

Full Score

for the international grammar school, sydney

Symphony of the Child

James Humberstone 2009

Sample

Symphony of the Child was commissioned by International Grammar School, Sydney in 2008 and premiered at the City Recital Hall, Angel Place in May 2009.

The original idea for the work was a short all-school piece to celebrate the school's 25th anniversary, but after director of music Alison Housley and her staff attended the premiere of my children's opera *Kiravanu*, they asked for something on a bigger scale.

Staff and students submitted poetry and prose to me for consideration as text for the choir, and the school song composed by past parent of the school Ross Edwards was also to be incorporated (you'll find it in the final movement). Each age group was to be given their chance to shine, so I chose words from the early years, the middle and senior school students and teachers to set in the first three movements.

In addition, professional musicians who were parents of children at the school volunteered to take part in the performance, so the challenge became to write a piece which provided interesting, challenging music for players and singers from the age of 3 upward. The opening solo, for example, over a bed of simple ostinati for pre-schoolers, was performed by the Sydney Symphony's Paul Goodchild.

The fourth movement winds threads of the previous three movements together, and incorporates the school song. Lesson plans were provided to the school, along with my sketches and notes from the compositional process, to help integrate the repertoire into the classroom.

James Humberstone 2009

Symphony for the Emerging Child

Associated learning and concepts

I – Early Years

All children learn to sing a short four-bar phrase with “Hello” in 7 languages.

Youngest children learn a drone on G:



Hel - lo Ni hao Kon - ni - chi - wa - Bon - jour Ho - la Gu - ten Tag Ciao!

The musical notation shows a single note (G) on a treble clef staff, repeated four times across four bars. The lyrics are written below the staff.

Older children learn the same words and rhythm but with melody:



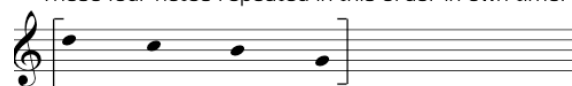
Hel - lo Ni hao Kon - ni - chi - wa - Bon - jour Ho - la Gu - ten Tag Ciao!

The musical notation shows a melody on a treble clef staff, consisting of four bars. The lyrics are written below the staff.

The two lines can be sung in harmony (and are, in the final work).

All children should also learn the following ostinati for melodic Orff percussion. As many as possible will perform these ostinati in the piece:

These four notes repeated in this order in own time.



The musical notation shows a four-note ostinato on a treble clef staff, enclosed in brackets. The notes are G, A, B, and C.

then:



The musical notation shows a four-note ostinato on a treble clef staff in 4/4 time. The notes are G, A, B, and C. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

and later:



The musical notation shows a four-note ostinato on a treble clef staff. The notes are G, A, B, and C. The dynamic marking is *mp*.

These ostinati require no sharps or flats on the instruments. Those only playing the first ostinato in class or in the performance can remove all bars apart from the four needed. In class, introduce the idea of playing in free time. Most children will automatically play together after a few repetitions. Encourage them to be independent and discuss concepts of playing *longer* and *shorter* notes than those they can hear around them. Older children may like to improvise a melody with the first ostinato. They should try beginning and ending on G.

II – Middle School

The Middle School movement is all about fun and games – because life and learning is all about fun and games, but especially at this age. Not only does the music have irregular, surprising twists and turns, but the middle school students are given their own sections to explore.

On the next pages follow their Game.

Game

James Humberstone

In this game six two-bar chord patterns are provided, each with a different metre. The order the patterns appear in and the number of times they appear will be chosen by the students using chance procedures. First, however, the students should get used to each metre and rhythm within it.

Repeat each rhythm until the students begin to become familiar. Ask them to move in time with the rhythm - it's not necessary that they count beats or move exactly in time, but that they grasp the feel of the metre, especially where the beat is uneven.

Recordings of each pattern repeated for 3 minutes are provided. The six patterns are:

Presto eg ♩ = 292

The image shows six musical patterns, each consisting of two bars of music. Pattern I is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Pattern II is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Pattern III is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Pattern IV is in 5/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Pattern V is in 7/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Pattern VI is in 9/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Each pattern is written on a single staff with various chordal and rhythmic notations.

