

Explore Music 8: Introductory Module

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Introductory Module (Required)

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The instructional hours indicated for each unit provide guidelines for planning, rather than strict requirements. The sequence of skill and concept development is to be the focus of concern. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these suggested timelines to meet the needs of their students.

To be effective in teaching this module, it is important to use the material contained in *Explore Music: Curriculum Framework* and *Explore Music: Appendices*. Therefore, it is recommended that these two components be frequently referenced to support the suggestions for teaching, learning, and assessment in this module.

Icons Used in this Module



Formative
Assessment



Summative
Assessment



Listening



Key Point



Extension



Cross
Curricular

Explore Music 8: Introductory Module

(26 Instructional hours with an option to complete it in 13 hours)

Overview

Rationale

In *Explore Music 7*, all students were required to take the Introductory Module before proceeding to the other modules. Students were led through a series of learning opportunities in which they reviewed rhythmic concepts that had been taught in *Music Primary – 6*. While reviewing these concepts, students applied the skills and concepts to improvisation and composition. Students taking *Explore Music 8* should have a solid understanding of the following:

- note names and values
- time signatures and measures
- rhythmic scores
- improvisation
- questions/answers and rondo form
- ostinato

This module will build on these skills, focusing on the following:

- melody, including pentatonic and diatonic scales
- harmony and texture, with opportunities to demonstrate these elements both through composition and performance

Additionally, in *Explore Music 8* students will gain experience using graphic notation in composition. Some students may already understand this process if they completed Unit 4 in the Introductory Module for *Explore Music 7* (those students who completed the module in 26 hours). In grade 8, a brief overview of graphic notation will be given, with activities for students to practice and apply the skills and concepts to composition.

Students who take *Explore Music 8* will enter the course with experience in applying skills and concepts to performance. In addition to the Introductory Module, many will have taken guitar, world drumming, and/or popular music in grade 7, and all these modules are hands-on with students creating and presenting music on an instrument. Therefore, by the time they enter grade 8, they should have a solid foundation on which to build their musicianship.

Glossary

- time signature
- measures
- questions/answers
- rhythmic rondo
- melodic rondo
- pentatonic scale
- clef signs
- ledger lines
- chords
- chordal structure
- harmony
- texture
- timbre
- graphic notation

Introduction

The Introductory Module is compulsory for the successful completion of *Explore Music 8*, and this module should be completed before beginning the others. It is designed in such a way as to allow students to complete all the activities in 26 hours, or one term, provided the schedule allows for two 60-minute periods per 5- or 6-day cycle. If, for example, this is not possible, and there are only 60 minutes scheduled for *Explore Music 8* in a 5- or 6-day cycle, then it is advised that teachers complete only the basic activities without the “Extensions” which are highlighted in gray throughout the module (total 13 hours).

A culminating activity requiring students to create a musical composition is a critical component of the assessment for this course. Teachers should introduce this activity to students on the very first day and build on the skills as they progress throughout the module. In this way, they should discover how all the elements interact in music making.

Knowing the nature of young teens, teachers must be aware of the limitations they may face with students in the class. We know that peer pressure influences how students react to new learning. Moreover, because of changes taking place at this stage of development, young teens often experience challenges with discovering their singing voice. Therefore, teachers must be sensitive to these issues, and not place students in situations where they will “shut down” because of embarrassment among their peers. While we need to encourage students to sing, the realities are such that at this stage it can be problematic for some students – particularly the boys – to achieve success in this medium, and therefore other forms of expressing and communicating musical thoughts and ideas may be encouraged.

The range of learners is amplified when one considers the prior learning experiences outside the school that some students may have had. There may be some in this course who have a strong background through private instruction. Teachers need to be aware of this range of abilities and differentiate instruction to ensure that all students are challenged and are able to achieve success.

