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**The First
Footprint**

Clear Unison

The First Footprint

Clear Unison

Core Values

The songs in this chapter are designed to value the idea of singing the same tune in the same way at the same time. The path to harmony must first be paved with a clear unison sound through awareness of sameness of pitch (intonation) and sameness of rhythm (simultaneity).

We suggest first establishing a musical context by playing “Frère Jacques” while your students listen. Then ask them to sing it with you. We do not assume that unison is an understood concept. The idea of many voices sounding like one voice must be one your singers think is important. Ask them if it is and why they think so.

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Musical Goal: Singing like each other

Musical Context: Listening and singing

Point of Ownership: Making unison meaningful

Activities to Promote Musical Thinking and Learning

Physical: Walk the Same Way

Have a small group plan unison movement to “Frère Jacques.” Ask them to perform the movement while the class sings. Ask the class, “Did the movers begin together, stay together, and end together?”

Essential questions for open-ended discovery:

How are walking together and singing together the same?

Do you have to listen carefully to do this?

Can people sing and listen at the same time?

What kinds of things can we listen for when we sing together?

- Is it important for all of us to start on the same note?
- Is it important for all of us to change to the same note?
- What does it mean to be sharp or flat? How can you tell?
- Why is how long we hold notes important?

Add your own discovery questions until you feel intonation is understood and simultaneity has been reinforced.

The Secret

Essential-question discoveries are most meaningful within a live musical context. The concepts learned through activities and questioning require a real musical experience. These experiences are the scaffolding needed to move to the next footprint. Clear unison is essential.

Frère Jacques

Unison

Traditional French Melody

mf

Moderato

mf

Frè - re Jac - ques, Frè - re Jac - ques,
Are you sleep - ing, are you sleep - ing,

5

dor - mez vous? Dor - mez vous? Son - nez les ma - ti - nes,
Broth - er John, Broth - er John? Morn - ing bells are ring - ing,

8

son - nez les ma - ti - nes. Din don din! Din don din!
morn - ing bells are ring - ing. Ding dong ding! Ding dong ding!

Alleluia

Unison

W. A. Mozart

mp

Andante

mf

mp

Al - le - lu - ia,

6

⁵

mf

mf

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!