

Time Shifting Arts Hook – Up

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Overview

This curriculum is written for 4th and 5th grade students in an elementary general music classroom. The activities are designed to be modular, to fit the arts education schedule. A class meeting once per week may participate only in one of the activities whereas a group that comes two or three times per week may be involved with more of the activities.

I have also taught utilizing schedules where students meet intensively for a three week or six week period. The activities could be useful in that type of scheduling. The activity lesson designs may be utilized as an in-depth project. The activities may be used as enrichment. I have classes that experience heavy numbers of pullouts. Those students remaining need additional activities that explore a topic in depth for their particular class time as opposed to introducing new material for the entire group.

The goal of this curriculum research is to assist students in making links from past art forms to current art forms. Through these connections they will be better able to create and refine their own original work. They will acquire a deeper understanding and appreciation of art forms they are not familiar with. They will also be better able to understand where they are in the history of man creating art.

We will explore the two concepts of recitative and rap. The objective is to have the student explore and analyze a motif/motive comparing and contrasting the two art forms. The student will first define the term motif/motive, and then examine selected motifs. Selections include excerpts from *La Traviata* by Verdi 1853, *Carmen* by Bizet 1875, and *Salome* by Strauss, 1905. Students may also

explore musical theatre scores/scripts to examine if a form of recitative is used and the use of speech instead of recitative in musical theatre scripts.

Rationale

Recitative

“...a vocal number that mimics the inflections of speech, found primarily in operas and oratorios.” (Leonard, 97)

Rap

“...a rhyming half-sung, half spoken style, often enhanced by electronic effects.” (Leonard, 96)

Students can explore the music of a singing group The Inkspots’ use of speaking in their recordings in the 1930’ and 1940’s. They may examine the music of Isaac Hayes and his use of speaking in his recordings in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Students should define how and why composers use recitative. Students will then explore selected excerpts of rap beginning in the 1980’s.

A timeline can be developed to track the use of the spoken/sung word in vocal music. This will allow students to see trends and draw a consistent thread through the history of speaking as singing. As an activity this will draw in the visual learner and serve as a thought organizer.

A portion of my curriculum research is a study of lyrics. Students will have opportunity to create original lyrics. As background, students define motif and motive. Students will have opportunity to listen to motifs and motives. They will discuss and reflect upon what the sound of the lyrics makes them feel without the lyric having verbal meaning. Students analyze why they have some feeling about the motives/motifs though there is no lyric with dictionary meaning. Students will brainstorm for descriptive words to use in their discussion. They may discuss the sound and its impact on emotion.



Students will discuss communicating with a broad audience or a narrow audience. The terminology of slang words and traditional English may be discussed. The opposing thoughts on various aspects of the project may be explored around these points: positive and negative criticism and appropriate and inappropriate language. The teacher will lead a discussion of controversial art forms focusing on the reasoning behind whom an opera presented who was once considered controversial and why rap is currently controversial. Students make a comparison and contrast of the reason for controversy and the artists’ intent.

Students begin their creative process with nonsense or made up words. Students study songs with vocables, Native American and African. Students practice sounds that carry the sound beginning with English vowel sounds. The school I work in is a German magnet school. We will also utilize the vowel sounds in German. Students may also explore the use of blended sounds and the impact of consonants. Students will have opportunity to listen to and study examples of scat singing. Students have opportunity to create their own lyrics, to create a motif, and to use their own vocable motif and a scat motif. They may then create a lyric motif. Students will have opportunity to perform and record their motifs in class.

Finally the students will explore notation of a motif/motive. Students will look at various ways to notate information. A discussion may begin with the alphabet. Students can look at other markings in foreign languages. For our school we will discuss the use of the umlaut in German and its impact on the sound of the vowel and how that sound is displayed visually. Students look at notation of Egyptian hieroglyphs and of Zuni Native Americans. We will study various methods of notating music. How a sound is produced will be explored and how that information is notated to the reader will be discussed. The amount of effort to create a sound will be presented through the Rudolf Laban concept of Effort/Shape. The students will discuss how they feel when they produce various sounds they have created and how they can communicate that to other performers. Students will have opportunity to study the Effort /Shape symbols and incorporate them into their work.

