

Manitoba MODES

Official Newsletter of the Manitoba Orff Chapter

President's Message

BY ERICA ROTHSCILD

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I hope the summer offered opportunity for rest and renewed enthusiasm with the return to classes!

An exciting year awaits us as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the chapter and the return of the National Conference in April (*Halifax, Passages 2026*). As well, the two-year term of the current board will be coming to an end, and a new board will form in November.

This past summer saw highly successful Orff Level I and II groups including one Level III student. A great team of experienced Orff instructors guided the students. After a year rotation with Kodaly Levels, the next Orff Levels will take place in the summer of 2027. A survey will be sent out to inquire about interest for Levels in French.



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The Make 'n Take workshop in September featured Ashley Ford, Jeff and Charlene McPherson, and Amanda Ciavarelli. Participants took back to their classroom games and tools they built during the workshop.

Our first collaboration with the Manitoba Kodály Society (MKS) at the Fall Fiesta, on October 25, will feature Susan Brumfield, choral conductor and professor of Music Education at Texas Tech University. Our AGM will take place during lunch and two recipients will be awarded the Morna-June Morrow Award for excellence in music education.

The WSO Listening Workshops will take place in November (Musical Discoveries) and in January (Adventures in music), featuring lessons for the programs Charlotte and the Music Maker, and The Orchestra Games.

Children's Day will take place in May. On May 1st will be the day in Brandon and May 13 and 14 the days in Winnipeg (French, English). A great day of professional development for both you and your students!

The eastern Orff Chapter has been working hard on creating an amazing experience for the National Conference Passages 2026! Make sure to check out what is brewing in Halifax this coming April!

Celebrating 50 years is an exciting achievement! Join us in celebrating in a variety of ways: sing Kelsey Simpson's song in your classrooms, join us at our AGM or at a 50th anniversary banquet planned on Saturday November 8th at Saucers Café, and purchase special 50th anniversary merch available through an order form on our website.

As I come to the end of this two-year term as President, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the board of directors. It has been inspiring to work along passionate, dedicated, and motivated individuals who share a common commitment to music education. I am both happy and confident that our incoming president, Jennifer Gillis, will continue to build on the strong foundation this organization has worked hard to achieve over the years. I look forward to continuing to engage with this wonderful community of colleagues, mentors, and advocates for music education.

Erica Rothschild





Advocacy Corner

THE POWER OF MUSIC IN THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM: BUILDING BETTER BRAINS BY AMANDA CIAVARELLI

When we think of music in schools, many people imagine singing songs, playing simple instruments, or preparing for a concert. But music education is much more than a “fun break” in the school day. Research shows that learning music can shape the brain, strengthen focus, and build skills that last a lifetime.

Music and the Brain

When children engage with music—whether clapping a rhythm, playing the xylophone, or singing in a group—their brains light up in powerful ways. Music learning requires listening, movement, memory, and coordination all at once. This “full brain workout” strengthens the connections between different parts of the brain, especially those involved in problem-solving, attention, and language.

Focus and Attention

In a world filled with distractions, the ability to focus is one of the most important skills children can learn. Music provides natural opportunities to practice it. To stay in time with a beat, follow a conductor, or remember when to come in, students must pay close attention. Over time, these small moments add up, teaching children how to concentrate deeply and ignore distractions—skills they can carry into reading, math, and everyday life.

Cognitive Function and Learning

Music doesn’t just build focus; it boosts cognitive function too. Playing and reading music involves patterns, numbers, and sequencing, which are the same skills used in math. Learning lyrics strengthens memory and language development. Making music in a group teaches cooperation, listening, and flexible thinking. In short, music helps children’s brains grow in ways that support all areas of learning.

Why Music Matters Early

Elementary school is the perfect time to introduce music because children’s brains are still developing rapidly. Musical experiences during these years lay the foundation for strong neural pathways that support learning long into the future. Students who engage in music early often show improved academic performance, stronger social skills, and greater self-confidence.

To learn more, visit [**Building Better Brains**](#) for research and advocacy materials for music programs.





