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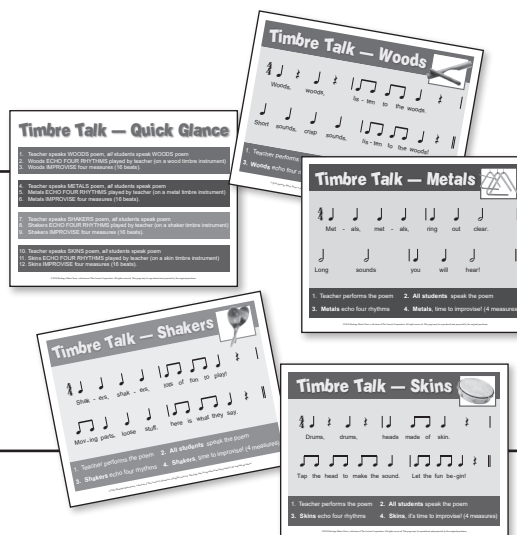
Timbre Talk

Focus

Timbre
Steady Beat
Rhythm Patterns
Improvisation

Materials

- Visual ↓
- Artie's Prep Talk ↓
- Four Hoop Groups
- Pointing Device



Preparation

1. Review Artie's Prep Talk for this lesson. You may want to print a copy to have it ready for quick reference. (The prep talk is printed on the next page and is also available online.)
2. Prepare your teaching area with the leader instruments you will play, choosing one instrument from each family (woods, metals, shakers, skins). I recommend using woodblock, tambourine, maracas, and a hand drum. Place the instruments in a location where you can easily access them, such as on a music stand next to you.
3. Place the four Hoop Group Stations in position and add baskets of instruments in this order from the children's left to right: (1) Woods, (2) Metals, (3) Shakers, (4) Skins.

Instruction

1. With students still in their seats, demonstrate proper playing technique for the instruments in each Hoop Group.
2. Guide students through the activity by explaining each part, projecting the visual and using a laser pointer to show students where you are. (The first page of the visual has a summary of what will happen, and the subsequent pages include the poems and the performance order for each verse of the poem.) Use Artie's Prep Talk (on page 7) as a guide to talk students through the performance order.
3. Assign students to their starting hoops and let them each choose an instrument. Give them some warm-up time while you move throughout the group, correcting any technique problems that might be occurring.
4. Perform all four verses of the Timbre Talk poem, using pages 2–5 of the visual. After each group performs, instruct them to place their instruments back into their hoops (but not in the baskets) while other groups perform: "Great job, woods! Instruments down. Look at your friends in 'metal town!' Metals, first I say it, then your turn..."
5. Direct the children to rotate to the next hoop (woods go to metals, metals go to shakers, shakers go to skins, and skins go to woods) but tell them not to touch the instruments yet.
6. Students choose an instrument and the Timbre Talk sequence begins again. Check for proper technique and then begin the poem. If there is sufficient time, allow students to experience all four timbre stations.

Artie's Prep Talk

Here is the script I use to prepare students for this activity.

It's time for Hoop Groups, my friends, and you will notice that we have four different timbres of non-pitched percussion waiting for you in our hoops. Please read the timbre labels with me: (*pointing*) woods, metals, shakers, skins. *Pause and demonstrate proper playing technique for the instruments in each hoop, also discussing how the sound is created. I always do this before I send the children to their starting hoops.*


Today we will be exploring these four timbres as well as focusing on steady beat, echoing rhythm patterns, and improvising. Who remembers the definition of **improvise**? *Field answers. I stress the following points to encourage artistic and musically pleasing improvisations, adapting for the age level of the students:*

- Listen to the steady beat of the music and create music of your own that honors that steady beat.
- Don't play so loudly that you can't hear the others playing.
- Music includes sounds *and* silences, so be sure to include both notes *and* rests in your improvisation.
- Don't fall into the trap of just playing loud, fast notes. Be creative!
- Show the music in your body while improvising. Don't move so much that your playing is affected, but show the feel of the music while you play.

Display the visual. There is a poem for each timbre. We will always begin with me performing the poem, immediately after which all of you will speak it. Listen to what that will sound like (*spoken rhythmically*): First I say it, then your turn. Woods, woods, listen to the woods. Short sounds, crisp sounds, listen to the woods. *Children immediately respond with "Woods, woods, listen to the woods. Short sounds, crisp sounds, listen to the woods," reading from the visual.*

Then I will play four rhythms in a row. You will echo each one after me, so be prepared with great posture, instruments up and ready, and an attitude of energy in your body. Let's practice that part once together.

