



Method Sheets

Title of the activity

Finding the basic pulse

Activity proposed by

Vimmart - Inclusive Art School

Duration

At least 10 minutes.

Participants

Maximum of 10 participants

Aims

Finding and maintaining a basic rhythm in a group develops not only orchestral skills but also interpersonal skills.

Material

Your body alone is enough, but you can also use other instruments, a djembe drum, for example.

Preparation

Possible percussion instruments and chairs forming an arc in front of the facilitator.

Steps/Instructions

1. Ask the group to stand in front of you so that everyone can see you. Explain the meaning of a basic steady beat in music (you can use a metronome or the 60 bpm second hand of a clock), i.e. all music has a tempo at which the object being played moves in time. In this case, the basic beat is the tempo of the music.

2. Begin to tap/beat the drum alternating hands to the tempo and ask the group to follow the same beat. Try to get a unified sound. This exercise should be kept going for a few minutes so that everyone finds the common beat.

3. Without stopping the beat, use your own example to instruct the group to clap/play different hand sequences, e.g. (r)ight, right, (l)eft, left, "l,l,r,r", "r,r,l", "r,l,l", etc. The strokes can also be moved to the centre or edge of the drumhead or to different parts of the body (thighs, chest, clapping, etc.). The key is to maintain the same, calm tempo throughout.

4. The "shifting beat" exercise requires visual attention as well as auditory attention. "Send" the rhythm at a calm, steady tempo to the participant seated to the left, who plays the rhythm (r,l) on the drum/thighs, sending the rhythm to the next participant until the rhythm comes back to the instructor one participant at a time. Pay attention to the steadiness of the beat and the consistency of the tempo.

Evaluation method (if applicable)

What matters is the stability and continuity of the basic beat. In addition, each exercise should be done for long enough to allow the pulse to settle in the group.

Hints/tips for facilitators

Different rhythms can be added to the exercises to add a challenge. Also works as an introductory game for the first few times in a group by adding the rhythms of the syllables of your own name as part of the basic pulse.

Variations (if applicable)

Complex exercises can be built around the basic pulse. Either more challenging body rhythm exercises or different orchestrations, e.g. by splitting the group into smaller parts and adding overlapping rhythms or even polyhythms/polymetrics.

Method

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