Make 'n Take Review

BY OLIVIA KELLY

On September 16, music educators had the opportunity to attend the biennial MOC Make 'n Take PD. For educators at any point in their career, it is a great opportunity to gain new curricular ideas, activities, and even find inspiration for new things to try in their own classroom! Not to mention it was a lovely excuse for old colleagues and friends to catch up after the summer, and to get to know new colleagues in the province.

Those in attendance had the pleasure to attend three sessions. Ashley Ford shared rhythm and recorder recognition games in the form of Battleship and endearingly called Frogger for the frog theme. Participants were given materials to make both sets of games. The game board has four rows of lily pads in four colours, students will cover one of each colour with a log. The partner of the students will have their own sheet and clap or play the lily pad going through the colours one at a time, when successful they will cover the correct lily pad with a frog. A fun and great game to use as rhythm and recorder review, for subs, or for a fun day in music!

Amanda Ciaveralli presented visual planners specifically for the music room. In school, many teachers may have students who make use of visual planners that are built with velcro on a laminated folder. Unfortunately, the only visual about music with these planners is usually just one box with a picture for music. The planner Amanda shared has images for all kinds of activities in the music room as well as some for social skills. With the music room being a place where students may struggle with transitions or language processing, this planner is very useful. It is another way to support students, help structure the class so the student has a routine, and allows the student some more independence.

The duo of Charlene and Jeff McPhearson had participants make, take and play with their centers based session. Participants were able to make the game KABOOM!, a game where students take turns taking out popsicle sticks with notes to build rhythms. Watch out, if they pull a KABOOM! all of their popsicle sticks go back in the cup! Charlene and Jeff also had numerous centers placed around the room for participants to explore and play with. There were matching games, memory games, a rhythm building game with plastic food, music note twister, interactive digital activities, instrument centers and more! Lots of fun ways for students to review old concepts, practice new ones, and work on their musical skills at their own pace.

After a great evening of new things to bring back to the music room, good pizza, and great conversation with colleagues; the participants of this years Make 'n Take left rejuvenated with new ideas and inspiration for the rest of the year. Thank you to all of the presenters for sharing with us and thank you to the board members of the MOC for hosting and running the event.

Hope to see you at the next Make 'n Take!



Resource Review

BY LORI ARTHUR

The Manitoba Orff Chapter and the Manitoba Kodály Society are excited to be hosting Susan Brumfield at this year's Tempo conference as well as at Fall Fiesta. If you are familiar with Susan Brumfield I need say no more. I first met her in person when she was a clinician at the CMEA conference in Winnipeg. If you are not, please check out her [website](#) under publications and listen to some of the lovely vocal works she has arranged. Perhaps of most interest to the Orff enthusiast is her collection of [**Music for Children Choral Suite No.1**](#) complete with Orff instrumentation.

Published by Hal Leonard and available in Winnipeg through Long and McQuade or St. John's Music, Susan's **First We Sing** series has a variety of components. Ideal for grades 1-5, this collection includes extension activities for the classroom, historical references, measures of student learning, and cross-curricular suggestions. It offers classroom-ready content for any elementary music curriculum, such as the Kodaly or Orff approaches. Whether you're looking to expand your repertoire, or new ways to teach familiar favorites, these songbooks are just the resource you need.

- First We Sing Kodaly Inspired Teaching for the Music Classroom ISBN: 9781480339828
- First We Sing Teaching Strategies For Primary Grades ISBN: 9781480391000
- First We Sing Activity Cards for Preparation and Practice- ISBN: 9781480390997
- First We Sing Teaching Strategies Rhythmic and Melodic Elements for Intermediate Grades ISBN: 9781495008399
- First We Sing Digital Resources Supplements for Planning and Assessments ISBN: 9781495094491

Song Anthologies to accompany the series:

- First We Sing Songbook 1 ISBN: 9781458418661
- First we Sing Songbook 2 ISBN: 9781495020032
- First We Sing Songbook 3 ISBN: 9781495094682
- First we Sing 100 Little Songs and Rhymes (K-2) ISBN: 9781540027108 *digital edition also available*
- First We Sing 101 Songs and Games for Singing, Playing and More! ISBN: 9781705127506

Susan has also published song anthologies with songs from England, Scotland and Italy:

