

Kusimama

By Jim Papoulis

Orff Children's Day 2023 – Brandon

Choral – Janelle Wilts

Warm-up

- Awaken head-voice with vocal exploration. Follow the path of a ball with the voice, as it is tossed around the room.
- Breathing exercise: sip air “through a straw,” feeling the air fill “from the bottom, up.” Imitate blowing up a beach ball by taking in full breaths and exhaling on “tssss.”
- Explore following the path of a beach ball with the voice. How is it different from a playground ball?
- Descending major scale singing “Yum yum yum yah”
 - Source: Successful Warm-ups, Book 1 by Nancy Telfer
- Descending major scale following prompts on the solfège ladder. Change melodic path to pre-teach the harmony part from Kusimama, mm. 6-8.

Kusimama

The text in Swahili and English is “about standing tall on the earth, not with anger or aggression, but with hope, strength, acceptance, and a positive spirit.”

- Introduce the text for “Mimi Kusimama”, then add the melody. (mm. 5-6)
- Sing through A section, with students singing “Mimi Kusimama” phrases, while the teacher sings opposite phrases. Ask students to identify which phrases are the same, and which are different. Switch roles.
- When the melody is secure, learn the harmony part with the help of the solfège ladder.
- Support the sound through to the end of held notes.
- Convey the message of “proudly standing tall” in our bodies, in our consonants, and in our sound.
- Use imagery of tossing up a beachball to help maintain the pitch on descending lines.
- Add in body percussion, and djembe.

Janelle Wilts has enjoyed teaching elementary music and choir at St. Augustine School in Brandon for the past 12 years. She believes the best way to learn music is through playful exploration, and that each child is capable of expressive music-making. She graduated from Brandon University with her B. Mus/Ed in 2008, and was thrilled to complete her Orff Level I at U of M in the summer of 2022. Before joining the elementary music world, she taught band and choir at the middle and senior years levels. Aside from teaching, Janelle enjoys hiking, cross country skiing, singing with local choir, Konektis, and having kitchen dance parties with her three children.