

**MUSIC, COMMUNITY, AND  
COOPERATION  
IN A  
LOWER ELEMENTARY  
CLASSROOM**

**An Action  
Research Report**

**By Heidi James**

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# RESEARCH QUESTION



- What impact will daily incorporation of singing and music have on a classroom's sense of community, collective care of materials and cooperation during clean up time?

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Building Peaceable Communities & Classrooms**
  - Community Built through Culture & Language of Peace
- **Building Classroom Community through Music**
  - Classroom Community Building Facets
- **Positive Effects of Music/Group Singing in Classrooms**
  - Microcosms of societal rituals
  - Enthusiasm for singing
  - Builds positive emotional connections between participants
  - Recorded music increases social interaction, kinesthetic listening

# BACKGROUND

## ■ Participants

- 16 students, ages 6-9
- Private Montessori school, suburban setting

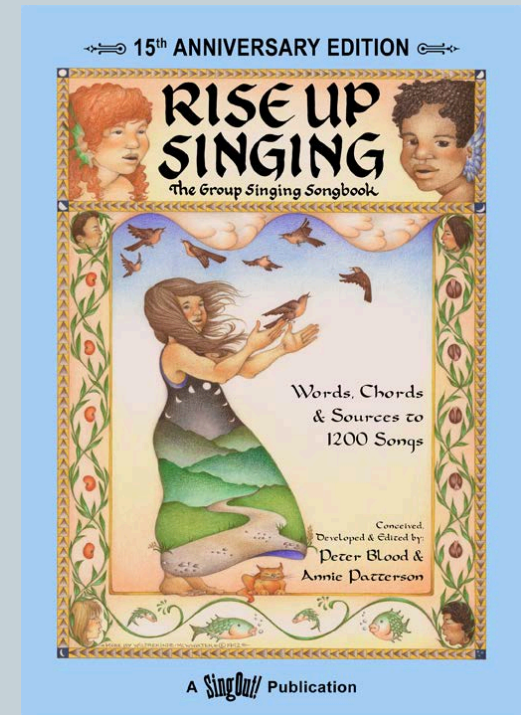
## ■ Purpose of Action Research Project

- Assess affect on:
  - Sense of community within the classroom
  - Demonstrated understanding of cooperation and helpful behaviors



# RESEARCH PROCESS: DAILY GROUP SINGING

- 10-15 minutes daily
- Taught songs from “Rise Up Singing”
  - Songs included:
    - Keep on the Sunny Side (The Carter Family)
    - With a Little Help from My Friends (The Beatles)
    - Octopus’s Garden (The Beatles)
    - This Land is Your Land (Woody Guthrie)
    - Moonshadow (Cat Stevens)
- Discussed lyrics, meaning within songs
- End of the day: Clean up



# DATA SOURCES

- Pre- and post-survey

Pre and post-study questionnaire

Do you like singing as a group?

How do you feel when we sing together as a class?

What does cooperation mean to you?

What does it mean to be a community?

- Observed behavior tally

- During clean up

- Caring for materials that were not the direct responsibility of the child
    - Helping someone clean up when asked (by another child)
    - Helping another child clean up without being asked

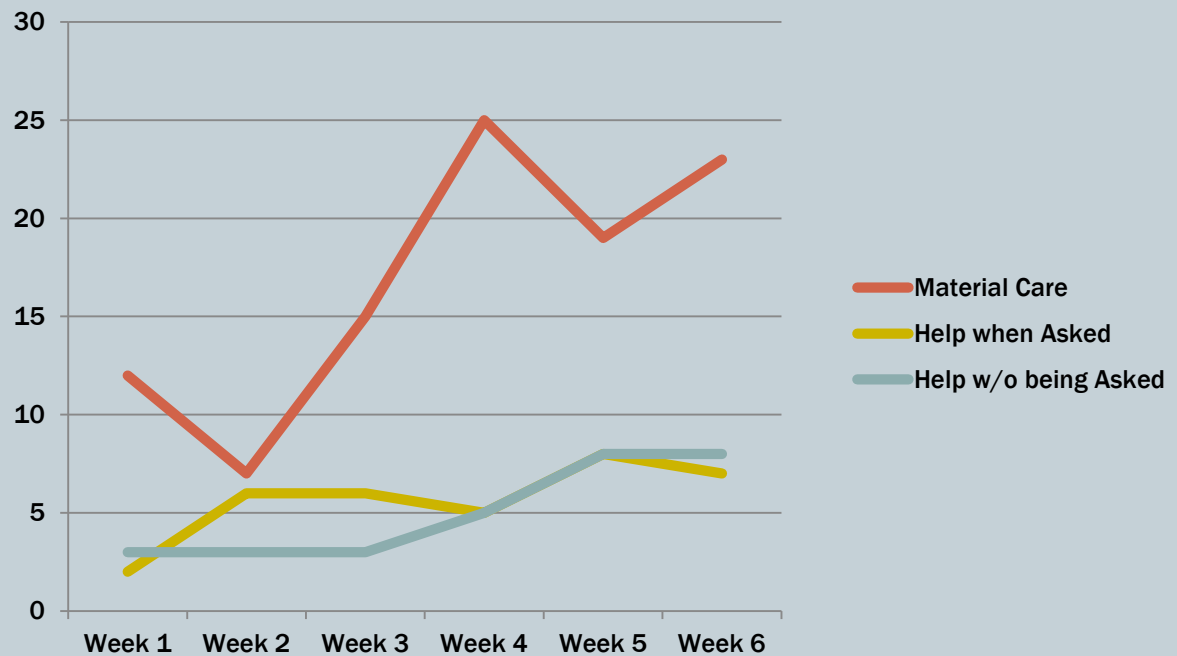
- Teacher observation notes

# RESULTS

## ■ Survey Results

- 31% Increase in enjoyment of group singing
- 44% increase in understanding of “cooperation”
- 38% increase in understanding of “community”

## ■ Behavior Tally Results



# RESULTS

## ■ Qualitative Data

Coded Observation	Number of Observed Instances
(1) Frustration over lack of help	8
(2) Frustration over lack of other's responsibility	9
(3) Helping peers	12
(4) Expression of needing help from peers	9
(5) Expression or positive interaction with recorded music	33



# CONCLUSION

- Students enjoy group singing
- Group singing positively affected the level of community, cooperation and care for materials in the classroom.
- Continuation of group singing in the classroom
  - Singing with other classrooms
- Further Ideas for research using group singing:
  - Teaching more key ideas
  - Teaching academic topics through song



**QUESTIONS OR  
COMMENTS?**

**Thank You!**