Cutting an Album

Critical Listening and Thinking: An Inclusion-Centered Project

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9586L: Music Education in Inclusive Contexts

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July 27, 2020

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Critical Listening and Thinking: An Inclusion-Centered Project

Target: Grade 4

To build awareness of inclusion-based learning; to offer personal insight into student potential and support creativity through the process of composition discovery and voice inquiry.

1. Voice training
2. Compositions for voice
3. Recording our projects and “cutting a record”
4. Sharing discovery with other classes and community

Actionable Project

**Rationale**:

This program/unit is designed to promote personal identity and exploration of self within an inclusive participatory framework. Our primary focus is confronting our perspective of identity through music, researching alternative approaches and exploring the best practices that will honour and respect inclusion of all students. As such, the following trajectories will be explored:

1. Explore different cultural traditions behind music and text
2. Hypothesize the meaning of self-identity using creative outlets.
3. Determine student role and purpose within an academic and social framework.
4. Accept differences of others with respect.
5. Build independence through extensive learnings and dialoguing with the instructors.

**Unit Resources:**

1. <https://www.edonline.sk.ca/webapps/moe-curriculum-BBLEARN/CurriculumHome?id=11>
2. Saskatchewan repertoire (exemplars)
3. compositions by Canadian composers
4. microphones
5. recording devices/laptops
6. <https://musescore.org/en>
7. <https://www.bandlab.com/>

Website for Saskatchewan/Canadian music resources/ideas:

1. [SaskMusic: Home](https://www.saskmusic.org/)

**Unit Plan**

**Essential Question:**

Q. In what ways can creating music address academic and personal needs while also supporting transferable skills?

Supporting Essential Question using **Personal/Academic Outcomes**

*Students will be able to:*

* illustrate music using visual representation
* interrelate choral repertoire with personal socio-cultural environment
* unpack previous learnings and synthesize new learning
* recognize personal connections to music
* offer support and collaborate with peers in group exercises
* discover methods with which they learn best and be willing to explore new methodological approaches
* use aural skills to describe what they hear and recreate those compositions
* evaluate the work of their peers in a constructive, thoughtful manner
* present final (pre-recorded) compositions (or album) in “festival class”
* in a brief video recording, students evaluate their learnings, reflecting upon the process (also presented during the Festival)
* formulate ideas and plans to utilize programs that provide an inclusive environment for students with disabilities (p. 4, Baldwin)
* speech-to-text
* visual and aural resources
* scribe

**Academic Outcomes and Indicators**

*Grade 4 students will be able to:*

*CP4.5 Demonstrate increased skills and abilities in the use of voice and instruments (traditional and/or homemade) and develop compositions using Saskatchewan as inspiration.*

* Sing in tune and begin to develop the ability to sing harmony.
* Distinguish between the head voice and the chest voice in singing.
* Recognize different voice classifications in singing and own voice qualities (e.g., soprano, alto).
* Sing expressively, using proper breath support, vowel sounds, consonants, and tone production.
* Demonstrate increasing independence when playing various sound objects and instruments.
* Experiment with sounds and music concepts to express ideas derived from Saskatchewan sources such as local stories, poems, visual art works, photos, land and geography, observations, and current or historical events.
* Select and organize sounds, instruments, and ideas for composition.
* Analyze and describe decisions made and problems solved in own and group compositions (e.g., choice of instruments, and organization of form, tempo, and dynamics).
* Keep a record of sound/music ideas (e.g., invented and traditional notation, audio recording, learning logs).
* Recognize accidental discoveries in own compositions and put them to use where appropriate.

(*Saskatchewan* Arts Education Curriculum, 2011)

**Unit Plan Details**

Objective: CP4.5 - Students complete the project in small groups.

**Lessons to Promote Learning**

All indicators retrieved from the Saskatchewan Education Website:

<https://www.edonline.sk.ca/webapps/moe-curriculum-BBLEARN/CurriculumOutcomeContent?id=11&oc=19292>

**Lesson one:** Introduction to Composing

**Indicator**: Keep a record of sound/music ideas (e.g., invented and traditional notation, audio recording, learning logs).

(*Saskatchewan* Arts Education Curriculum, 2011)

We will keep a recording using journals. **Speech-to-text options** are also available on school laptops.

Approximate time required: 45 minutes

Personal Journal Reflection - complete and share with small groups

1. Share short excerpts of compositions through aural learning
* different genres
* tempos
* instrumental with or without vocals

Students can contribute to this discussion and make connections to music they hear at home, church, or within their community.

1. Choose a piece and discuss its relevance with students - build a mind map example with student involvement asking students what makes this music interesting, different, etc..
2. Students will complete a personal mind map independently diagramming their own thoughts.