- Hot Peas and Barley-O Children's Songs and Games from Scotland ISBN: 9781423412953
- Over the Garden Wall Children's Songs and Games from England ISBN: 9781423473374
- Giro Giro Tondo Children's Songs and Games from Italy

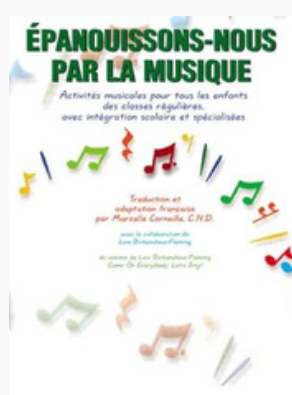
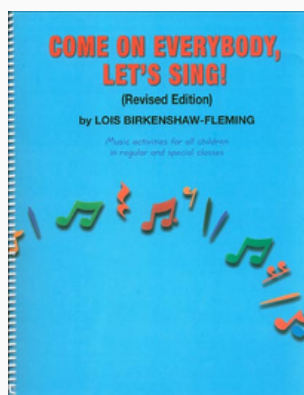
Other choral arrangements by Susan Brumfield include octavos for 2, ,3 and 4 parts. If you're looking for something to perform with your choirs, check out her arrangements. I personally spent an afternoon enjoying the beautiful fall weather Manitoba is experiencing and listening to her beautiful arrangements, especially an endearing arrangement of the Acadian folksong La Violette. Be sure to register for Tempo and join us for a day of music making, indulge in retail therapy with St. John's or Long and McQuade, and then take some time on Saturday to join us again at Fall Fiesta for even more joyful engagement!

Off the Shelf

BY LORI ARTHUR

In this edition of Off the Shelf, I would like to draw your attention to an author who has provided quality resources for music educators everywhere- Lois Birkenshaw-Fleming.

Come on Everybody Let's Sing! is a collection of music activities for children in regular and special music classes. Even though it was originally published in 1989 and then revised in 2000, the songs remain relevant and a treasure for teachers looking for simple, readily accessible material for their classes. In this volume, Birkenshaw-Fleming provides teachers with a division of songs into different themes, movement activities, sound exploration, instrument skills and basic skills. As well, she defines basic musical concepts and offers suggestions and practical information about our diverse learners. Along with a plethora of musical activities, there is an extensive listing of further resources for exploration.



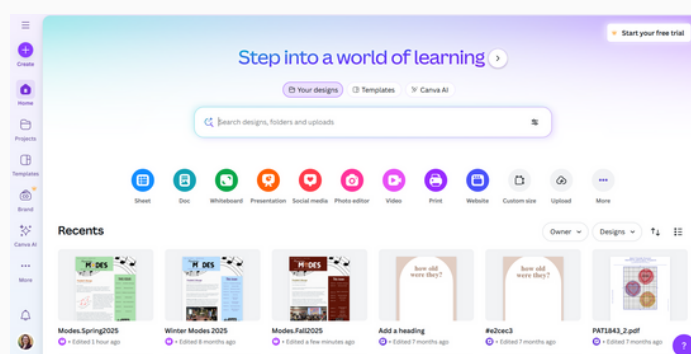
L'une des ressources françaises que nous avons dans notre bibliothèque de prêt est **Épanouissons-nous par la musique** traduction et adaptation française par Marcelle Corneille avec la collaboration de Lois Birkenshaw-Fleming. Activités musicales pour tous les élèves des classes régulières, spécialisées et avec intégration scolaire. La première partie de ce document est composée de chansons, poèmes, comptines, activités et plans de leçons disposés par catégories telles que chansons de geste, saisons et températures, animaux, fêtes et jours spéciaux, entre autres. La deuxième partie de ce volume aborde des aspects plus spécifiques liés à l'enseignement de la musique. En plus de proposer de nombreuses activités musicales, cet ouvrage contient un sommaire cours de base en théorie musicale ainsi que des idées Pionnières du mouvement pédagogique ORFF au Canada, ces deux femmes encouragent une plus grande utilisation de la musique auprès des élèves qui ont des besoins spéciaux.

You can borrow these resources by emailing library@manitobaorff.org. If you have suggestions for additions to our library, please forward the information to the above address. We are seeking to expand our inventory of French resources to benefit our members. As always please reach out with any questions or concerns.

