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*It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. The journal began in 1990 as The Quarterly. In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication. Visions of Research in Music Education will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish The Quarterly in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.*

# Music in Kindergarten

By **E. Tzarkova and E. Serbina**

*Russian Ministry of Education*

In Russia, 86 percent of children ages 2 to 7 spend their days, from 8:00 a. m. until 7:00 p. m., in preschool educational institutions. That is because we believe that children's development and education are one of the most urgent and complicated issues for our society.

For a long time in our country there existed a universal and compulsory state program of preschool education. The program was administered under the leadership of N. A. Vetlugina by the Scientific Research Institute of Preschool Education of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. More recently, however, alternative programs with new approaches to content and methods of education have been employed, and these place more emphasis on how children learn.

Paralleling the state kindergartens are specialized kindergartens with extended teaching in foreign languages, music, and other fine arts. All the programs, however, are similar in structure. They include different forms of activity separated, for example, into the subjects of music, speech development, environmental studies, fine arts, physical training and other subjects, each with one or two sessions taught per week. There are also general education goals to be met and skills to be acquired by children.

Since the nature of children is to integrate their experiences and information, the old preschool curriculum, with its lesson-like ses-

sions, contradicts the natural logic of children's development. Moreover, it damages children's learning and hampers their progress. To address these problems, the Scientific Research Institute of Schools is developing an experimental program called "Raduga" (Rainbow). The purpose of the

program is to create an atmosphere in which children enjoy learning by being taught according to their mental development at a particular age. The program includes music education, but its goals are quite different from those of the generally adopted state program, "Music Education in Kindergarten."

## Goals

The purpose of the new program is to prepare children who are ready to understand the surrounding

world, including the world of nature, of people, and of art, and to help the children become open to such things as sounds, images, and fairy tales. The program, based on our understanding of both the nature of children and the nature of art, embodies the ideas of Kabalevsky. This new pedagogy of art is based on the following concepts:

- the creation of a unique artistic and aesthetic environment;
- the natural way that children's activities and the process of learning are parts of their lives, and not separate from day-to-day "life-building;"
- the emphasis of children's natural stages of development, including cultural development; and
- reliance on the children's intuitive and imaginative style of understanding the world.

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It is well known that in the mother's womb a baby can hear various sounds of the outer world. In the lap of humanity's cultural traditions, newborns hear restful lullabies and enjoy the tender sounds of folk songs. Maternal speech, when addressing babies, is almost always musical and rich in soft, sing-song intonations. The children continue to grow among such sweet musical sounds until they enter kindergarten. Suddenly, charm is gone, and the whole atmosphere changes.

The new kindergarten program tries to preserve, as much as possible, this warm, maternal atmosphere. Children deprived of their mother's presence during the day should hear the gentle and kind voice of the teacher. The pre-school teacher's daily duties should be:

- singing out greetings when the children arrive;
- singing and dancing in a circle, playing children's musical games;
- singing resting songs when children take naps (to all of them, or individually when necessary);
- singing special nursery songs during everyday, natural situations for the children, such as when a minor injury or quarrel occurs, or during mundane events such as washing or combing hair; and
- singing traditional songs addressing the sun, the wind, the rain, a bee, a snail, flowers, and so on during walks so that children learn to listen for and to hear the music of nature.

Such material is the essence of folklore, the natural and necessary basis for a proper music education of a child. Folk music was once an inherent part of everyday life, and it should occupy a similar place in kindergartens today. It is one of the most important components of the new program.

Russian nursery songs are full of love for the child. The melodies are clear, tender, and natural, and children are fond of listening to them. Children will naturally begin echoing their teachers' singing, and with repetition will join in. As they sing day after day, children gradually learn the songs. It is

very important that nothing is learned purposefully, but that everything happens naturally. Songs are connected closely and harmoniously with the rituals of meeting, sleeping, walking, and so on. In this way, music becomes a natural part of the children's lives.

Another important component of the new program is the attention paid to classical music. The traditional program's classical repertory generally is comprised of pieces composed by contemporary musicians especially for kindergarten children, and the scope of the music is extremely narrow. Most of the pieces are notable for their primitive melodies and texts and also for their marked complexity. In contrast, in the new program children hear the works of Vivaldi, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Ravel, and Debussy, as well as those of the Russian composers Kastalsky, Berezovsky, Bortnyansky, Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, Scriabin, and Prokofiev.

In the new music education program, the criteria for choosing musical works are:

- a definite mood is implied by the music;
- expressiveness prevails over picturesqueness;
- the predominance of the melody is delineated by a voice or an instrumental solo (the flute and violin being preferable).

### **Roles of Classroom Teacher and Music Specialist**

In Russia's kindergartens, classroom teachers are assisted in teaching music by music specialists. These professional musicians are responsible for teaching all the children, rather than only a single classroom. The music specialists present two 20- to 30-minute sessions per week, depending on the age of the children. At these lessons, children study songs and dances and listen to selected music. After the music specialist leaves the classroom, musical activities continue throughout the day, under the guidance of the classroom teacher.

The roles of the classroom teacher and the

music specialist in the new program are radically different than in the old system. Only the teacher can foresee the situations in which music can be a part of the school day, for it is the teacher who is constantly with the children and knows their habits, their moods, and their reactions. It is important that music should come into children's daily life harmoniously, helping with self-expression and self-discovery and give them opportunities to sing, play and enjoy themselves. The classroom should include songs, round dances, and music that is either sad or merry, calm or energetic. Music will help teachers and children find a common language and discover the beautiful and multifaceted world of sound.

In contrast, the music specialist's duty is to assist the classroom teacher in shaping the repertory, arranging festivities, and mastering music material. The music specialist helps the children develop certain skills, like understanding the language of music. The music specialist also plays children's instruments and folk instruments; acts out operas, ballets, and musicals; and arranges performances. These are the specific duties of music specialists:


- to arrange puppet shows twice a month;
- to organize concerts of classical music once a month by either playing an instrument or inviting professionals to perform;
- to prepare festive performances for holidays;
- to explore with children the properties of sound while playing different children's and experimental instruments;
- with older children, to give lessons in movement and music once a week, including free movement to music, round dances, foreign traditional dances, and historical dances such as the minuet and polonaise; and
- with 5- to 6-year-olds, to give singing lessons and conduct choirs that perform sacred music, classical music, and contemporary songs twice a month. Smaller children sing only in their classrooms with their teachers; they do not have special lessons in choral music.

The new system of music education assures that children experience many forms of creative music activity throughout the year. Their everyday lives include singing for and

with other children; moving to music and singing in a circle; listening to music; experimenting with sounds while playing traditional and children's musical instruments; and understanding music as an integral part of holidays and other festivities.

Another area explored in the new program concerns mathematics and music and the connection between them. Any geometric (manipulative) object can be assigned a sound, and any musical sound can be assigned a symbol that can be printed on paper, clay, or wood and then put into motion. Children like to sing pictures and paint songs.

The children also explore space and spatial relations in games like "Ring around the Rosy." By participating in swift circular motions and movements toward and away from the center of the circle and moving in lines, the children learn about spatial concepts. They also gain a sense of time. How can one explain to the very young the meaning of slow and fast? Music can explain when words fail; music can relate concepts without words. For example, teachers may present as an example a long sound using the length of the bow, then follow with a short, pizzicato sound.

The new kindergarten program is a creative process in which children and teachers are engaged equally. The program uses the best examples of humanity's musical culture—folk music and the classics. The children have an opportunity to realize their freedom and manifest it individually in a variety of forms of artistic and creative activity. 

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