Patt.	Rpt.
1	1
6	1
2	4
6	1
4	4
6	1
3	1
1	1
2	1
4	1
3	4
3	4
1	1
2	2
4	2
6	1
4	4
5	1
4	4
5	2
6	2
4	3
2	3
5	1
4	2
3	1
3	3
4	2

Once each pattern is known, break students up into 6 groups. It may take several weeks to reach this point, so be prepared to approach the patterns in different ways each time. Each group will work with a different pattern, and will devise movement to fit that pattern. If time, each group will also devise accompaniment with untuned or body percussion: obviously the movement and percussion can be one. The whole exercise can also be taught as a percussion and rhythmic exercise alone, with students learning to play along with their pattern or play the beats in the bar which can enforce the syncopation.

Getting back together, use the recording of each pattern in order (I, II, III, IV, V and VI): each pattern is presented eight times. The groups should get used to transitioning from one pattern to the next.

Now it's time for the students to choose the order of the patterns. They will need two dice: a common 6-sided dice to choose the order of the patterns and an equilateral triangle dice to choose up to four repetitions for each pattern (a specialist dice like this can be bought from a games shop).

Students roll the 6-sided dice to choose a pattern, then the 4-sided dice to choose how many times that pattern should repeat. They should continue to add patterns until a set time or number of bars is reached, or at least until all patterns have been played. Chance can also decide when the repetitions end: for example, when the same combination as the initial result is thrown again.

To make it easy to create a new score and recordings to perform their new version with, use the supplied Sibelius score to copy and paste the piece together. There are also MIDI files for doing this in a sequencer if that is preferred. Students now perform their new version of the piece, which can be inserted as marked in the score of the second movement of *Symphony for the Emerging Child*.

An example score follows, with chance procedures undertaken by the composer. The dice thrown are shown in the table to the left.

An extension to these activities, if the students have learned patterns well and can transition seamlessly, is to write the numbers 1 to 6 on large sheets of paper, and have one student 'conduct' the order that the groups enter, live during performance. They could 'compose' the order or roll a dice there on the spot.

I VI

H.C.

E.S.

Gro.

Dr.

Brushes, quietly

II II II II II

H.C.

E.S.

Gro.

Dr.

II VI IV

H.C.

E.S.

Gro.

Dr.

IV IV IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

VI III I

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

II IV III

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

III III III III III III III III III

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

III III I

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

II II IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

IV VI IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

IV IV IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

V IV IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

IV IV V

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 1 through 6. The top staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measures 1-4 are in 4/4 time, and measures 5-6 are in 7/8 time. The chord progression is IV, IV, V. The H.C. part consists of eighth notes. The E.S. part consists of eighth notes with accents. The Gro. part has a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note. The Dr. part has a complex pattern of eighth notes and rests.

V VI

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 7 through 10. Measures 7-8 are in 4/4 time, and measures 9-10 are in 7/8 time. The chord progression is V, VI. The H.C. part continues with eighth notes. The E.S. part continues with eighth notes and accents. The Gro. part has a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note. The Dr. part continues with eighth notes and rests.

VI IV IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 11 through 14. Measures 11-12 are in 4/4 time, and measures 13-14 are in 7/8 time. The chord progression is VI, IV, IV. The H.C. part continues with eighth notes. The E.S. part continues with eighth notes and accents. The Gro. part has a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note. The Dr. part continues with eighth notes and rests.

IV IV IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

V IV IV

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

III III III III

H.C.
E.S.
Gro.
Dr.

The image shows a musical score for a band. At the top is a grand staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score is divided into two measures, each labeled with a Roman numeral 'IV'. The instruments are: H.C. (Horn), E.S. (Euphonium), Gro. (Trumpet), and Dr. (Drum). The H.C. part consists of chords with accents. The E.S. part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Gro. part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Dr. part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents.

Sample

Obviously the Game relates to aleatoric music, exemplified by the *experimental* movement from the 1950s and led by John Cage. Learning about this music can be a little cerebral, but introduction to works such as La Monte Young's 1960 pieces or Cage's *Water Music* [try searching for the live performance on YouTube] can be fun and engaging at any age.