It is expected that in most cases, the same teacher will teach *Explore Music 7* and *Explore Music 8*. Therefore, the proficiency level of students should be fairly evident. However, if this is not the case, it is suggested that at the beginning of the Introductory Module, teachers complete a needs assessment to discover the range of learners and skill level among students. This will allow for more effective instruction that is tailored to meet the needs of all students.

Outcomes Addressed

- Learners will analyse how rhythm, meter, and tempo communicate meaning.
- Learners will analyse the role of melody and harmony in the communication of meaning.
- Learners will evaluate the role of texture and form in communicating meaning.
- Learners will evaluate how composers and performers synthesize the elements of music to communicate meaning.
- Learners will analyse how the cultures of local and global communities are expressed through music.
- Learners will create original musical works reflecting personal, social, and cultural contexts.
- Learners will perform music in ensembles to communicate meaning.

Tips for Teaching Success

To be effective, assessment must be part of the teaching and learning process. Teaching, learning, and assessment work best when informed decisions are made based on how well the students are progressing. If left to the end of a unit or at the end of this module, teachers will find themselves making subjective decisions, and students will find the actual assessment meaningless. Therefore, to be able to arrive at a final mark at the end of this module, teachers must include an assessment activity every day. For examples of assessment instruments, see Appendix D in *Explore Music 7–9: Appendices*.

Tips for Teaching Success

Refer to the “Big Ideas” in *Talk About Assessment* to get a sense of how you will be assessing student progress in this module. In your introduction to the module, tell the students about the eight big ideas and explain that this is the process you will be using in assessing them. It will be necessary for each student to maintain a portfolio of their progress, and this can be a binder in which they can insert assignments, extra practice, journal notes, reflections, etc.



While the activities that follow are written in a sequential order, allowing for flexibility with the time spent on each section as well as the entire module, teachers should exercise flexibility when facilitating them. For example, if the module will be completed in 13 hours, the extension activities may be used for those students who have a solid background and may need greater challenge. It is important to realize that this module is intended to review the skills and concepts taught to the end of grade 6, emphasize their importance in an authentic context (composition, presentation, performance), and prepare students for the subsequent modules.

Materials

- to ensure that students experience success with this module, it is necessary for them to have access to pitched percussion instruments. Ideally, you should have a set of Orff instruments in the classroom, along with tone bells and a collection of rhythm instruments. If your school does not have these, you may consider borrowing them from a neighbouring school. Some of the activities can be completed using keyboard instruments, but these can be intimidating for some students, and they are limiting in the number of students who can use them at one time.
- a collection of non-pitched instruments and/or other sound sources
- staff paper
- music writing software
- a quality sound system and access to computers with composition and recording capabilities

Unit 1: Getting Started/Rhythm Review

(3 hours)

Introduction

The activities in this unit will serve two purposes: reinforce a team approach to music making, while at the same time reviewing basic skills and concepts in rhythm. This unit is an important one because it will not only set a tone of active music making that is the cornerstone of this course, but it will also allow you as teacher to get to know your students and discover their proficiency levels.

Key Concepts

- rhythmic vocabulary
- time signatures
- measures
- questions/answers
- rhythmic rondo

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

PART A: INTRODUCTION TO THE MODULE (1 HOUR)

As students enter the room, play a selection of music that incorporates a strong rhythmic element, and, if possible, a recognizable cultural component. Examples include “Medley” from *Gipsy Kings Greatest Hits*, “She Moves On” from Paul Simon’s *The Rhythm of the Saints*, “I Want You” from *Savage Garden*, “Jai Ho” from *Slumdog Millionaire* soundtrack.

Have a large space ready so students can move freely to the music. Encourage students to begin moving around the room feeling the beat. Vary the movement by having them change directions; move only on beats 1 and 4 or 2 and 3; use different levels (high, medium, and low); have the group follow one student, etc. Be creative and encourage students to make suggestions for movement. Based on their experiences from *Explore Music 7*, they should be comfortable with this warm-up.