Tech Tip

BY KAYLA SCARAMUZZI

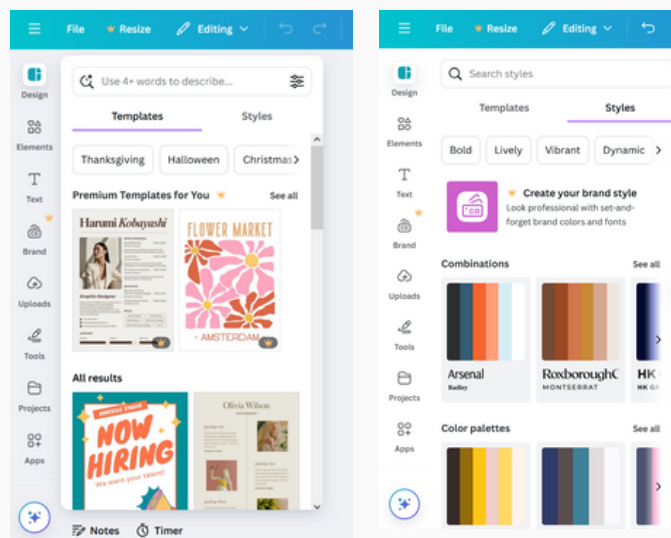
Canva is a free design tool, full of customizable templates or start from a blank slate. Our own **Manitoba Modes** is made using Canva! You can create anything from presentation slides, Instagram posts, infographics and posters. Canva also offers a premium membership **free for educators!**

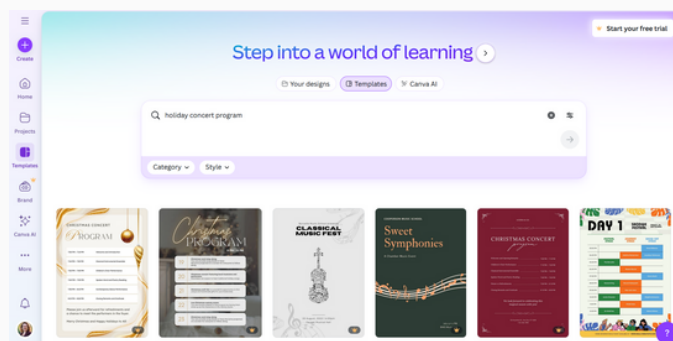


Once logged in, your home page will show any recent projects you have worked on, as well as quick links to create new projects. On the left navigation bar, you can easily switch views between your projects, templates, or Canva AI.

Canva offers plenty of templates and colour palettes that enable educators to create beautiful graphics easily! Under the **Design** tab, the **Templates** heading provide you with already created projects that allow you to edit text and images, with graphic design choices already made; fonts, colours, image sizes and ratios, and more! If you want to flex your creative muscles, the **Styles** heading will show you various colour palettes to use, with colour theory in mind. Canva also has a **colour palette generator** that will work with uploaded photos to create a colour palette for you!

Use the **Elements** (shapes, lines, graphics, etc.), **Text**, **Uploads** (upload and collect images), and **Tools** tabs to further add to, or change your projects.

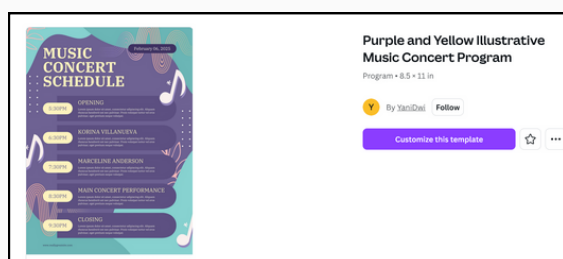




Maybe you want to design a beautiful program for your winter concert this year! Head to the **homepage** and use the search feature at the top to search for templates to use. Use the **Category** (flyers, posters, documents, etc.) and **Style** (minimalist, modern, simple, etc.) dropdowns to narrow your search and find templates that better fit what you're looking for.



As you can see, Canva offers **tons** of options to choose from. The premium designs have crowns in the bottom-right corner, and the free designs are without (but remember, premium is free for educators!). Once you find a template you like, click it and select **Customize this template**. Or, click the **star icon** so you can come back to it later!