The students will be made aware of the historical context of music notation. The Middle Ages in Europe brought forth the modern form of musical notation. Benedictine Monk Guido d'Arezzo drew upon principles in use before his lifetime to create a codified form for musical notation (Boatwright 22). Guido d'Arezzo began with a staff of three or four lines. He utilized color on his staff. The predominant color used was red and yellow or green was added. Guido d'Arezzo fixed the note 'F' or 'C'. From those tones he theorized one could decipher all the other tones (Boatwright 22). In the margin he would mark the position of tone 'F' or 'C'.

This way of drawing the staff might assist students in learning to read the staffs. Students could experiment with how many lines they would like to have on their staff. Musicians had a need to notate a sound and a need to notate silence. An example of rudimentary notation uses just a line. The line may be vertical or horizontal. The vertical line signifies silence. The horizontal line signifies sound (Boatwright 20). The next problem in notation of music would be the duration of the sound. "In the thirteenth century,...two note symbols with definite proportional time values were introduced: a 'long note' (longa), and a 'short

value' (brevis) (Boatwright 29). Theorists began to use two symbols signifying a 'long note' and a 'short note'.  symbol used as a long note and  symbol used as a 'short note' (Boatwright 29). This approach would simplify the notation of symbols for young students.

During the Middle Ages in Europe minstrels and troupes of performers presented songs and slapstick comedy. At the same time there were also religious instructional dramas. These productions included religious chants. Some religious dramas mixed poetry and liturgical texts. The Gregorian chant from earlier times links with the Middle Ages liturgical texts in Roman productions.

In Italy during the Renaissance the commedia dell'arte form was the tradition. Clowns improvised through storytelling. These characters are the basis of western stage comedy. In 1700, ballad opera using popular songs of the time with new lyrics and comic opera using original scores and romantic plot lines were common. (Ibid 3) Renaissance writers utilized Greek drama but added music which led to Grand Opera. (musicals101.com 3)

Howard Boatwright in his text *Introduction to the Theory of Music* states, "A melody, in its basic definition, is simply a chain of intervals strung out horizontally" (105). Rap music utilizes a spoken rhythmic line that has "flow" and utilizes "layering" (Rose 38). Rose relays rapper Fab Five Freddy's concept of rap music to us stating a flow links rap to traditional western concepts of music construction. Boatwright in his analysis of how music notation developed delves into melodic line. He analyzes melodic line as "simply a chain of intervals strung out horizontally" (105). Rap music's spoken line, which serves as the melodic line, flows horizontally as a chain with small interval variation of little movement of high or low pitch. Fab Five Freddy states rappers create a "new style" (Rose 38). The African American developing artist often lacks opportunity to study music formally. Due to economic constraints and limited available opportunities, some African Americans suffer with "complex cultural constraints" (Rose 59). Through adversity Duncan Smith states artists "assert the right to write" (Rose 59). Duncan Smith is speaking of graffiti artists. Rose, in her book *Black Noise Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*, analyzes not just rap but other expressive art forms drawing parallels. Economic and social constraints are viewed as an "enemy" (Rose 61). Rose reasons rap came about partly due to "social, urban space parameters" which includes "contemporary racism [and] class oppression" (Rose 61). Rap artists, according to Rose, feel they have "developed a style nobody can deal with" (61).

The relationship between words and music has been a topic of discussion since the Middle Ages. "The first separation" of words from music "took place

some four centuries earlier, and then it was language that proclaimed its independence, as Poetry” (Stevens 15). Stevens reports “medieval composers had no direct interest in their texts; the correlation of tone and word remained haphazard” (Stevens 16). “Almost any music could be composed to almost any words” (Stevens 16). Some criticism of rap music currently is that there is no music there. Rap is devoid of music. In the 14th century Deschamps in a treatise on poetry suggests that poetry is “natural music” and is in contrast to melody which he deems “artificial music” (Baltzer, Cable, Wimsett 8). Bower in the text *Fundamentals of Music* states, “musica is manifested at three levels of existence, the order of the universe, order in the human soul, and order in sounding music” (17). Perhaps we as teachers and our students need to determine which level we are on and what level we think the composers/lyricists/performers are on in any given piece of music. After determining that position we may then be better able to critique the works we encounter.