Debrief the activity by talking about the cultural influences in the music they heard, the instruments playing on the recording, the time signature, etc. Elicit as many “rhythmic” vocabulary words as possible and begin compiling a list on the board.



Give students an outline of the module, stressing the fact that they will be building on their learnings in *Explore Music 7* while at the same developing greater proficiency in improvisation and composition. Discuss the assessment component, reviewing the eight “Big Basics” in *Talk About Assessment*. Explain that their evaluation for the module will be cumulative, and assessments will be completed each day they meet. Introduce the culminating project found in Unit 5 and discuss how this project will be developed throughout the module.

As students participate in the activity, take notes on those who are experiencing challenges with rhythm, those who appear to have a good understanding of it, and those who are excelling. These observations will play a key role in how you plan the remainder of the module, and how you address the individual needs of students.

Using the resource, *Improvisation Games for Classical Musicians* (Agrell, Chapter 12 “Rhythm Games”) and based on your observations from the previous activity, lead students in rhythm activities that are appropriate for the class. Suggestions include

- Hand Drills and Skills (page 79)
- African Switchback (page 88)
- Ostinato (page 89)
- Rhythm Palette (page 95)



While these activities are meant to motivate students and review rhythm, they can provide valuable insight into their musical understanding. Take notes as they will assist in planning the remainder of the module.

PART B: (2 HOURS)

In groups of four, have students explore “Quarters to Two” (Agrell, page 91). After they have had time to improvise their rhythms, have them notate them on a single line (staff) with correct time signature and measure markings using music software. This includes the improvised parts as well.



Have students perform their “compositions” for the other students in the class, and ask for feedback using the following guided questions:

- Did the group keep a steady beat?
- Was the time signature evident (strong pulse on beat 1)?
- Did all members of the group participate and work together to achieve a common goal?

- Did the group challenge themselves by including rhythms that may have been more advanced?
- Give one positive statement about the performance.
- Give one suggestion for improvement.

Have groups pass in their notations. This can be an important needs assessment for you as teacher. It will determine those students who will need additional help before moving to melody.

Begin with a review of questions and answers where you use body percussion to create a 2-measure phrase, and an individual responds with an improvised phrase that is the same length. Extend the activity to 4-measure phrases. Note individual student achievement.

Tips for Teaching Success

You should always insist that the last beat of the final measure of each phrase is a rest to ensure that students are not rushed in their response. It makes for a natural flow.



Assign a rhythmic rondo. In their same groups, have students decide on a 4-measure phrase that will become the “A” section. Notate this using music software to create score notation (they should include at least 4 percussion instruments, body percussion, or combinations of both). Have each student in turn improvise a contrasting section (B, C, D, E). They do not need to notate these sections, as in the true spirit of improvisation the music should dictate the response.



After students have had opportunity to perform their rondos (in a song-writers circle format), have them complete a Group Assessment (samples may be found in Appendix D, *Explore Music 7–9: Appendices*). Discuss these with each group before the next class (they need be no longer than 5 minutes).

Unit 2: Melody

(9 hours [6 hours + 3 hours extension])

Introduction

In this unit, students will focus on melody as they build their note reading skills and deepen their understanding of scales. Building on the rhythmic development in *Explore Music 7*, students will have opportunities to improvise and compose using pitched instruments, and then notate their melodies on a staff.

As they create their own melodies, you will need to monitor the environment so those students who are struggling with the concepts will be able to achieve success at their own level. However, it is important that all students know the foundation for scale building (pentatonic and diatonic), as well as the placement of notes on the treble clef staff.

For many of the exercises in this unit, melodic instruments must be available to students. These can include keyboards, Orff instruments, tone bells, wind, and string instruments. Ideally, it would be best if there were several available in the classroom.



Since pitches will need to be notated on a staff, music writing software is key. Several are available, and teachers should choose one that matches the capacity of the computers in the music room and the ability level of students.

