

## **WARMUPS FOR HANDS AND EARS**

- 1) **tuning**
- 2) **play** through some of the 6 tunes together, at warmup pace
- 3) Choose one to **play again** - after inviting people to play a few times through, then to drop out for a whole time **to listen**, then play again. **What do you hear?**
- 4) **Trio plays one tune together, three times, with variations in melody, harmony, orchestration. What differences do you hear?**

## **TALKING TOGETHER ABOUT MUSIC FOR ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE**

- 1) **What does this particular type of music need?** (in service to the dancing - needs to inspire movement)
- 2) **What does it take musically?**  
( articulation, space between the notes, air (vertical movement),  
phrase moving somewhere, direction (horizontal movement), variety in texture, dynamic changes, knowing the dance moves and the "feel" of dance)

## **PLAYING IN A GROUP**

**Listen** - one ear inward, one ear outward

Divide into **two groups** (one plays, the other listens). **Play through chosen tune three times in three different ways:**

- 1) think **only of yourself**, your tone, how well you play, and do what you can to **make yourself the star** -and don't listen to the others.
- 2) play as if you really **don't want anyone to hear you**, shy, into yourself.
- 3) **Be solid in yourself AND in conversation with the other instruments.** Assume that you have something to offer, that people will want to hear you, and enjoy working with what the others are doing.

**Discussion - what was that like?** Any differences in playing, or in listening?

Repeat: Reverse the players and listeners

## **TEMPO/TIMING/RHYTHMIC FEEL**

Important for the dancers!

- 1) **Listening & watching to identify a good tempo:**

Illustrate with set and turn single. Choose a few phrases from one of the tunes. Then trio will play the phrase too quickly, too slowly, unsteadily.

**Give feedback until the tempo is just right.**

**Discussion - Where's the beat** and why is it important in each of the time signatures.

- 2) **Phrasing:**

In your own place, **walk to the music, and change direction** when the end of one phrase, beginning of next.

**Listen** to a tune, **use arms to indicate phrase.**

3) **Mapping the dance moves onto the music-** Look at the dance instructions: go over the phrases of the dance moves are. What does that tell you about how to play the musical phrases?

Musical introductions to the dance- how to indicate to dancers the pace of the music before they move. Consider pickups and turn-around notes at ends of phrases

### **HARMONY & LEARNING TO IMPROVISE**

**Chords** - Explain **structure - (root, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, sometimes 7<sup>th</sup>)**. **Note the chord names** on music.

Then choose tune & play for one time through:

- 1) everybody play the **root** of each chord in the piece,
- 2) then everybody play the **3<sup>rd</sup>**,
- 3) then everybody play the **5<sup>th</sup>**.
- 4) all choose a chord note and play again (creates a melody)

**Discussion - What did that feel like?** Chords give ideas for harmony lines. Chord notes can be used as drones and can also inspire 'chunks' that add rhythmic interest and texture. Using 'open 5ths'.

### **MELODY VARIATIONS**

Best to keep melody very straightforward and predictable and audible for at least 3 times through. After that, some freedom to vary it - individual expression and play.

**Discuss some practical ideas for changing melody:**

- 1) melody as written
- 2) take out notes (skeleton) – takes commitment, helpful if too fast
- 3) fill in long notes
- 4) alter where in instrument range – lower, higher
- 5) add to ends of phrases, or to link phrases
- 6) same pitches but change rhythm (mirror image, faster, slower)
- 7) same rhythm, change notes
- 8) add non-chord tones - trills, passing notes, above/below grace notes
- 9) invert patterns (movement of phrase, notes, rhythm)

**Activity in two groups**

- **take turns** being the melody player, while others provide harmonic support.
- task is to deliberately **change the melody by any of these methods**.

### **ARRANGEMENT/ORCHESTRATION**

Allows certain instruments and sounds to shine at different times.

Lets musicians rest, especially for difficult tunes or long dances, really hear each other, be inspired by others.

**Discussion: What can be varied?** (texture, instruments, dynamics, harmonies, alternate melodies) **What can be done with repeats?** (second A or B)? **How could you vary texture and approach to chords?** (get ideas from backup instruments).

**Activity:**

In 2 groups, separately each work on orchestrating a tune amongst themselves that they will play for the other group. Observers give feedback about what things they liked, what they noticed.

**Important suggestion for individual players:** don't play the same thing in a row more than twice through, and do sit out sometimes.

**HAVE FUN!**