The second performance activity for Middle School is a short piece integrated into this movement called *SixEightThreeFour*. The changing meters in this movement settle into alternating 6/8 and 3/4 time signatures reminiscent of Spanish dance music like the Flamenco.

Teach the rhythm first by clapping with accents all together:



Then break the class into two groups and clap in two parts:



Next learn *SixEightThreeFour* part by part [see next page], over several weeks. You may need to spend more than one week on the melody, depending on the age and skill level of the class. Try to achieve the melody and bordun if not the inner parts.

Extend the performance into composition by taking it in turns to improvise a solo over the top of the accompaniment. Consider recording the student's performances. You can also extend the compositional element into music technology by importing the provided MIDI file of the piece into any sequencing program, and asking students to improvise a solo on a MIDI keyboard and optionally add more non-melodic percussion parts too.

Extend the performance into listening by watching the performance of *America* from Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Note especially the men clapping around 3'30" – it's the clapping exercise we did above.

Extend the performance into theory at a level appropriate to each class by discussing the different subdivisions of 6/8 and 3/4, and possibly the concepts of simple and compound time if you feel appropriate.

The score for *SixEightThreeFour* appears on the next page.

Chorales – all performers

Optional *Chorales* create breaks between sections. Because the music of *Symphony for the Emerging Child* reflects the energy and vigour of youth it can be somewhat unrelenting, and the Chorales allow moments for reflection. In addition, they allow staging changes to occur, and provide warm-up material for rehearsals.

The music in the Chorales is the same for each section – wind then brass then strings – but is voiced differently to create different effects and to be appropriate for each section. The chorales can therefore be used as warm-ups for each individual section or together as an orchestra, even though they appear at different points in the whole work.

The Chorales also make an interesting study in instrumentation for senior students doing composition. They can look at why chords are voiced in different ways for differing instrumentation, and analyse why certain voicings work well in certain instrumental contexts.

The music in this section is inspired by Howard Skempton's *Lento*. Similar chord progressions and a chorale-style settings are used. Listen to *Lento* [available on NMC recordings and via the iTunes store]. Examine the influence Skempton's work has had on Humberstone (who studied with him in 1996).

SixEightThreeFour

James Humberstone

Presto

Transfer to snare drum

Transfer to bass drum

Transfer to shakers

Transfer to toms

Transfer to claves

ST

P

CL

FN

III – Senior School

The inspiration for this movement is elements of Japanese Music. The movement opens and closes with a large drum ensemble (who also feature at the ending of the final movement). These parts can be performed by senior elective students, or by percussion students, or by a combination of the two. Parts should be performed from memory. Drummers should watch a performance of Taiko drumming (there's an excellent Taiko DVD) and consider what performance elements might not be in the score – the use of gestures to punctuate phrases, etc.

The second musical influence from Japan is the sound and harmony of the Sho. Play students excerpts of music including the sho and introduce the harmony played by the Sho and its context as an instrument of the Gagaku. In this movement, the sound of the Sho is imitated by the woodwinds, who in their initial harmony also play chords possible on a Sho. These chords are then developed to become the harmony of the movement.

Students can analyse the music here, working out which traditional chords have been used in this movement and can use this as a model for their own composition, adapting the sound of another world music instrument into a western context.

Another Australian composer who draws inspiration from the music of Japan is Anne Boyd. Boyd has written at length on the influence of Gagaku and Japanese writers. Study *As I Crossed a Bridge of Dreams* and some more recent works such as *A Quiet Place*.

IV – The Emerging Child

This movement combines the joy of the three prior movements with the model of the music of Ross Edwards, the IGS school song and compositional techniques associated with minimalism.

The school song is written into this final movement, and can be performed by all pupils who attend the school, even if they are not on stage. A lovely effect, if possible, would be that children not on stage enter the performance area from all entrances, so that the school song (and final repetition of the words *I am the Emerging Child*) are sung from all around the audience. Children watching in the audience and parents who know the school song should be encouraged to join in.