Key Concepts

- C, F, G pentatonic scales
- grand staff
- clef signs
- lines, spaces, ledger lines
- melodic questions/answers
- modes

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

PART A: REVIEW OF PENTATONIC SCALES (3 HOURS)

In *Music Primary* – 6 students learn the pentatonic (5 tone) scale. This is a good place to begin this unit on melody as it gives students experience with limited pitches that always blend. Review the pentatonic scale with students. In pairs, have them create questions and answers in the same way as they did with rhythmic questions in Unit 1. If you have a selection of Orff instruments, space them around the classroom. Otherwise,

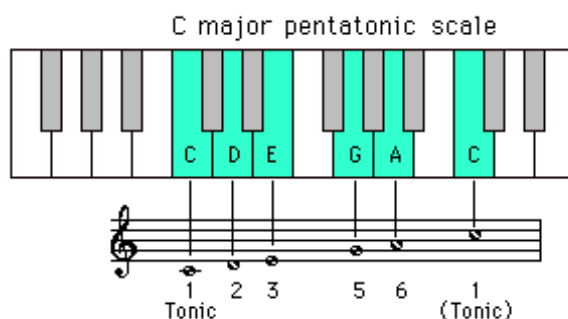
do this warm-up on the keyboard(s) that is/are in the room:

- Put students in groups of four and have them take a place at a pitched instrument. If using Orff instruments, have them remove some bars leaving only those that form a C pentatonic scale (C, D, E, G, A). If using keyboards, have them use the black keys since this forms the pentatonic scale. The first student improvises a 2-measure musical “cell” and the next student answers. That student then improvises a 2-measure cell, and the next one answers. Repeat the process as much as is necessary to allow students to feel comfortable creating two-measure questions and answers. Explain how their question and answer together form a four-measure phrase with a beginning, middle, and end. Have them experiment with this concept by moving their arms in an arch over their head as you demonstrate a melodic phrase on the instrument. Encourage them to end their answer on C as this will feel like a resting place that often characterizes the end of a phrase.

Review with students the grand staff, clefs, and names of lines, spaces, and ledger lines. Refer to ApRo Theory Level 1, lessons 1, 2, 3 and 14. Using a keyboard, demonstrate whole steps and half steps. Ask students to find notes using the whole and half step method, e.g., whole step above D, half step below F, 1 ½ steps above E, 2 steps below B. Have students practice this by repeating the exercise, this time writing the intervals on staff paper. When doing this activity, always have them write the starting note and write the second note after that rather than above it. This will allow them to see how the notes move. Later they will practice notes that are played together as in a chord or a contrasting melody.

Show on the staff, the notation for the C pentatonic scale using the following formula:

- Whole step, whole step, step and a half, whole step



Now give them time to practice writing the C pentatonic on their own as you walk around the room ensuring that everyone has understood the formula. Have them try the F and G pentatonic scales as these do not require accidentals.

Distribute a sheet that lists several 2-measure “questions” in a pentatonic scale. Leave space following each to write a two-measure “answer”. Using the same key, have students write an answer to each question. After students have completed their answers, put them in pairs and have them collaborate as they review and revise. If instruments are available, have them try these out. As an extension, have students create their own questions, while their partner creates the answer. Challenge those students who have greater proficiency in melodic concepts to write 4-measure questions and answers.



‘Question and answer’ technique in a musical selection is considered a musical form and is often referred to as call and response. Play for students a recording of any piece that demonstrates call and response, or question and answer. Choose examples from popular music as well as orchestral music (e.g., *Symphony No. 41, Jupiter* by Mozart. Discuss how in this piece the questions are stated in one section of the orchestra and then answered by a contrasting section. This also happens in popular music.



Have students bring to class an example of popular music that shows question and answer technique .



Play the pentatonic scale for the class. Ask them to respond with comments about the culture that comes to mind when they hear it. Many Asian cultures use the pentatonic scale in their music. Now play for students examples of music that have a very strong pentatonic sound.