The Chinese and other ancient Asian cultures view notation somewhat differently than we in the west. Notation is sometimes more for the teacher than the student/performer. “In traditional western music, primary meaning lies in pitch and time relationships, and in these alone” (Cole 11). Our notation system does not communicate many things as Chinese notation does. For example, our notation does not speak directly to mode of attack or how each note is joined to the next, quality of individual notes (Cole 12). Students need to think about the sounds they produce and what they have to do physically to produce the sound. A more physical approach is a valuable approach to explore to try to reach more of our students.

“Teenagers... understand their limited access to traditional avenues of social status attainment” (Rose 38). At times new styles of music may be controversial. The greater culture or dominant societal group becomes aware of the style and that greater culture or dominant societal group makes a “conversion of [the] sub cultural signs.” The dominant societal group(s) (or greater culture) redefines what the dominant societal group considers deviant behavior. The cutting edge artist / group will redefine the art form again to avoid and overcome such cultural constraints.

Rap artists, like all artists, have a desire to be creative. They promote the concept that the individual “can make a new style” (Rose 38). The layering of sound is like a collage for the ear. Uses of electronic equipment allow the instrument to exist as equipment and the equipment to exist as an instrument. The use of the microphone and the vinyl recording on a turntable are examples of a new genre of instrument.

Rap artists are also making use of concepts from electronic music composition. The sound engineer becomes a musician through the concept of sampling and continuous tape loops. Rap artists and sound engineers lift musical motifs from a musical piece. The sample motif is used at times as an ostinato. The ostinato is sometimes rhythmic only and other times a melodic rhythmic ostinato. The sample or tape loop may also appear to be like a riff. The riff may utilize instruments the rap artist and his back up group do not play themselves. The riff adds a melodic component to rap music. Some riff sampling utilizes one melodic instrument. Other melodic riffs have a harmonic group of instruments. This adds depth to the polyphonic nature of rap music. Utilizing music of other artists and other past eras allows the rap artist to comment on the greater dominant culture. The rap line superimposed polyphonically displays to the dominant culture that their music has been heard and analyzed by the rap artist. Their rap line provides a musical commentary on the music of other artists and genres. The meaning of rap lyrics stretches this commentary to greater depth of social, political, economic issues in the entire society. Mixing and editing the music is also an art form. The rhythmic aural nature of sound mixing and editing become part of the music. There must be a great rhythmic awareness and rhythmic use of the equipment to affect the final piece. When video is added, music video being a vital marketing tool, the video editor is added into the mix of musical artist. Rhythm is essential to audio and video editing.

Rap music's development parallels developments in electronic music. The use of electronic equipment rising to the level of instrument must be considered in realms, rap and electronic music. Rap musicians would probably agree with this statement about electronic composers. "The notation of electronic music is nearly impossible anyway, and very few composers create tapes that would lend themselves to note – by – note (or sound- by – sound) transcription in visual forms. Even if this could be done, it would probably look so complex that the performer would be hopelessly confused" (Schwartz 107). Remix in the rap repertoire is similar to polyphonic recording on several tracks in the electronic music world. Music depends on the "ambience [of] sound emanating not from the players but from loud speakers" is a comment about electronic music performance but can easily translate to rap performance (Schwartz 112).

The rap musician might relate to the early jazz musician. Cole forces us to think about and consider that the literate musician may be too locked to the written musical symbol stating, "the attitude that whatever is not in the score must be wrong" (Cole 11). Perhaps we need to unlock our attitudes and approach to written music for students in the approach to literacy in word and note. With video performance integral to CD production on cable television and CD/DVD formats, the visual aspect of sound has gained importance in modern rap music. It also parallels in development of 20th century concert music as well as electronic

music. Read in *Pictographic Score Notation* states, “not pitches, rhythms, or intensities are represented on the score page but, instead the relevant instruments themselves are rendered in visual rather than verbal terms.” (Read ix) This relates to Arnold Schoenberg’s thought that, “one should express [musical materials] as little as possible with letters or even words, and make ever increasing use of signs (if possible pictures...)” (Read ix). Electronic music composers consider the need to score movement within the music. Movement is part of the music. Composer Friedholm Dohl in his piece *Klang – Szene II* composed in 1972 has the dancer depicted in the score which is a pictographic score (Shepherd 243). Luc Ferrari speaks of his electronic piece *Societe II* in 1967 that the score shows movements of the percussionists (Shepherd 239). Students may want to consider how they execute the movement required to create the sound they want vocally or on an instrument. When students are singing they may relate the production of sound to their exploration of electronic music to Alvin Lucier. In their vocal production they may relate to Lucier’s concepts of the sounds inside the body and the value of the brain as a versatile source of waves and electronic signals, beginning the movement of bio-music (Schwartz 128).