The musical content of this movement is very simple. Ostinati are written for all parts to accompany the school song, including Orff instruments which may be played by any suitable age group:

Sop. Met. *mf*

Alto Met. *mf*

Bass Met. *mf*

Sop. Xyl. *mf*

Alto Xyl. *mf*

Bass Xyl. *mf*

Shk. *mf*

Bongos *mf*

Before the first half of the school song, ostinati are layered in. This is a technique often used in Orff arrangements but also in minimalist music. Older students may extend listening to minimalist music: one particularly suitable work is John Adams' *Harmonium*, because the first movement *Negative Love* was the inspiration for the opening of this movement too (in *Negative Love* the word "No" is repeated before being allowed to develop into a full sentence).

Study of the music of Ross Edwards is, of course, also entirely relevant. Apart from the school song itself, the *I Am the Emerging Child* theme uses similar kinds of syncopated, dancelike rhythms that we associate with Edwards, and naturally one can also reflect on the changing meters in the second movement which are so typical of Edwards work and the modal switches of the 1st, 2nd and final movements following some of his harmonic models.

I - Early Years

James Humberstone

A

Senza misura - at least 15 seconds

The musical score is organized into two main sections. The first section, labeled 'A', covers measures 1 through 100 and includes the following instruments: Piccolo, Flutes 1,2, 1 Oboe, Clarinets in Bb 1,2, Bassoon, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Trumpet 1 in Bb, Trumpet 2 in Bb, Trombone 1, Trombone 2, Tuba, Timpani, Bass Drum, Suspended Cymbal or Tam-tam, Xylophone, Marimba, and Vibraphone. The second section, also labeled 'A', covers measures 101 through 150 and includes: Glockenspiel, C#ff Soprano Metallophones, C#ff Alto Metallophones, C#ff Bass Metallophones, C#ff Soprano Xylophones, C#ff Alto Xylophones, C#ff Bass Xylophones, Choir, Violin I, Violin II, 1 Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, and Double Bass. A large 'Sample' watermark is oriented diagonally across the center of the page. The score is written in a 'Senza misura' style, with notes placed on the staves without stems or beams. A specific instruction for the Glockenspiel, C#ff Soprano Metallophones, and C#ff Alto Metallophones reads: 'These four notes repeated in this order in own time.' The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

2 **Moderato**

B
Offstage, but not behind a closed door.
At the back of the audience would be best.

Tpt. 1
Timp.
Xyl.
Mar.
Vib.
Glock.
Sop. Met.
Alto Met.
Bass Met.
Sop. Xyl.
Alto Xyl.
Bass Xyl.

14

Tpt. 1
Timp.
Xyl.
Mar.
Vib.
Glock.
Sop. Met.
Alto Met.
Bass Met.
Sop. Xyl.
Alto Xyl.
Bass Xyl.

20

Tpt. 1
Timp.
Xyl.
Mar.
Vib.
Glock.
Sop. Met.
Alto Met.
Bass Met.
Sop. Xyl.
Alto Xyl.
Bass Xyl.

26

Picc. *f*

Fls. 1,2 *f*

Alto Sax. *p*

Ten. Bari Sax. *p*

Tpt. 1 *mf*

Tpts. 2,3 *p*

Tbn. 1 *p*

Tbns. 2,3 *p*

Tba. *p*

Timp.

Xyl. *mf*

Mar. *mf*

Vib. *mf*

Glock. *mf*

Sop. Met. *mf*

Alto Met. *mf*

Bass Met. *mf*

Sop. Xyl. *mf*

Alto Xyl. *mf*

Bass Xyl. *mf*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Db. *mf*

Db. II *mf*

C

C

35

Picc.

Fls. 1,2

Alto Sax.

Ten, Bari Sax.

Trpts. 2,3

Tbn. 1

Tbns. 2,3

Tba.

Xyl.

Mar.

Vib.

Glock.

Sop. Met.

Alto Met.

Bass Met.

Sop. Xyl.

Alto Xyl.

Bass Xyl.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Db. II

f

f

f

44

Tbn. 1

Tbns. 2,3

Tba.

Xyl.

Mar.

Vib.

Glock.

Sop. Met.