Put students in groups of four and provide pitched instruments for each group. This time one student will improvise a question, and another will improvise the answer (limited to C pentatonic scale). Each student should have an opportunity to improvise a question and an answer. Have them notate each on the staff. There should be four 4-measure phrases created now and these can be the foundation for a 16-measure composition that will be added to over time.



Have each group arrange the four phrases in an order that sounds appealing. Now have each group perform their composition for the other students, eliciting constructive feedback. They should be able to justify their choices for the way they arranged their composition. Ask the class to suggest one positive thing that makes their composition interesting, and one thing that they may wish to try in order to improve it. After all groups have performed, take another 10 minutes to have them try the suggestions made. Bring them back to the full group and ask them to explain what they discovered.

- Did they like the suggested changes or did they like their original way better?
- Why or why not?
- What would they do differently if they did the exercise again?



Now that students have had a review of notes on the staff, both aural and written, it is a good time to do melodic dictation. Begin with a limited note set, such as sol-la-mi, and add more notes when they are ready. You can either sing the pitches or play them on an instrument. Begin with one measure and build. Keep the rhythm fairly simple at the beginning but increase the complexity of the melodic pattern as they gain more confidence. Have them correct each other's work and note those who are experiencing challenges with melodic dictation.

Tips for Teaching Success

Ear training should become a part of every lesson, as it reinforces skills taught and develops a life skill that needs to be nurtured.

Put students back in their groups from the earlier activity. Now they are going to create a rondo using the 16-measure composition they created. The 16 measures will be the A section. After everyone plays this, the first student will improvise an 8 or 16-measure B section (not written down). Everyone repeats A. Then the next student improvises a C section, and this is followed by everyone playing A. Continue until each student has had an opportunity to improvise a section of the rondo. After they have had sufficient time to practice, have them play their rondos for the class. Remind them that since the contrasting sections are not written down, they may sound different every time they are played. This is characteristic of improvisation.

Tips for Teaching Success

Depending on the ability level(s) in the class, some students may find improvising several measures a challenge. You as teacher can assess the situation and determine the length that is appropriate for students – 4, 8, or 16 measures.



Have students write a response in their journals that indicates how they feel they did in the rondo project. Some prompts to help them include:

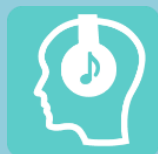
- A question I am curious about and want to find an answer to is....
- I learned that...
- During this project, most of my time was spent...
- I found it easy to...
- I had some trouble....but I solved it by...



EXTENSION (1 HOUR)

To be completed in those situations where the module will be 26 hours in duration.

Provide more practice for students in creating questions and answers as well as rondos using the C, F, and G pentatonic scales.



Begin each class with melodic dictation, and as you sing or play a 2-measure pattern, have the class sing it back before writing it. Continue adding notes until students have proficiency in listening to and writing 2-measure patterns in all three pentatonic scales (C, F, and G). When students are comfortable with dictations that are limited to quarter notes and quarter rests, add eighth notes and half notes. Sixteenth notes for melodic dictation can be challenging at this point.

Try sight reading with students. Have on the board or overhead, an 8-measure phrase in C pentatonic. Give them the starting tone and ask them to sing it using the note names. Have students play the phrase on a pitched instrument in the classroom, or one that they brought from home.



Have students individually create a 16-measure composition using the C, F or G pentatonic scale. It is good to have them work on this during class time as this will allow you as teacher to provide additional help where needed. The compositions should be passed in on staff paper, and students must be reminded of proper note placements, spacing, alignment, neatness, etc. Before they pass them in, have them perform them for the class.

