

PRE-TEACHING TEAMWORK

Kathleen McBee

West Bay Elementary

kmcbee@epsne.org

If you reflect on a day in the life in an Orff classroom, you'll notice tons of opportunities for teamwork throughout each part of the lesson. Whether it be creating movement, composing body percussion to accompany a speech pattern, or even playing together on the instruments, we ask our students to work together as a team SO much throughout each class.

I often found myself getting frustrated when my students struggled to work together. I felt like teamwork was something they all practiced so much that they should just 'know' what to do. It turns out, this might not be a fair assumption! Our students are in a crucial part of their life where they are still learning so many important social and emotional skills. We have a unique opportunity as music teachers to help them foster the incredible skill of teamwork. We can aid this development by having specific conversations about **how** to work in a team.

This year I chose to pre-teach what it means to be a part of a team. But instead of reinventing the wheel, I headed to the library to borrow the wisdom of authors! The following articles helped to give me lots of ideas of books that teach on teamwork and find a book that was appropriate for each age level.

[11+ Books About Teamwork for Kids](#)

[Books About Teamwork for Kids](#)

I began by reading the book to the class and then we had a conversation using teamwork discussions questions I found online, we then discussed how the characters used teamwork in the story, what experiences my students have had as part of a team, and finally how we could be good teammates.

It is still early in the year, but I am confident that by starting the year with these conversations, we will be able to focus on working together in teams in a positive way this year!

These were the books from the articles I chose to share with my students:

- K-1: Farmer Duck by Martin Waddell and Helen Oxenbury
- 2-3: Packs: Strength in Numbers by Hannah Salyer
- 4-5: The Junkyard Wonders by Patricia Polacco (This one was a long read with some heavy story lines, but SUCH a good book – and a true story!)