Students can explore these concepts of pictorial score notation through Effort/Shape analysis and Labanotation and Dance Writing, pictorial notation of movement. Musical Theatre lends itself to some pictorial display of important nuances of the music. In 1868 John Denier in the musical *Humpty Dumpty* felt the need to visually depict the stage space. The stage has five parallel grooves creating a two dimensional stage usage. Doris Humphrey, modern choreographer, depicts stage space pictorially based on geometric lines created in the proscenium stage space. Notation of the dance and the music coordinate with where the dancer is in space. Scores of traditional musical notation have related Dance Writing notation simultaneously written on the page. This type of connection to the live pictorial score and the modern day video or live concert needs to be made for our students. This may help to dispel the mystery of the written note on the page.

The American Musical Theatre produced work that was considered controversial just as rap is controversial today. America began its journey to American Musical Theatre through the English form, English ballad opera.

Flora is the first known ballad opera to be produced in 1735. Ballad opera was produced for many decades. After we became the United States the form burlesque developed. This form was still an importation. (Theatrehistory.com 1)

“*Ixion* 1869 was shocking because women danced in skin colored tights” (Ibid 1). The production form relied on female sexuality which was important later in

American musical productions (Ibid 1). Sexuality is an issue in opera and rap music. Rap relies on sexuality for much of its shock value to gain public attention. *Carmen* and *Salome* both share in that controversy. The students see that shift across time frames in history. The first commercially successful theatrical production, *The Black Crook*, was produced in New York City in 1866 (Ibid 1). It is referred to as the first American Broadway musical. The playwright Charles M. Barras had in mind a serious drama. Producers added, “spectacular sets, poor quality songs, and a full ballet company without the playwright’s knowledge. We find in the world of rap music artists in conflict from time to time with their producers” (Ibid 1).

While a true American theatrical form was struggling to emerge, the minstrel show came on the American stage scene in 1843. The minstrel show had humor, dance, and song. It was exploitative of African Americans. That is also said of current rap music. There is concern about rap artists today not having control of their material just as African Americans were not in control of the material in minstrel shows.

The Brook, produced in 1879, was the first American musical theatre piece to have plot, characterization, and settings. There was some unity among plot, dialogue, and characters in an American play (theatrehistory.com 1). Many historians think clear American musical comedy structure occurred with the work of George M. Cohan. Cohan’s work utilized the elements of colloquialism, the American spirit, and far fetched and improbable plot. The plot had to frame the song elements of dance, routine, and humorous episodes all which were the same elements of the minstrel show. For Cohan the star drove the plot rather than the play driving the plot (Ibid 2). Out of the degradation of the African American in the Minstrel Show grew the elements of the American Musical Comedy Form. We may ponder degradation of women and controversial lifestyles involved in street violence and drugs. These things prevalent in rap and how it may lead to a new art higher art form may be discussed. Polyrythms, collage/montage of sound, electronic techniques, and spoken dialogue are common elements of rap. American Musical Comedy had the inflexible structure of curtain up, chorus girls, chant, and a big production number at the end of each act. (theatrehistory.com) Once again chanting is important as a vehicle for the voice whether in Gregorian chant, musical comedy, or rap.