With just a few clicks, I was able to change the colour style (maybe you have school colours that will inspire you!), and edit the text to better fit the concert program.



It can take time and practice to familiarize yourself with all of Canva's capabilities, but using templates is a great place to start.

What will you create?



Scholarships & Awards

MORNA-JUNE MORROW AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN MUSIC EDUCATION

All nominees (and nominators) must be current members of MOC and meet at least 4 of 6 criteria listed:

- Music teacher in a public or private school or institution for a minimum of 15 years
- Actively using Orff methodology in the music class setting
- Actively involved in community music activities (e.g. divisional, church, or community groups)
- Self-initiating in their professional development
- Strong sense of dedication and organizational skills
- Actively involved with a music-related board/executive (ie MOC, MMEA, MCA, etc)

SUSAN BERRY MEMORIAL TRAVEL BURSARY

This bursary is awarded annually and provides financial assistance to rural music educators attending MOC professional development workshops in Winnipeg.

The bursary recipient will receive up to \$400 for transportation, meals, accommodation, and/or sub costs incurred to attend an MOC workshop.

HELEN NEUFELD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

This award is given to the applicant(s) who best exemplifies Helen's commitment to the philosophies of Carl Orff Canada and her passion for music education.

This award is usually given to a student, or students, taking Orff Level II or III.

GUNILD KEETMAN SCHOLARSHIP

The Gunild Keetman Fund was established in 1976 to provide annual grants to selected Canadian students or teachers.

Scholarships are awarded in the spring of each year and are available for all approved Orff Schulwerk courses offered in Canada, summer and winter. Applicants must be members in good standing of Carl Orff Canada, who have successfully completed a Level I Orff course.

Please visit [**our website**](#) for more information and application forms.



Upcoming Events

OCTOBER 24	TEMPO Conference
OCTOBER 25	Fall Fiesta & MOC AGM
NOVEMBER 3	WSO Musical Discoveries Workshop
NOVEMBER 8	MOC 50th Anniversary Banquet
JANUARY 16/17	Da Capo Conference, Brandon
JANUARY 20	WSO Adventures in Music Workshop
APRIL 23-26	Passages 2026 <i>Carl Orff Canada National Conference</i>
MAY 1	Children's Day - Brandon
MAY 13	Children's Day - Winnipeg, French
MAY 14	Children's Day - Winnipeg, English



FALL FIESTA

SATURDAY

October 25, 2025

With Susan Brumfield



Registration at 8:30
Workshop 9:00 - 3:00

Come and explore
100 Little Songs & Rhymes (K-2)
101 Songs and Games (3-5)
Musique, les coeur des Cajun (K-5)

École South Pointe
615 Kirkbridge Drive, Winnipeg

Register at
www.manitobaorff.org
by October 17, 2025

MOC AGM held at 12:00





Annual General Meeting

DATE: Saturday, October 25, 2025

TIME: 12:15 p.m.

**PLACE: École South Pointe School
(615 Kirkbridge Dr, Winnipeg,
R3Y 0K9)**

Meeting takes place during lunch of **Fall Fiesta**
with **Susan Brumfield** 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**MOC/WSO Listening
Workshops
Ateliers d'écoute
2025-2026**

Musical Discoveries

November 3, 2025

le 3 novembre, 2025

5:00 pm - 8:00 pm Registration 4:30 pm

École South Pointe

615 Kirkbridge Dr

Adventures in Music

January 20, 2026

le 20 janvier, 2025

9:00 am - 3:30 pm Registration 8:30 am

Seven Oaks Maintenance Centre

1985 Grassmere Road

Registrations open

Registration / Inscription:

<https://manitobaorff.org>

Manitoba Orff Chapter
TURNS 50!

Join us for an evening of celebration,
connection, and dinner at our

50th ANNIVERSARY
BANQUET

Saturday, November 8, 2025
Saucers Cafe
570 Academy Rd

Tickets: \$25

Use QR code or link in description
to purchase tickets



Complete the [Google Form](#) to order
your own 50th Anniversary merch.

Complete the [Google Form](#) to order your tickets.



Visit the [Passages 2026](#) website for more information.

Board of Directors

GENERAL INQUIRIES

info@manitobaorff.org



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