**Lesson two**: Sharing the Mind Map

**Indicator(s)**:

* Keep a record of sound/music ideas (e.g., invented and traditional notation, audio recording, learning logs).
* Recognize different voice classifications in singing and own voice qualities (e.g., soprano, alto).

(*Saskatchewan* Arts Education Curriculum, 2011)

Approximate time required: 45 minutes

Personal Journal Reflection - complete and share with small groups

“How do we address the search for our own voices and, at the same time, the craving to be lost, overwhelmed within music?” (p., 166, Schmidt)

**Peer-to-peer** mind map sharing x3

Music “is a primarily social role across cultures” (p. 3, Mitchell), meaning a good discussion prior to music-making can only promote critical thought about music and inclusivity.

Coach the dialogue but allow freedom, encouraging respectful delivery. Share music selections introducing voice. How are these voices similar? How are they different?

1. Have several artists from several genres. Include excerpts from the following operas/artists: Chacun le Sait - Donizetti
2. Toby Keith
3. **Nukariik**
4. Mozart’s Requiem in D minor
5. Louis Armstrong

**Lessons Three, Four, Five, and Six: Researching and Composing**

**Indicators:**

* Experiment with sounds and music concepts to express ideas derived from Saskatchewan sources such as local stories, poems, visual art works, photos, land and geography, observations, and current or historical events. Select and organize sounds, instruments, and ideas for composition.

*Introduction – Class and Teacher Assignment/Hook*

[*https://folklife.si.edu/talkstory/the-sound-of-life-what-is-a-soundscape*](https://folklife.si.edu/talkstory/the-sound-of-life-what-is-a-soundscape)

* *Create and record a soundscape with students accessing the sounds of the school, nature, midi instruments, classroom tools, etc...*
* *Discuss the meaning behind each sound chosen. How do our choices reflect who we are as individuals? How does this connect to our identity?*
* Analyze and describe decisions made and problems solved in own and group compositions (e.g., choice of instruments, and organization of form, tempo, and dynamics).

(*Saskatchewan* Arts Education Curriculum, 2011)

Approximate time required: 4 classes (45-60 minutes each)

Personal Journal Reflection - complete and share with small groups

* Materials needed: paper and pencil
* painting displayed for reference
* notation examples
* introduction to Bandlab or MuseScore

Notation can be represented later. Reflecting on soundscape creation, allow the students to collaborate how they want to represent the sounds on the page with some teacher feedback for clarity purposes.

1. Have five paintings ready to share with the class.
2. Choose one and create a mind map with the students that represents the painting. Think about texture, colour, emotions to help fill in the information.
3. Associate these items with an inanimate object, one that will create a unique sound but also represents the paintings aspects.
4. Have your pre-recorded composition ready to share with the class and the principal or other teacher. After listening to the recording, ask your guest to guess which painting the composition represented.
5. Have students work in pairs to choose a painting, create their own mind map and composition.
* Encourage students to discuss decisions.
* Remind students all suggestions contribute to the composition.
* Encourage critical listening when students contribute.
* What they feel the painting represents should be discussed.
1. Pairs present and make their guesses.

**Lesson Seven: Work Period**

Indicators:

* Select and organize sounds, instruments, and ideas for composition.
* Analyze and describe decisions made and problems solved in own and group compositions (e.g., choice of instruments, and organization of form, tempo, and dynamics).

Approximate time required: 1 - 1.5 hours

“Set the stage” by beginning a conversation about critical listening. Students create their assignment from the previous lesson. Visit each station and guide if needed.

Use this time to utilize some critical thinking questioning. Provide a generous amount of wait time.

How can we continue to apply learnings to programs like BandLab or MuseScore?

**There will be several work-related group sessions placed here as students navigate the music programs and delve into another creative universe.**

**Lesson Seven: Sharing Our Learnings with Another Class**

Be sure to record compositions on the **Grade Four Cutting an Album** project file. We will share this project and a brief understanding of our learnings with other classes. Our primary focus for this session will be:

1. Respect for each student’s musical interpretation - A **clap** and **cheer** after each performer
2. Positive journal reflection of individual work - explain in detail what was challenging about the project, working in groups/pairs, the genre of music, etc.

**Lesson Eight: Festival Share with Family and Community Members**

In a station-like format, students will share their learnings aurally and visually through discussion and representation. Family and community members are invited to attend this event. The educational process, the skills and abilities acquired, are the primary focus. Students are encouraged to share their learnings in a thoughtful manner, paying special attention to the process and less about the final product. Students are to share the dialogue with their group members, offering encouragement and support during their presentation.

References

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