



CLASSICAL MUSIC INDY

*AfterSchool Indy Curriculum:
Teaching Composition from an Early Age*

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Teaching Music Composition at an Early Age

Purpose:

To increase music literacy in elementary aged youth, and provide an avenue for creative expression.

Course Learning Objectives:

1. Students will implement fundamentals of music to tell stories, feelings, and emotions.
2. Students will produce graphic notations that represent melodies.
3. Students will compose rhythms using graphic and standard music notation.
4. Students will create projects through collaboration with peers.
5. Students will explain basic musical fundamentals.
6. Students will perform compositions written by themselves and their peers.

Course Calendar:

Session 1

Session Topic

Introduction to Composer, Beat, and Rhythm

Session Objectives

- Students will demonstrate translating the rhythm of their name to shape rhythms.
- Students will demonstrate performing the rhythm of their name.
- Students will demonstrate a steady beat.
- Students will engage in group music making.

Session Vocabulary

- Composer
- Beat
- Rhythm
- Square Shape (4 beats)
- Heart Shape (2 beats)
- Circle Shape (1 beat)
- Split Circle Shape ($\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2}$, 1 beat)

Session Assignment:

- Notate rhythm of name
- Echo the 4 rhythmic values by clapping
- Perform rhythm of name
- Walk the 4 rhythmic values as music is being played

Session Prompts

- Can you help me keep what we call a steady **BEAT** with the musician?
- Have you heard of any other famous people who have written music?
- Let's play a game called "Echo". It's kind of like Simon Says, all you have to do is repeat after me!
- Now that we get the idea of how to turn our name into rhythms, we get to become composers! The back of our name tag is blank – you have *5 minutes* to compose your name with the shapes we have provided.
- We know how to feel rhythm in our hands through clapping, right? Let's feel it with our feet now! Can you walk to the shapes that I show you?

Session 2

Session Topic

Application of Composer, Beat, and Rhythm

Session Objectives

- Students will demonstrate notating *Mary Had A Little Lamb* with shape rhythms.
- Students will demonstrate notating *Are You Sleeping?* with shape rhythms.
- Students will demonstrate a steady beat.
- Students will perform an original improvisation.
- Students will engage in group music making.

Session Vocabulary

- Composer
- Beat
- Rhythm
- Square Shape (4 beats)
- Heart Shape (2 beats)
- Circle Shape (1 beat)
- Split Circle Shape ($\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2}$, 1 beat)

Session Assignment:

- Perform rhythm of name
- Echo the 4 rhythmic values by clapping
- Notate *Mary Had A Little Lamb* with shape rhythms as a large group
- Perform *Mary Had A Little Lamb* with body percussion as a large group
- Collaboratively notate *Are You Sleeping?* with shape rhythms in small groups
- Perform *Are You Sleeping?* With body percussion as a large group

Session Prompts

- Let's do the same name game that we did yesterday!
- What different kinds of sounds can we make with our body?
- Using only one kind of shape, how can we make every section add up to 4?
- Keep the beat and echo me – try to answer this question by the end: How many beats are in each of these sections?
- Now can you work on your own to draw the shapes of *Are You Sleeping?*
- Now let's play Echo, but this time each of you gets to make up your own rhythm, and then the rest of us will repeat it!

Session 3

Session Topic

Introduction to Pitch with Shape Notation

Session Objectives

- Students will demonstrate notating *Hot Cross Buns* with shape rhythms.
- Students will demonstrate notating high, middle, and low pitches from the melody of *Hot Cross Buns* with shape rhythms.
- Students will compose 1 measure melodies with high, middle, and low pitches and shape rhythms.
- Students will compose 8 measure long melodies with high, middle, and low pitches and shape rhythms.
- Students will engage in group music making.

Session Vocabulary

- Beat
- Rhythm
- Composition
- Pitch
- Measure

Session Assignment:

- Perform rhythm of name
- Echo by singing *Hot Cross Buns*
- Notate the rhythms of *Hot Cross Buns*
- Notate the pitches of *Hot Cross Buns* as either high, middle, or low
- Collaboratively perform *Hot Cross Buns* on pitched percussion instruments
- Compose a one measure, four beat long melody, using shape notation and pitches of high, middle, and/or low
- Compose an eight measure long, thirty-two beat long melody, using shape notation and pitches of high, middle, and/or low

Session Prompts

- If you recognize this song, sing along! Now, let's play echo with it.
- Today we are going to learn how to write this song! To do this, let's first figure out how many beats we are dealing with in each section! Keep a beat and tell me how many beats are in each section by a show of fingers. How many beats are in a measure?
- Which of our notes is HIGH? **Hot**, **Cross**, or **Buns**? Which of our notes is MIDDLE? Which of our notes is LOW?
- Use your paper to write down a single measure melody with enough shapes to fill up 4 beats, making them high, medium or low! How many beats should your measure add up to?

