

Preface

Kids love nothing more than to explore, experiment, and create. Some of my most cherished memories of school involve the act of creating art projects, dioramas, science projects, etc. However, I don't remember ever being given the opportunity to create in music class. As I developed and implemented these lessons with my students, I was amazed at the intensely engaged learning that was taking place, as well as with the pride I saw in their accomplishments. Sometimes it just takes a little nudge in the beginning to show them they *can* be creators of music. The grade levels suggested at the beginning of each lesson are just that—suggestions. You may very easily adapt any of the lessons to suit your classroom needs.

For those with whiteboard technology, some of the lessons include flipcharts to make the process interactive. The charts can be edited as to your specifications (duplicating/deleting items, etc.). They have not been locked to prevent changes. Entering into design mode should allow you to personalize them to your needs. I hope that your young composers experience the same growth, sense of accomplishment, and pride as my students!

—Nicole

Accessing Data Files

For your convenience, all of the visuals and manipulatives presented in this text are available on the CD in color (for projection) and black and white (for printing) options. To access the digital files, you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader, which you can download for free at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. Once you have installed the Acrobat Reader, simply insert your CD into your CD drive. When prompted, click on **View Files** to see all of the amazing resources available to you.

Accessing and Using the Flipcharts

To access the flipcharts, you must have the ActivInspire software and a Promethean whiteboard. Place the CD into your disc drive and open the ActivInspire file. The flipcharts should automatically open to the title page. Proceed to the Contents page, and then choose the chart to accompany the lesson that you are teaching. Each chart includes notes for you, and many also include printable worksheets. In order to ensure that all interactive functions work properly, please make sure to check for ActivInspire software updates regularly. This information can be found in the ActivInspire Help menu.

Garden Songs



This lesson grows with your students! I generally teach this lesson to my kindergartners in the spring. Then, we expand upon the lesson in the following years.

Materials

- Garden Song Full-Size Visual (included in the data files)
- Plotter and roll paper
- Garden Song projection slide (included in the data files)
- Flower manipulatives (included in the data files)
- Colored paper
- Magnetic clips or button magnets
- *Inch by Inch* by Leo Lionni
- *The Muppet Show* season 4, episode 1 (optional)
- *Sesame Street* episode 0288 (optional)
- Resonator bells or other pitched instruments with treble-clef tones (E to high F)
- Student worksheets

Cross-Curricular Concepts

Predicting and confirming
Fine motor skills



This lesson includes interactive whiteboard flipcharts.

Preparation

- Prepare the visual aid in one of the following ways:
 - Print the “Garden Song Full-Size Visual” using a plotter and roll paper. If you do not have a plotter, you may have the file printed at any printing/copying store.
 - Print the “Garden Song Projection” on film and obtain an overhead projector to use during your class. As a pdf, this file can also be projected using other methods or presented on an electronic whiteboard.
- Print the flower manipulatives on colored copier paper or tagboard. Attach the stems to each flower so that the bottom of the stem is flush with the bottom of the visual that you are using. The length of each stem should correspond to the pitch of the note and the visual you are using. For example, low E will have the shortest stem, and high F, the longest. The stem lengths force students to place the flower on the correct line or space if they remember to always “keep the stem in the grass.” (Alternatively, you could create your own manipulatives using a die-cut machine and construction paper.) If you wish, you may laminate and attach magnetic strips to the back of the manipulatives.

Lesson

1. Begin the class by reading the book *Inch by Inch*. Discuss the story with your students. You may also wish to show one or both of the following video clips:
 - The Muppet Show* season 4, episode 1 features John Denver singing “The Garden Song”; or
 - Sesame Street* episode 0288 features “Inch Worm” sung by a Muppet inchworm and bug played by Jerry Nelson and Fran Brill.
2. Display the prepared visual or projection.
3. Discuss the fence, noting the five fence rails.

4. Place the shortest flower (low E) on the fence “with the stem in the grass.” Repeat this phrase each time you place a flower on its line or space so that your students remember that the stem must always be in the grass.
5. Show your students how the E on the resonator bell looks like the E on the flower. You could also create miniature flowers to place on the corresponding bell. Play the pitch.
6. Repeat the process outlined above with each flower, moving up the fence (both lines and spaces). Your students should notice that each flower and its representative tone is moving higher on the fence and higher in sound.
7. Ask your students to predict what the music will sound like if all the flowers are played one after the next (start low and go up).
8. Reverse the flowers and the instruments, and have the students identify/predict what this new pattern will sound like. Play the new pattern for the students and ask them to confirm or revise their predictions.
9. Tell the students you are going to do something “really crazy” and mix up the flowers. After placing the flowers on the fence, discuss what the music will sound like (go down, up, up, down, etc.). Then play this new pattern for the class, again allowing the students to confirm and/or revise their predictions.
10. Choose nine students to move a flower to a new place on the fence. Emphasize that each flower’s stem “must be in the grass” at the bottom of the visual. Arrange the bells and students, so each can play his/her corresponding tone. Let the students play the song. Repeat as needed until everyone has had a turn.
11. After the last group of children has arranged the flowers and played the pattern, give each student a worksheet. Be sure to point out several times that the students must look carefully and draw their flowers on the correct fence rail or space in between. The students should try to copy the flowers accurately using the same colors as the visuals and writing the letter of the alphabet in the center of each flower.