Teacher claps and speaks each four-beat rhythm, immediately followed by children echoing. For the quarter rests, gesture with your arms but do not make any sound. Feel free to use any rhythm patterns you wish! Below are the ones I use for the initial experience. In future repetitions I change the rhythm patterns.



Ta, ti - ti, ta, ta. Ti - ti, ti - ti, ta, ta. Ta, (rest) ta, (rest) Ti - ti, ta, ta, (rest)

Boys and girls, after we echo the four rhythm patterns, I will say, "Woods, it's time to improvise!" and the students seated at the Woods Hoop Group will improvise for four measures.

Let's practice four measures (16 beats) of improvisation, students. I'll play the steady beat for you on my wood timbre instrument, and help you count the four measures. You clap some interesting improvisatory patterns.

Continue in this fashion, practicing each of the four poems, then send students to the Hoop Group Stations and continue with step 3 of this lesson.

Play Percussion

A parody of Alouette

Focus

Timbre
Steady Beat
Sequencing

Materials

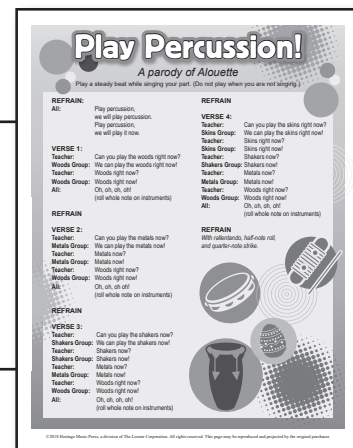
- Notation Visual ↓
- Lyrics Visual ↓
- Four Hoop Group Stations

Preparation

1. Study the Notation Visual to be comfortable when leading the song. If you wish, you can project this notation for the students. I usually project only the Lyrics Visual.
2. Place the four Hoop Group Stations in position and add baskets of instruments in this order from the children's left to right: (1) Woods, (2) Metals, (3) Shakers, (4) Skins.

Instruction

1. I have found this lesson to be more successful if the students have heard the song *Alouette* previously. If students are familiar with the sequencing used in *Alouette*, they will have greater success with the sequencing of the instrument parts in this lesson.
2. Remind the students of the nature of the “add-em-up” verses in *Alouette*, making each verse a little longer than the previous one. Let them know them that this non-pitched percussion piece will work the same way.
3. Display the Lyrics Sheet and discuss the ABA (Refrain/Verse/Refrain) form of the piece.
4. Sing the refrain with the children, then discuss the roadmap of the piece:
 - a. Teacher and students sing each refrain while clapping the steady beat.
 - b. The verses are call-and-response, with the teacher singing the question “Can you play the woods right now?” and the children in the wood timbre group singing back “We can play the woods right now!” while they clap the steady beat. The teacher then calls “Woods right now?” and the children sing “Woods right now!” again while clapping the beat. This will mean that the students clap four quarter notes with their first response and two quarters with their second. This continues with the other timbres. See the Notation Visual or the music on page 12 for clarification.
 - c. In the final measure of each verse (see measure 8 for the first example), with the lyrics “Oh, oh, oh, oh,” all students will sing and play a whole note roll. This makes for a nice lead-in back to each refrain, where all children are singing and playing the beat on their instruments.
 - d. As each verse expands, adding another timbre to the sequence, children will need to be ready to play in timbre (hoop) order. Using gestures to invite them in for each turn helps with the sequential parts.
 - e. Discuss what will happen on the final refrain, including the rallentando, the half note roll and a final quarter note strike.
5. Move students to their assigned hoop group stations and allow them some warm-up time while you help any students who may need instruction on the instrument techniques.
6. Practice the refrain, individual verses as needed, and the expressive elements in the final refrain before performing the entire piece.



Play Percussion!

Refrain All

Play per-cus-sion, we will play per-cus-sion. Play per-cus-sion, we will play it now.

Verse 1 Teacher Woods

Can you play the woods right now? We can play the woods right now!

Teacher Woods All

Woods right now? Woods right now! Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Refrain All

Play per-cus-sion, we will play per-cus-sion. Play per-cus-sion, we will play it now.

Verse 2 Teacher Metals

Can you play the met - als now? We can play the met - als now!

Teacher Metals Teacher Woods All

Met-als now? Met-als now! Woods right now? Woods right now! Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Refrain All

Play per-cus-sion, we will play per-cus-sion. Play per-cus-sion, we will play it now.

