

A different approach to music



This class of Grade 1 children at Park Royal Elementary School are recording part of a series of ten radio programs produced by the Ontario department of education in cooperation with CBC. The series explains the Kodaly method of music education. One teacher described the method as teaching children "to hear what they see and to see what they hear."

By JERRY HOFF
Mississauga elementary schools are alive with the sound of music.

And the sight, movement, and nearly the very touch and feel of music.

Thanks to an old Hungarian composer and educator, Zoltan Kodaly (pronounced ko-die, accent ko) who died in 1967 at the age of 84.

What Mississauga has done with the Kodaly method in area elementary schools is the subject of this year's annual series of ten radio broadcasts sponsored by the Ontario Department of Education in cooperation with CBC.

This year's series is the first time Mississauga has been involved in the broadcasts and, in tribute to the subject matter and presentation, it is the first time all ten programs of the series have been devoted to a single school system.

"Mrs. Richards discovered the Kodaly method in 1960. Inspired by the outstanding results she observed in schools in Budapest, she returned to the United States determined to develop a course of study incorpo-

rating Kodaly's philosophy and adapt the techniques of his system to

The first of the broadcasts will be aired Tuesday, Jan. 7, from 2 until 2:30 in the afternoon. The series will continue each Tuesday at the same time for ten weeks.

Programs will be province-wide and local listeners may tune in on CBL (740 on the AM dial) of Toronto.

"The series is geared for the primary grades — kindergarten through Grade 3," said William J. Wright, program consultant for the Ontario Department of Education. "It's an experimental program in Ontario schools and is an adaptation of the Kodaly method by the American music educator Mary Helen Richards.

materials meaningful to American children. The present 'Threshold to Music' program in Mississauga and elsewhere is

the result of her efforts."

The Kodaly method came to Mississauga last year when Mrs. Richards visited Toronto to demonstrate her program. Mrs. Margaret Gunn, assistant music supervisor for the Mississauga board of education, encouraged Mrs. Ann Hilborn, a Park Royal Public School Grade 1 teacher, to attend the demonstration. This led to the "Threshold of Music" program being introduced to Mrs. Hilborn's Grade 1 class at Park Royal.

Ross Mills, principal of Park Royal, decided ear-

ly last year that the program shouldn't be limited to one class and reorganized the school timetable to involve all Grade 1 children in the program.

Kodaly's philosophy, Mr. Wright explained, "leads the child to become totally immersed in the music he is studying."

Mrs. Gunn and Mrs. Joan Eaton, also assistant music supervisor for the local board of education, explained that eight of the programs in the radio series will deal with facets of system while the fifth and tenth programs will be devoted to review.

Program number one discusses the beat. "We deal with the beat as an inherent thing, as basic and natural as the heart-beat," Mrs. Gunn explained.

"Then comes the second program, this one on the rhythm pattern. The children create this by words they either speak or sing as they tap their feet to the beat. Program three, high and low, teaches tonal pitch and how to recognize differences in pitch tones.

Melody is taught in the fourth program. Children discover the direction of tones and learn this is melody."

The fifth program reviews all the first four and puts them together.

"Ostinato is the title of the sixth installment," Mrs. Gunn continued. "Here the children find a

continued rhythm pattern repeated throughout the song as an accompaniment."

Mrs. Eaton explained program seven. "We call it canon," she said. "but at this point that is synonymous with a round. This shows how to maintain independence and individuality of parts while putting them together. Programs eight and nine," she continued, "teach the children how to read, jump, and know intervals in a five-tone scale natural to their voices. Program ten reviews all nine previous programs and presents the children a total picture of their subject to that point."

"The heart of the program," said Mrs. Gunn, "is to teach the children to hear what they see and see what they hear. We're not concentrating on producing musicians or composers, but we are developing musically literate listeners."

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