Session 4

Session Topic

Introduction to Standard Notation

Session Objectives

- Students will demonstrate translating shape notation into standard notation.
- Students will compose 1 measure melodies with high, middle, and low pitches and standard notation.
- Students will perform their original 1 measure melodies.
- Students will collaboratively compose an 8 measure melody with high, middle, and low pitches and standard notation.
- Students will engage in group music making.

Session Vocabulary

- Pitch
- Melody
- Whole Note
- Half Note
- Quarter Note
- Eighth Note
- Measure

Session Assignment:

- Use music machine to translate shape rhythms into standard notation
- Compose a one measure, four beat long melody, using standard notation and pitches of high, middle, and/or low
- Perform original one measure, four beat long melody
- Collaboratively notate all eight measures of *The Pirate Melody*, using standard notation and pitches of high, middle, and/or low
- Collaboratively perform *The Pirate Melody* on pitched percussion instruments

Session Prompts

- When we put a square through the music machine, it turns into what we call a “whole note.” How many beats does a square have? So, how many beats does a whole note have?
- How many beats does a heart have? So, how many beats does a half note have?
- How many beats does a circle have? So, how many beats does a quarter note have?
- How many beats does a split circle have? So, how many beats does an eighth note have?
- If you look at your paper, you have a blank word line, and one measure. You are going to use your new note system you learned to create a one measure melody to help us picture your word!
- Every please copy down the melodies for each word from your peers, so that all of us have the same eight measures on our worksheet. Then, we will perform it as a group!

Session 5

Session Topic

Introduction to Standard Notation and Staff

Session Objectives

- Students will identify all note names in a treble clef staff.
- Students will compose 1 measure melodies with standard notation and using specific pitches provided that spell a word.
- Students will perform their original 1 measure melodies.
- Students will collaboratively compose an 8 measure melody with standard notation and using specific pitches provided that spell a word.
- Students will engage in group music making.

Session Vocabulary

- Staff
- Musical Alphabet
- Melody
- Composition

Session Assignment:

- Complete worksheet that fills out musical alphabet.
- Complete worksheet to compose one measure melodies that use specific pitches provided that spell a word.
- Participate in board races to identify rhythmic values and note names.
- Compose an eight measure long, thirty-two beat long melody, using standard notation and a treble clef staff.

Session Prompts

- Repeat after me: A-B-C-D-E-F-G (echo), again!
- Let's fill in our worksheet together to figure out which notes go where.
- This same worksheet shows a bunch of pictures and has a staff where you can fill out the letters of each line/ space. Try to figure out what the words are and spell them with quarter notes in your staff!
- Our game is called Board Racing Notating and the way that you play it is by drawing in the type of note and letter that I say! Whoever gets the letter first gets a tick mark. The team that gets to 20 tick marks is named winner!!
- Flip your pages over to the side that doesn't have drawings! This time we have as much creativity as we want. Write out a melody where each measure adds up to 4 beats.

Session 6

Session Topic

Standard Notation and Staff Continued

Session Objectives

- Students will engage in group music making.
- Students will compose 1 measure, four beat long, melodies that demonstrate stepwise pitch intervals.
- Students will compose 1 measure, four beat long, melodies that demonstrate skipping pitch intervals.
- Students will perform their original 1 measure melodies.
- Students will individually compose an 8 measure melody with standard notation and a treble staff.
- Students will engage in group music making.

Session Vocabulary

- Staff
- Pitch Names
- Step
- Skip

Session Assignment:

- Students will compose 1 measure, four beat long, melodies that demonstrate stepwise pitch intervals.
- Perform original 1 measure melody that demonstrates stepwise pitch intervals.
- Students will compose 1 measure, four beat long, melodies that demonstrate skipping pitch intervals.
- Perform original 1 measure melody that demonstrates skipping pitch intervals.
- Compose an 8 measure melody with standard notation and a treble staff.
- Perform original 8 measure melody.

Session Prompts

- I am going to write one measure melodies that you will all copy on your instruments to get us warmed up!
- When our notes occur next to each other stepping up or down from a line to a space/ space to a line, we call this a STEP. Let's all create stepping melodies on our worksheet!
- Let's try to create some SKIPPING melodies – these will hop around more!
- Now that we have taped our quilt melody together, let's try to play along with it!
- Your job is to write a piece that is about what you are thankful for. The title is "I am thankful for _____." Fill in the title, and write a melody that you think represents what you are thankful for!

Course Learning Objective Map

| Program Learning Outcomes | Aligning Sessions |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Students will implement fundamentals to communicate stories, feelings, and emotions | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 2. Students will produce graphic notations that translates into melodies | 1, 2, 3, 4 |

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|---|------------------|
| 3. Students will compose rhythms using graphic and standard music notation | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 4. Students will create projects through collaboration with peers | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 5. Students will explain basic musical fundamentals | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 6. Students will perform compositions written by themselves and their peers | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 |