on me. Well,
wa - ter, chil - dren, wade in the wa - ter; God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.

10
10 on, hold on! Keep your hand on that
10 I looked out this morn - in', deep down trou - ble I see. Well, I looked out this
Wade in the wa - ter; Wade in the wa - ter chil - dren; wade in the

15
15 plow; hold on. When you
15 morn - in'; let the sun shine down on me. Oh,
wa - ter; God's a - gon - na trou - ble the wa - ter.

Rounds & Canons Defined Mirror & Retrograde

1. Past ten o - clock; Fair is the night.
2. Past ten o - clock; stars shin - ing bright!

Canon Composition Solution

Yours Truly

1.

5 2.

9 3.

I: dms

IV: fld'

V: str'

I: dms

Singing Games as Canons

Hi lo chick - a - lo, chick - a - lo, chick - a - lo.

Hi lo chick - a - lo, chick - a - lo, hil

Stand in a circle facing a partner. Left hands are back to back with partner.

Play the game with RH:

HI - clap right hands high

LO - clap right hands low

CHICKA - clap own left hand.

At the end turn to the right and Right Hands will be back to back with the partner who was behind you. Now play the game with the left hand in the same manner.

Canons as Dances

Round and Round We Go

John Krumm

Round and round we go, we hold each oth-er's hand and weave our lives in a
cir - cle. The day is done, the dance goes on.

- Concentric circles
 - Phrases 1 & 2: Grapevine
 - To teach: Partners 1 & 2; 1s on the outside, 2s on the inside; grasp right hands and step forward, then left hands, etc.
 - Phrase 3a: Walk forward with arms up
 - Phrase 3b: Walk backwards with arms down
- Perform the canon with movement
- Perform the movement only

From the Stars

Fay White

1. From the stars our bo - dies come. 2. Un - der the stars we all are one.
3. Now in-to deep - est night we go, 4. a - lone yet not a - lone.

Circles of Our Lives

*Within the circles of our lives
we dance the circles of the years,
the circles of the seasons
within the circles of the years,
the cycles of the moon
within the circles of the seasons,
the circles of our reasons
within the cycles of the moon.*

*Again, again we come and go,
changed, changing. Hands
join, unjoin in love and fear,
grief and joy. The circles turn,
each giving into each, into all.*

*Only music keeps us here,
each by all the others held.
In the hold of hands and eyes
we turn in pairs, that joining
joining each to all again.*

*And then we turn aside, alone,
out of the sunlight gone
into the darker circles of return.*

~Wendell Berry

Sing Me Another

1. 2. Traditional
 Sing me an -oth -er be - fore we de - part, Sing to the praise of our mu - si - cal art,

3. 4.
 Sing, sing, sing, sing, Voi - ces in u - ni - ty, Songs from the heart!

Partner Songs

1. A wonderful intermediate step to developing part-singing independence.
2. Follow the same sequence & foundation to introduce round & canon singing.
3. Ask the students to identify what song you are clapping (or singing) while they sing another song.

Are You Sleeping/O Listen to the Carillon/Three Blind Mice

Bells in the Steeple/Jack in the Box

Land of the Silver Birch/My Paddle's Keen and Bright

C-O-F-F-E-E/With Laughter and Singing/All Things Shall Perish

The Pupil's Complaint/The Teacher's Reply

Three Spirituals in Quodlibet

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