PART B: DIATONIC SCALES (3 HOURS)

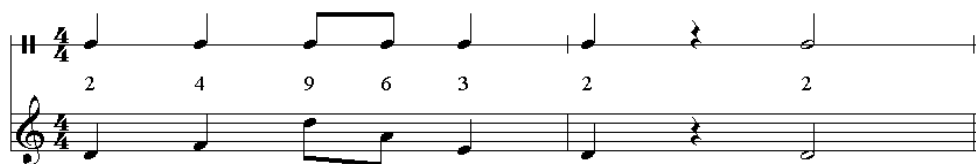
Tips for Teaching Success

It is important that this module not become characterized by worksheets, practice drills, memorization, and isolated activities to merely learn notes on the staff. The best learning takes place when students experiment with skills and concepts and discover in the process. This is more meaningful, and characteristic of the way we learn language. If skills are taught in isolation, they are less likely to be internalized.

Review the pentatonic scale with students by having C pentatonic written on staff lines on the board, leaving a space for F and B. Review the formula (whole step, whole step, 1 ½ steps, whole step). Ask students if anyone knows the notes that are missing. Have someone fill them in on the staff. Play the pattern on a pitched instrument. How many notes are there in this scale (8 and this forms an octave)? Now challenge them to figure out the new formula for this scale: whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half. Provide a practice page so they can write the C Major scale. Sing the scale using note names, numbers, or sol-fa syllables.



- To familiarize students with note names and placement on the staff, have them write a short melodic phrase using their phone number.
- Write a 2-measure rhythmic phrase in $\frac{4}{4}$ time using combinations of eighth, quarter, half notes, and rests. Be sure the bar line is placed correctly.
- Consider the numbers for the C Major scale (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). Put each digit of their phone number under a note in the rhythm pattern (e.g., 249-6322).
- Translate the numbers to notes on the staff. For 9, use 4th line D; for 0 use a rest.
- Place the treble clef at the beginning. Now try playing it on a pitched instrument





Select some students to play their melodic phrase for the class and discuss it in terms of good phrasing.

- Does it feel like the last phrase of a song?
- Why or why not?
- If rests were used, are they placed strategically suggesting that the phrase has a beginning, middle and end?
- What other observations have they noticed?
-

Put students in pairs and repeat the exercise above, so they now have a 4-measure phrase. Allow them the liberty to change the notes (do not necessarily restrict them to their phone numbers) so they can make their phrase sound more musical. Encourage them to play the phrases and make changes, as necessary.



EXTENSION (2 HOURS)

To be completed in those situations where the module will be 26 hours in duration.

Experiment by writing the numbers in a variety of patterns:

- Sequence (add one number to each digit)
- Repetition (your number again)
- Retrograde (your number backwards)
- Rhythmic shift (begin on the second number with the first number now last)
- Fragmentation (pick two numbers from your phone number and repeat them, e.g. 494-9494)
- Augmentation (make every number larger)
- Diminution (make every number smaller)

Write other 2-measure rhythm patterns and repeat the activity with the new rhythms.

Using melodic instruments, have students work in pairs to improvise questions and answers in C Major, using steps similar to the previous exercises. Always have students notate their phrases on the staff using software and encourage them to think musically as they develop their understanding of shaping phrases. When they have had sufficient experience in pairs, have them join another group so there are 4 students working together. Have them select their favorite question and answer sequence and arrange these to form a 16-measure melody. Encourage them to think about 4 phrases, each with a beginning, middle and end.

- Do they flow easily?
- Is there a feeling of “rest” at the end of measure 8 and measure 16?

Compare it to asking a question in a conversation, where the vocal inflection seems to rise at the end of the question and fall or rest at the end of the answer. Give them flexibility to make changes to their melodies.



Whenever possible, students should use music software to notate their compositions. However, if computers and time are limited, have them notate by hand being sure they place the notes properly on the lines and use proper spacing.

When students have their 16-measures written and feel confident in playing them on a pitched instrument, have them sit in a circle. Have each group of 4 perform their melody for the others, and as in a songwriters circle, elicit feedback from the class. Encourage them to think of things they found appealing, as well as ideas for improvement. Have students return to the group and incorporate these changes if they feel they like them. Remind them that ultimately it is their composition, so they can take the suggestions under advisement, try them out, and decide if they make their composition sound better.

