**Lesson Plan: Music**

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**Activity Name**

Beginning Composition

**Grade Level/Class**

MS 6th-7th grade

**Major Concepts**

Music can be composed many ways.

**Materials and Resources**

* Manuscript paper
* Pencils
* Rhythm cards
* Solfege cards
* Notation programs – such as Muse, Finale, Sibelius
* Notebook paper

**Rationale**

Comprehensive Musicianship (CM) is an approach to the study of music through the common structural elements. These elements are experienced in performing, listening and composition. Students acquire musical knowledge and gain understanding by taking on each of the roles: listener, performer, composer.

**South Dakota Music Standards**

#1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

#2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

#3: Refine and complete artistic work.

**Behavioral or Observable Objectives**

As a result of this activity students will:

* Explore two ideas of composing: lyrics first and rhythm first.
* Begin learning how to apply a melody to lyrics and rhythm.
* Begin learning how to notate music on manuscript paper.
* Begin learning basic music notation software.

**Assessment**

I will use formative assessment throughout the lesson by performing the following:

* I will review the students’ progress in applying lyrics to rhythm and rhythm to lyrics and ask students to identify if it is correct – why or why not.
* I will correct final compositions, checking for notation errors in the hand-written music as well as in the music notation program.
* Students will perform their compositions for the class.

**Teaching Strategies**

**Anticipatory Set**

* I will ask the students to recall where we left off and where they are in their compositional writing.
* Students will share any ideas or questions they may have.

**Procedure**

* The students will choose 8 rhythm cards (4 beats each) and as a class will decide the order they should go to form an 8 measure sequence.
* Students will write lyrics to fit the rhythm. They can use words or random vocal sounds. They can choose to create lyrics that tie together or be random.
* After students have lyrics that fit the rhythms they chose as a class, students will write solfege syllables above the rhythms to create a melody.
* Teacher and students will sing through the lyrics and melodies and make changes as students choose.
* Review basic notation rules: clefs, time signature, stem direction, spacing. Key signature will stay in C major/A minor.
* Students will transfer their 8 measure rhythm sequence along with solfege melody to the manuscript paper.
* Students will transfer their lyrics to the manuscript paper.
* Review basic notation program functions and ‘how to’.
* Students will begin transferring their manuscripted composition to the computer notation program.
* Once students have this part of the project completed, they can then begin writing new lyrics to fit a brand new 8 measure song.
* Students will write rhythms to fit the lyrics, 8 measures with 4 beats per measure.
* Once the students have written their new lyrics and rhythms, they will again use solfege syllables to create a melody.
* Notation on manuscript paper and using notation programs will continue as they did previously.
* \*\*\*Along the way, students who complete the steps more quickly than others will assist in correcting their peers’ work and offering suggestions.\*\*\*

**Closure/Transition**

* We will review through discussion what we have done so far in the process of this composition project.
* We will briefly discuss the remaining steps in this composition project.
* Students will share any new insights or ideas in composition so far.

**Modifications for special needs or cultural differences**

A student in the class, Jonathon, is learning disabled. He has great speech abilities and can express himself well, including what he likes and dislikes. He is challenged with solfege, note names, rhythms and writing. I can work with him one-on-one and also assign a couple other students as peer teachers to assist him through this project. Jonathon can write lyrics. We can say those lyrics to the rhythms and help him make the lyrics fit the rhythm. Once the lyrics are matched with rhythms or rhythms with lyrics, we can use melody cards and sing various combinations of melodies for Jonathon to choose from and piece together to fit his lyrics.