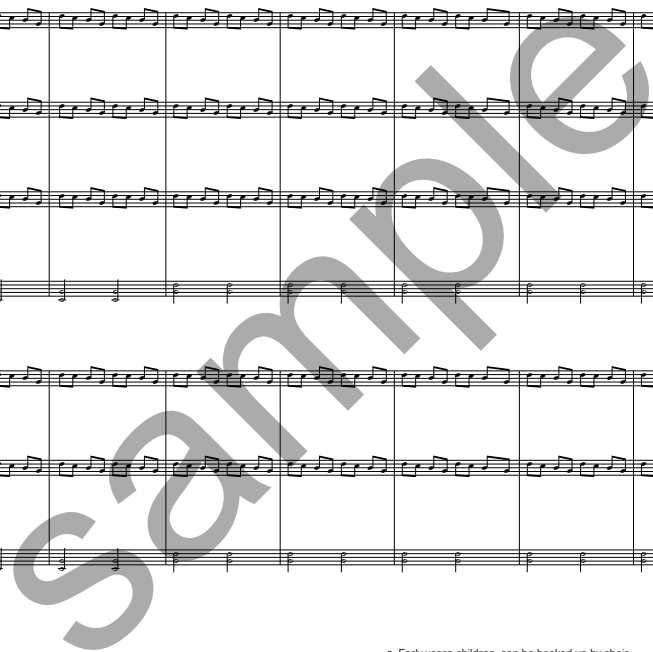
Alto Met.

Bass Met.

Sop. Xyl.

Alto Xyl.

Bass Xyl.



Choir

f Early years children, can be backed up by choir

Hel - lo Ni hao Kon - ni - chi_ wa_ Bon - jour Ho - la Gu-ten Tag Ciao! Hel - lo Ni hao Kon

Vin. I

Vin. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Db. II

p

55

Picc.

Fls 1,2

Tbn. 1

Tbns. 2,3

Tba.

Xyl.

Mbr.

Vib.

Glock.

Sop. Met.

Alto Met.

Bass Met.

Sop. Xyl.

Alto Xyl.

Bass Xyl.

Choir

ni-chi_ wa_ Bon-jour Ho-la Gu-ten Tag Ciao! Hel-lo Ni hao Kon-ni-chi_ wa_ Bon-jour Ho-la Gu-ten Tag Ciao! Hel-lo Ni hao Kon-ni-chi_ wa_ Bon-jour Ho-la Gu-ten Tag Ciao!

Vin. I

Vin. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Db.

Db. II

Children who have been playing
Off instruments should now join in singing



56

Picc.

Fls 1,2

Choir

Vin. I

Vin. II

Vla.

Vcl.

Db.

Db. II

Older children a2

All children, two parts if possible

Hel-lo Ni hao Kon-ni-chi_ wa_ Bon-jour Ho-la Gu-ten Tag Ciao! Hel-lo Ni hao Kon-ni-chi_ wa_ Bon-jour Ho-la Gu-ten Tag Ciao! Hel-lo Ni hao Kon-ni-chi_ wa_ Bon-jour Ho-la

p

77

Picc. *mp*

Fl.s 1,2 *mp*

Ob. *mp*

Cl.s 1,2 *mp*

Bsn. *mp*

Choir
 Gu-ten Tag Ciao! Hel-lo Ni hao Kon-ni-chi-wa... Bon-jour Ho-la Gu-ten Tag Ciao! *Choir only* Chasing laugh-ing fall-ing breath-less ex-ci-ted Try-ing ex-plor-ing dis-cov-er-ing sur-prised *With children again* Hel-lo Ni hao Kon

Vin. I

Vin. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Db. II

F

Sample

87

Ob. *mp*

Cl.s 1,2 *mp*

Bsn. *mp*

Choir
 ni-chi-wa... Bon-jour Ho-la Gu-ten Tag Ciao! *Choir only* Cre-at-ive Cor-a-geous Fear-less and brave Lang-uage and cul-ture I think I can learn *With children again* Hel-lo Ni hao Kon-ni-chi-wa... Bon-jour Ho-la

Vin. I

Vin. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Db. II