Have each student write several melodic questions and answers in C Major (forming 4-measures).



Begin the next class with short melodic dictations (start with one measure and build) in C Major scale. Always give students the starting tone.

Tips for Teaching Success

For additional ear training activities for warm-ups or to add variety to the lesson, check out Chapter 15 (Melody Games) in *Improvisation Games for Classical Musicians* (Agrell). There are exercises for all ability levels, and students will be motivated by them.

Now put students in pairs and have each student select a question and an answer from previous ones they created. Arrange all 8 measures (a 4-measure question and answer from each of the two students) in a sequence that feels musical, making alterations in notes and note values if necessary. Play this melody and continue rehearsing it until they are comfortable enough to perform it for others. This is the A section. Then have one of the students improvise an 8-measure melody, to become the B section. Repeat A. Review rondo

form again and demonstrate how they have just composed a rondo. This can also be done with 4 students in a group, creating longer sections for A and B.

After creating the rondo, consider a rhythmic ostinato that can be used to accompany the melody. Play the rondo again with the ostinato. Next, name pitches for each of the notes in the ostinato, using only notes in the pentatonic scale. Now try playing the rondo with a melodic ostinato. For these activities you will need more than two performers.

Experiment with changing the note values of the ostinato using augmentation, diminution, and retrograde motion. What resulted in the overall sound?

Introduce students to key signatures. Avoid the typical “lecture” on keys, scales, etc. Rather, ask students to play a C Major scale. Have them sing the scale again using numbers, note names or sol-fa. Remind them again of the formula – whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half steps. Now ask a student to demonstrate on a keyboard a scale that begins on F. Did they notice anything unusual. Usually they will first play the scale with a B \sharp . If this was the pattern that was played, elicit from the class ideas on what was wrong with the sequence. Explain that to maintain the formula, we need a B \flat . Have them write the F Major scale on a staff with the proper accidental. Explain how this accidental can be placed in the key signature and then we do not need it throughout the piece.

Now try the same thing beginning on G. If they write the G Major scale they will include an F sharp. Again, have them write the scale on the staff.



Practice melodic dictation in the keys of F and G Major. Begin with one measure and build, always providing the starting tone. Include a few patterns that use an accidental (B in F Major, and F in G Major). Build over time, until they are comfortable with 2-measure dictations in the following Major keys: C, F, G.

Using one of the new keys (F Major or G Major), have students create a simple 16-measure melody using the notes in a major scale. You may want to give them specific parameters within which to work, such as

- Use only the following note and rest values (name them)
- Use at least 6 of the 8 notes in the scale
- Use common time
- Repeat one measure at least once
- Have a breathing space (rest) at the end of measure 4, 8, 12, 16
- End on the tonic of the scale
- Clearly show your understanding of how the melody rises and falls



Once they have completed their melody, provide them time to practice it on an instrument until they feel comfortable playing it for the class. Explain that this is a work in progress and treat the performances of these melodies as a “song writers circle” by encouraging the other students to give one positive comment and one suggestion for improvement. After everyone has had an opportunity to present their melody, allow time for students to revise their work taking into consideration the suggestions that were made. In the next class, have students present their revised melodies.



EXTENSION (1 HOUR)

To be completed in those situations where the module will be 26 hours in duration

Introduce students to modes. Explain that a mode is simply a pattern that forms a set of note- names. The pentatonic scale, in effect, is a mode, as are all major and minor scales that are constructed from a series of particular patterns of tones and semitones within an octave. The Ionian mode, for example, is the major scale made of the following steps: w-w-h-w-w-w- h. The Aeolian mode is the natural minor mode and uses the following intervals: w-h-w-w-h-w- w. Demonstrate on a keyboard or overhead slide the differences between whole and half steps. Using this information, have them write a major scale (Ionian mode) and a natural minor scale (Aeolian mode) starting on a given pitch.