Extensions

For Grade 1

Students can use a green strip of paper to hook the flowers together, creating faster eighth notes. They can also add quarter rests.

For Grade 2

Allow the students to add half rests (green caterpillars that sit on the third line) and whole rests (green caterpillars walking upside down under the fourth line). Students can also stack flowers to indicate where two sounds are played at the same time, creating harmony.



Interactive Whiteboard Lesson

If you are using the interactive whiteboard, follow step 1. Then, open the flipchart on your whiteboard. Proceed through the interactive lesson using the notes feature to guide you through the process, as needed.

On the Road Again

I developed this lesson to create more interest among my male students, although the girls certainly enjoy it too! Use this lesson to review timbre and the instrument families for classroom percussion instruments.

Materials

- Car templates (included in the data files)
- Colored paper
- Highway projection slide (optional; included in the data files)
- Recording of “On the Road Again” by Willie Nelson
- Assorted pitched and/or nonpitched instruments (one type of instrument per color used)
- Student worksheets (included in the data files)
- Crayons



This lesson includes interactive whiteboard flipcharts.

Preparation

- Print, copy, laminate, and cut out the car templates using different colored paper for each car.
- If using the highway projection slide, obtain a means of projecting it. Alternatively, you can create a road out of gray construction or bulletin board paper, or simply draw one on a chalkboard or whiteboard.

Lesson

1. Introduce the lesson using Willie Nelson’s hit “On the Road Again.” Discuss the lyrics with your students, especially the phrase “the life I love is making music with my friends.” Talk about how this phrase relates to music class just like it relates to Willie Nelson and his music-making friends.
2. Discuss how we can identify instruments by their unique sounds. Explain that we refer to their unique sound qualities as *timbre* or tone color. Listen to several different instruments asking your students to describe the sound of each and assign it to a family: woods, metals, or drum (skins/membranes). Finally, ask them what instruments might sound like things they could hear on a highway? Use those instruments to represent the different cars.
3. Using the car manipulatives and the projection of the highway, assign each car to a different instrument. Tell your students that by placing the cars on the road, they will be creating a musical piece using different instruments. For example, a gray car might indicate that a triangle should be played or a red car might represent a red Boomwhacker™.
4. Allow your students the opportunity to work in small groups, pairs, or individually to arrange the cars (on the highway visual or even the floor). Once all of the cars are arranged, they should play their piece using the corresponding instruments. Encourage your students to even place the cars beside each other or “passing” to indicate that they play two instruments simultaneously.

5. When the students have created their pieces, try combining several at a time and letting the class play them as a group. The students who created the piece can take turns using a pointer (mallet, Boomwhacker™, etc.) to direct the class.
6. If you wish, allow the students to draw (notate) their compositions using the student worksheet and crayons. They should be sure to include a key to show which instrument plays for which color car. These make a great hallway display.



Interactive Whiteboard Lesson

Following step 1, display the flipchart on your interactive whiteboard. Process through the slides, using the teacher notes as needed.



Grades 3–6

National Music Standards: 2, 4, and 5

Round-Robin Composing

I use this lesson with upper-elementary students. I often choose the state-testing window to introduce it, because the students get to create, make noise, and get away from the quiet and stress of the testing situation. (However, my room is far removed from the classrooms...if you are close to testing areas you may have to save this for another time.)

Materials

- Rhythm staff (included in the data files)
- Mallet and rhythm instruments
- Pencils

Lesson

1. Divide your students into groups depending upon the number of instruments being used. Having between four and five groups works well.
2. Distribute and familiarize your students with the rhythm staff. Have each group write their instrument name on their assigned line.
3. Instruct each group to compose a rhythm, notating it on the line.
4. Have your students pass the sheet to the next group, which will notate a *different* rhythm on their corresponding line.
5. Continue passing the sheet around until each line on each group's paper is filled.
6. Copy the students' work on overhead projector film or project each sheet so that the class can play together. (Perhaps a student could take the sheets to the office, or you can prepare the film so that the students can present the compositions in the next music class.)
7. Look at each creation. Practice each line separately, and then put it all together as a finished piece.