The revolution in American musical theatre came with the musical Show Boat in 1927. We see the development of the musical play. The plot of the play becomes integral to the songs, humor, dance, and routines. Characters are developed as is the plot line. (Ibid 3) Musical Play and Musical Comedy as forms are still active today across time. (Ibid 4)

African American music has been an innovative voice and force in the fabric of American music. We can time shift these important innovations from the minstrel show form to the rap music form. The structure of the minstrel show form was the creative impetus to create and establish musical theatre and musical comedy as an American art form separate from our reliance on European forms. Racism has never curbed the African American creative innovative spirit. African Americans in minstrel shows with their inherent degradation still were able to salvage some positive dignity from the form. African American composers, librettists, and playwrights were not permitted on major American mainstream stages while composers embraced African American creativity permitting works like *Porgy and Bess* and *Show Boat* on major mainstream stages. Those white artists took risks of not being accepted, suffering economically, and jeopardizing their own careers. These innovations allowed a broad audience to hear and see new styles of music moving African American concepts and innovations into the mainstream culture.

African American rap music has over time shifted utilization of the voice in Gregorian chant, nuances of Asian inflection and attack, and European opera to develop a new form and style. Rap artists have also used electronic music artists' concepts of embracing electronic equipment as a musical instrument and innovative use of electronic taping of music in creation of their own style. With television and film rap artists have also embraced the use of gesture and movement as part of their artistry. Rap music has entered the mainstream white culture through the world of advertising to a broad white audience through commercial marketing of products. Rap music then enters mainstream pop music charts reflecting sales to a broad white audience.

The objectives and activities link students to the past so that they may begin to find their creative voice. Students linked and grounded in historical material have a solid base on which to create their own American voice.

Lesson Plans

Objectives, Strategies, and Classroom Activities

Lesson: Creating a Staff

Vocabulary: pitch staff

Objective: The student creates his/her own staff with a fixed pitch.

Activities:

1. The students have opportunity to consider that composers are decision makers. They will have to decide how many lines they would like their staff to be and why. They may select to use color for their staff lines. They may select a color and discuss why they chose to have some of their staff in color.
2. The students select one or two lines to have a fixed pitch. They may discuss why they wanted to fix the specific note they chose. They will show how they will mark that pitch for their fellow classmate musicians.

Lesson: Creating a Notation System

Vocabulary: pitch duration

Objective: The students will be able to devise their own notation system.

Activities:

1. The student devises pictorial symbols for duration in time. The student decides on the units of time for their symbols.
2. The student next must devise a method of depicting pitch, high and low sounds.
3. The student creates a pictorial presentation display of their original musical symbols.
4. The student makes an oral presentation and demonstration of their original symbols.

Boatwright in his text *Introduction to the Theory of Music* suggests a student “use only one type of notes, whole notes, without time signatures or bar-lines” (29).

Lesson: Composing Lyrics

Vocabulary:

Motif Motive Lyric Compose Duration Inflection
Pitch
Melody Melodic shape

Objective: The students will be able to create an original short spoken motif / motive.

Activities:

1. Students write the lyrics in phrases or sentences. The students then write the lyrics divided into syllables.
2. Students relate the syllables or word parts to the concept of syllable search utilized in district language arts and reading programs.
3. The class reads each classmate's motifs/motives as a choral reading experience.
4. Students discuss the rhythm of the words deciding which words/ word parts are short in duration or long in duration.
5. Students utilize their original notation system to display their text in written form utilizing musical symbols representing duration.
6. Students discuss inflection of the voice utilized when they speak their lyrics noting when the voice goes up in pitch, remains the same, or goes down in pitch.
7. Students create a pictorial line representation of their motifs/motives/ representing high, same, or low pitch illustrating melodic shape.

Lesson: Creating a Melody

Vocabulary: Staff Pitch

Objective: The students will be able to experience the process of selecting pitches to create an original melodic line.

Activities:

1. The student will create a melody. The melody may be eight, sixteen, or twenty individual pitches. The teacher or student may decide how many pitches the student should create.
2. Students play their melodies on a pitched instrument such as tonal bells, metallophone, xylophone, or glockenspiel.
3. Students may play their own composition.
4. Students may play classmates compositions and discuss communication.
5. If more than one class participates in the activity they may play a classmate's composition from another class and extend the discussion of the purpose and function of communication.

Lesson: Scale Bugs: Manipulating Scales

Vocabulary: Scale Mode Tetra chord Pentachord
Pitch Sharp Flat Diatonic

Objective: Students create hands on manipulative to illustrate and manipulate a scale pattern.