Verse 3

22 **Teacher** **Shakers**
 Can you play the shak - ers now? We can play the shak - ers now!

24 **Teacher** **Shakers** **Teacher** **Metals**
 Shak - ers now? Shak - ers now! Met - als now? Met - als now!

26 **Teacher** **Woods** **All**
 Woods right now? Woods right now! Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Refrain

28 **All**
 Play per-cus-sion, we will play per-cus-sion. Play per-cus-sion, we will play it now.

Verse 4

32 **Teacher** **Skins**
 Can you play the skins right now? We can play the skins right now!

34 **Teacher** **Skins** **Teacher** **Shakers**
 Skins right now? Skins right now! Shak - ers now? Shak - ers now!

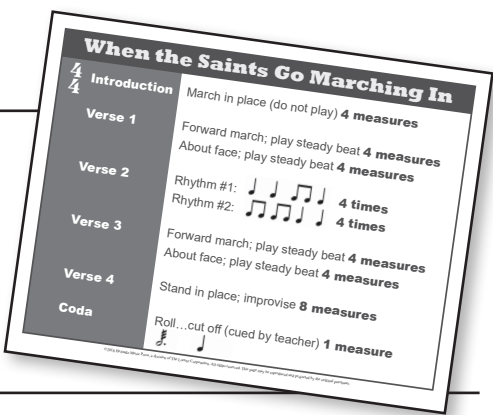
36 **Teacher** **Metals** **Teacher** **Woods** **All**
 Met - als now? Met - als now! Woods right now? Woods right now! Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Refrain

39 **All** *rallentando* *(roll) All strike:*
 Play per-cus-sion, we will play per-cus-sion. Play per-cus-sion, we will play it now.

When the Saints Go Marching In

Focus	Materials
Steady Beat	• Visual ↓
Timbre	• Recording ↓
Rhythm Patterns	• Four Hoop Group Stations
	• Pointing Device



When the Saints Go Marching In is considered the Unofficial Anthem of New Orleans. It began as a spiritual and in 1939 Louis Armstrong transformed it into the stirring jazz tune we know today.

Preparation

1. Place the four Hoop Group Stations in position and add baskets of instruments in this order from the children’s left to right: (1) Woods, (2) Metals, (3) Shakers, (4) Skins.
2. Before teaching the piece in class, practice a few times through, calling cues for the children near the end of each movement section. This will ensure that students are ready for the beginning of each new section. I use the following cues.
 - a. *Forward . . . march!*
 - b. *About . . . face!*
 - c. *Rhythm 1, now here we go!*
 - d. *Rhythm 2, now here we go!*
 - e. *Forward . . . march!*
 - f. *About . . . face!*
 - g. *Stand in place and improvise!*
 - h. *Ready and roll* (cue the roll and final quarter note)



Instruction

Display the projectable visual and, using a pointing device, discuss the details. Here are some important talking points:

1. **Time Signature:** Inform the children that this piece is in $\frac{4}{4}$ time, which means there will be four beats in each measure. Consider counting aloud, and possibly conducting, a few measures of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.
2. **Introduction:** This piece has a four-measure introduction. Discuss with the children why there is an introduction and why they need to be listening to it carefully. (It will set the tempo and “feel” of the piece; it is their “get ready to march” music.)
3. **Verses:** The piece consists of four verses with no interludes in between them. If you choose to have your students sing along on the verses, you can use some of the traditional lyrics listed at the end of this lesson. Although my students know the song from singing it in previous classes, we found that singing along with this Hoop Group lesson was distracting. Consider teaching the lyrics to the song in a prior lesson, so that it is “an old friend” of the students and familiar to them as they perform the instrumental transfer in a subsequent lesson.

