Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950), Swiss music educator, discovered the holistic, pedagogical connections between movement and music, and developed his eurhythmics method to enable his conservatory students to play more fluently. By approaching music education through listening and movement, rather than through theory or instrumental study, his students discovered and developed their own personal, and insightful artistic potential. Not only did his students’ performances become more expressive and authentic, but by developing balance between mind, body, and emotions, the study of eurhythmics carries over into one’s overall sense of well-being.

Three Branches of Dalcroze Education:

- **Eurhythmics** – using movement to embody musical concepts
- **Solfege** – using the ear, voice and body to teach pitch relationships, harmony, and theory
- **Improvisation** – spontaneous musical creation using the body, the voice, or an instrument

Fundamental Eurhythmics Games:

- **Quick Reaction** – honing attention, listening, and co-ordination skills
  - Replacement – substituting a pre-determined movement or pattern
- **Follow** – Student responds to musical direction as performed by the teacher, (e.g. tempo change)
- **Canon** – interrupted canon – the first part is silent while the second part imitates
  - true canon – the first part continues while the second part imitates

*Plastique animée* is an extended exercise in moving to music, in which eurhythmics students embody or ‘become’ an entire piece of music by imagining, planning, and practising their movements to reflect one or more of the music’s elements — form, texture, harmony, rhythm, melodic structure, intensity, articulation, or nuance (Dutton 2015).
Session Activities

1 – **Stretch, Warm – up:** Cirque du Soleil “Aftermath”

2 - **Eurhythmics**
Common beat
– create semi-circles, clap the beat silently – passing to the person beside you.
Music = break the circle and walk to the beat. Music stops, continue walking, create semi-circles, then pass the beat.
Music – change tempo
(Quick reaction) – if you hear high cluster, make the bat twice as fast, if you hear low cluster, make the beat twice as slow, low cluster again, twice as slow again. If you hear a modulation, change direction
(Follow) – walk the tempo you hear in the bass, clap the tempo you hear in the treble.
Canon “I’m Bad” at 8 beats – partner creates a walk or repeats 8 beats.

3 - **Solfege**
Assign numbers to students, (1,2,3,4,5)
Students sing their pitch.
Conduct from chart. Have student conduct from chart.
Conduct from piano, students listen for their pitch.
Students improvise stepwise melodic phrase, moving through as many pitches as they want, singing “o—n—e”, (but could end on 3). The person who has ‘3’ as their pitch then sings a stepwise melodic phrase on ‘thr—e—e”.
Students listen and sing a new phrase when they hear their pitch as the last pitch.
Have volunteers improvise a stepwise melodic phrase that might change direction.

3 – **Improvisation**
boom whackers – cumulating ostinato (Incredibox). Keep it simple (KISS) (can also use body percussion or drums or voices or ?) – anyone can say “stop”.
Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss music educator who developed a method of music instruction through which his students developed their intuitive, rhythmic, and perceptual understanding of music. The term “Eurhythmics” denotes the interactive and improvised physical interpretations of musical concepts that characterize a “Dalcrozan” approach to music education. Jaques-Dalcroze explains the holistic aspect of his work:

This general harmony of our cerebral, physical and spiritual forces assures for us the free possession of ourselves, develops our imagination, and quite naturally transports our sensations and feelings, conceptions and actions into the domain of art. Art is in intimate correlation with life: it is the outward projection of love and the knowledge of beauty and truth. (Dalcroze 1930/1985)

The aim of a Dalcroze exercise is to enlighten and inform the student’s musical insight, through his or her own spontaneous and improvised movements. The student’s understanding of a musical concept (e.g., beat), acquires greater depth when understood in corporal terms (space, time, and energy). The experience of corporal musical interpretation is never forgotten, but is assimilated with pre-existing knowledge, becoming a new construct. The kinaesthetic learning experience thus enables the student to access a more immediate and more honest form of spiritual or musically artistic communication, unfettered by any previous cognitive constructs, and imbeds his or her consequent musical performances with deeper and more profoundly moving artistic meaning.

In a Dalcroze class, a typical exercise will require students to embody a particular aspect of music. By observing their ease or awkwardness of movement, the Dalcroze teacher constantly assesses his or her students’ eurhythmic abilities, and then improvises music that challenges them to engage their senses and abilities more fluently, through listening more carefully to, and kinaesthetically responding to music. As students become and respond more closely with the music, their responses simultaneously affect the teacher’s musical improvisation. Such careful listening and simultaneous response is what constitutes a truly artistic musical performance; the presence or absence of simultaneous listening and responding often distinguishes a musical performance that moves an audience from one that does not.

Reference:
Dalcroze Classroom Resources