Activities:

1. The student reviews singing a C Major scale using the letter names of the scale: C – D – E – F – G – A – C

2. The student plays a C Major scale on a mallet percussion instrument or on a keyboard.
3. The teacher models for the student the first four notes of the scale: C – D – E – F. The teacher models the last four notes of the scale: G – A – B – C.
4. The student designs a bug or half fish half bug ‘critter’ with four legs and the bug’s legs must have the letter names of the tetra chord portion of the scale marking each bug leg. Each ‘Scale Bug’ must have a name such as ‘C Major Tetrachord Scale Bug’.
5. More advanced students in the 5th grade may use 12 pitches of the scale and create three tetrachord ‘scale bugs’.
6. Other scales to utilize would be F Major and G Major.
7. The ‘Scale Bugs’ could be a collaborative project with the art teacher. The ‘Scale Bugs’ may be drawn on selected drawing paper or could be made from other craft or art materials of the teacher(s) choice.
8. Students play the ‘Scale-Bugs’ reading the notation of the bug legs.

Lesson: The Rapline

Vocabulary: Hip Hop	signifying	synchronization
microphone	turntable	record (vinyl)
stylus	track	polyphony

Objective: Students place rap in a historical perspective.

Activities:

1. The student reads rap history and creates a historical timeline of important events and people in the world of rap.
2. Students draw a rough draft on scratch paper.
3. Students discuss why they excluded or included certain information.
4. Students make a large copy on paper or materials available to the student.
5. Students present their ‘Rapline’ stating their most important events and people and why they are important.

Lesson: Late Breaking News

Objective: Students discuss reasoning of societies that ban artwork. Students debate the impact of banned works.

Vocabulary: To be developed by teacher and students

Activities:

1. Students discuss the way through history some music has been banned, deemed inappropriate, or controversial.
2. Students discuss the artwork in the news media which may be controversial and cannot be spoken of. Their job is to find descriptive appropriate language to inform the public of the banned piece. The class develops a collection of 'extreme words' appropriate for the evening news.
3. Students are assigned a piece to write a story. Students are assigned roles as news anchor, guest talking head on the news program, or on location/field report. Students may be assigned as the artist interviewed about the banned work.
4. Students present their *Extreme News Broadcast*.
5. Students have a roundtable debriefing about the music discussed and reasons why art at times collides with societal rules.

Music Standards Addressed

- ✚ Explain choices made regarding media, technique, form, subject matter and themes that communicate the artist's philosophy within a work in the arts and humanities.
- ✚ Apply traditional and contemporary technology in furthering knowledge and understanding in the humanities.
- ✚ Know and demonstrate how arts can communicate experiences, stories or emotions through the production of works in the arts.
- ✚ Describe and use knowledge of a specific style within each art form through a performance or exhibition of a unique work.
- ✚ Compare similar and contrasting important aspects of works in the arts and humanities based on a set of guidelines using a comprehensive vocabulary of critical response.
- ✚ Classify works in the arts by forms in which they are found.
- ✚ Describe works in the arts comparing similar and contrasting characteristics.

- ✚ Identify critical processes in the examination of works in the arts and humanities.
 - Compare and contrast
 - Analyze
 - Interpret
 - Form and test hypotheses
 - Evaluate/form judgments

- ✚ Identify the attributes of various audiences’ environments as they influence individual aesthetic response.

- ✚ Investigate and communicate multiple philosophical views about works in the arts.

- ✚ Compare similar and contrasting important aspects of works in the arts and humanities based on a set of guidelines using a comprehensive vocabulary of critical response.

Communication Standards Addressed

- ✚ All students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.

- ✚ All students listen to and understand complex oral messages and identify the purpose, structure, and use.

- ✚ All students compose and make oral presentations for each academic area of study that are designed to persuade, inform, or describe.

Mathematics Standards Addressed

- ✚ Represent equivalent forms of the same number through the use of concrete objects, drawings, word names and symbols.

- ✚ Use drawings, diagrams or models to show the concept of fraction as part of a whole.
- ✚ Demonstrate that mathematical operations can represent a variety of problem situations.
- ✚ Determine the appropriate unit of measure.
- ✚ Organize and display data using pictures, tallies, tables, charts, bar graphs and circle graphs.
- ✚ Gather, organize and display data using pictures, tallies, charts, bar graphs and pictographs.

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