4. **Verses 1 & 3 (Marching):** Note that Verse 1 and Verse 3 involve the same movement pattern: Marching in one direction for four measures of $\frac{4}{4}$ time (the teacher will tell the students in which direction to begin marching), then turning “About Face” and marching four measures in the other direction.
5. **Verse 2 (Performing Rhythm Patterns):** Practice clapping the two rhythm patterns in Verse 2. Each is played four times. The children should stand in place, facing the visual while playing these rhythm patterns.
6. **Verse 4 (Improvisation):** Children should stand in place facing the front and improvise for eight measures. Near the end of Verse 4, the note values are elongated for a more dramatic effect. Discuss this with the children, eliciting their guesses on why this would happen in the final verse.
7. Discuss some guidelines that will encourage musically pleasing and artistic improvisations: (Even though this lesson plan is for younger children, I like to start encouraging a musical approach early.)
 - a. Listen to the steady beat of the music and create music of your own that honors that steady beat.
 - b. Don't play so loudly that you can't hear the musical track.
 - c. Music includes *sounds and silences*, so be sure to include both *notes and rests* in your improvisation.
 - d. Don't fall into the trap of just playing loud, fast notes. Be creative!
 - e. Show the music in your body while improvising. Don't move so much that your playing is affected, but show the feel of the music while you play.
8. **Coda:** This piece has a coda, which is a short ending section of the music. This mini-coda is simply a three-beat roll and a quarter-note strike cued by the teacher. Students should freeze in place for a *musical moment* at the end of the piece.
9. Assign students to their starting Hoop Group and remind them that “Good musicians LOOK ahead, THINK ahead, and LISTEN ahead.” Perform the song.
10. If time permits, consider having students rotate to the next Hoop Group. This song is short enough that I often rotate the children to all four of the stations during the lesson.

Optional Lyrics

My students always enjoy this Hoop Group lesson, as this is a song with which they are familiar. Consider teaching the song two or three lessons prior to introducing the Hoop Group routine. See below for some of the more familiar lyrics to this wonderful piece.

Although there are *many* verses, here are some of my students' favorites:

- Oh, when the saints go marching in, oh when the saints go marching in,
How I want to be in that number, when the saints go marching in!
- Oh, when the stars, begin to shine, oh when the stars begin to shine,
How I want to be in that number, when the stars begin to shine!
- Oh, when the saints go marching in, oh when the saints go marching in,
I'm gonna sing as loud as thunder, when the saints go marching in!
- Oh, when the trumpet sounds its call, oh when the trumpet sounds its call,
How I want to be in that number, when the trumpet sounds its call!

Trepak

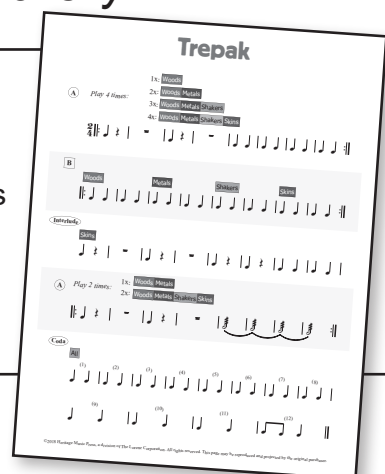
From The Nutcracker by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Focus

Timbre
Form
Note Values

Materials

- Visual ↓
- Recording of Trepak from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*
- Four Hoop Group Stations
- Pointing Device



Preparation

1. Place the four Hoop Group Stations in position and add baskets of instruments in this order from the children's left to right: (1) Woods, (2) Metals, (3) Shakers, (4) Skins.
2. Practice this piece numerous times before teaching it to the children, as it has a brisk tempo and little room for error.

Instruction

1. With students still in their seats, project the instrumental score in the visual and discuss the following details. A pointing device (such as a laser pointer) works well for this analysis. Guide students through the instrumental parts, locating and discussing details in the notation, such as:
 - The labels above each section indicating which Hoop Groups should play
 - Lead the students through a spoken description of the form for the entire piece, pointing to each section name and the repeat signs found in some of them.
 - The $\frac{2}{4}$ time signature
 - The tied notes in the second A section
 - The roll markings (slashes on stems) found in the second A section
 - The additive nature of the A sections. Note that the two A sections are not the same! (The music in the recording is the same, but the Hoop Groups parts are different.)
 - Draw students' attention to the numbers above the measures of the Coda. It is easy to lose track of where you are in this fast-moving section, and these numbers will help. Consider clapping the Coda while counting the measures with the students.
2. In preparation for playing, use a pointing device to lead the children through the score while listening to the recording. Answer any questions they might have and address those issues within the score.
3. Move students to Hoop Groups and circulate, helping with any playing technique issues.
4. With your pointing device ready, encourage an "attitude of energy" for the young instrumentalists, start the music and lead children in their performance.
5. Rotate students to the next Hoop Group, giving them a chance to play more instruments.
6. Encourage children to download this piece at home and share it with their families.

Trepak

A

Play 4 times:

1x: Woods

2x: Woods Metals

3x: Woods Metals Shakers

4x: Woods Metals Shakers Skins



B

Woods

Metals

Shakers

Skins



Interlude

Skins



A

Play 2 times:

1x: Woods Metals

2x: Woods Metals Shakers Skins



Coda

All