Have students create their own modes. Ask them to think of a mood, atmosphere, or image that they want to create, and to think of a note that they would like to start on. Considering only the notes in an octave above the starting note, add a second note to the first. If this fits the mood or image you want to create, write down the note name. Continue until you have as many note names as you want for your mode. Play different combinations of these note names in different registers of the instrument to ensure you like your choices. Name this mode using your name (e.g., the Steven mode). Now write a 20-second melodic fragment based upon this mode. You must use every note name in your mode at least once. Using software, notate your melody (see *Music Composition Toolbox*, pages 1–4).

Any exercises can be replicated using a mode instead of a major scale: dictation, questions /answers, rondo, round.

Unit 3: Harmony

(5 hours [2 hours + 3 hours extension])

Introduction

In this unit, students will gain an understanding of harmony and learn basic harmonic techniques by exploring chords, rounds, and melodic ostinati. They will review chords and apply their knowledge of chordal structure to compositions that they create. In the extension activities, students will explore texture, and create compositions that build through the exploration of various textures in music.

Key Concepts

- chords/chordal structure
- triads
- round/canon
- melodic ostinato
- harmony
- texture

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

PART A: BUILDING CHORDS (1 HOUR)

Explain that when two or more notes are played together, they form a chord. Chords can be built on any degree of a scale or mode. Have them write the D Major scale using the step formula and build triads above each note. Remind them that they will need to pay special attention to the sharps. Have them play the chords on the keyboard, Orff instruments or tone bells. Explain that chords are used in many ways in the music they hear.



Play a Bach Chorale or hymn tune that is chordal. Play a folk tune that demonstrates a chordal accompaniment on the guitar. Play a recording of a fiddle tune with a piano accompaniment playing in a chordal style. If there is a band in the school, have an ensemble come to the class to demonstrate chordal warm-up exercises that they do as a group.

Select a song that is familiar to students. You may wish to consult with students about songs they learned in elementary school. Choose one with a simple chordal structure of I, IV, V. Apply the same steps to the performance of this song and add a chordal accompaniment. Explain that “I, IV, V” is called the harmonic structure. Demonstrate how a harmonic analysis can be done for every piece of music. Have them write the chord numbers under the chords.

PART B: ADDING A MELODIC OSTINATO (1 HOUR)

In groups, have students select a familiar nursery rhyme. Remember, many nursery rhymes are in $\frac{6}{8}$ time, so this is a good time to review time signatures. Have them say the nursery rhyme several times until the rhythm is clear enough so it can be notated using rhythmic notation. When everyone has completed the rhythmic notation, have them select words or phrases from the nursery rhyme that have a rhythmic pulse. These can become ostinati that will be part of the rhythmic accompaniment. Notate these. Using the pentatonic scale, have them create a melody for the nursery rhyme and use software to notate it. Encourage them to consider rise and fall of phrases, beginning and end tone, strategic positioning of rests, and overall musicality. As they refine their melodies, encourage them to sing them until they are confident in their performance. Now, sing the melody with the rhythmic ostinato. In a songwriters circle format, have students respond to each other's work. Allow time for revision. Next, notate the ostinati on staff paper. These will now become melodic ostinati that will be repeated throughout the melody. Have students perform them and again allow time for feedback from others.

The next step is to decide on an overall structure for the piece. An example would be an introduction, the main section of the composition, and an ending or coda. After each group has decided on a structure and have rehearsed it, have them perform their compositions for others. Record the performances, and afterwards, discussed the results.



Ask students to write a journal response to the process that they have just experienced. In the response, have them articulate the steps taken to build the composition, the challenges they faced, and the overall effect of the piece when they performed it for the other students.



EXTENSION (3 HOURS)

To be completed in those situations where the module will be 26 hours in duration.

PART A (2 HOURS)

Re-group students as they were for the Rondo activity in Unit 2. Review rounds/canons and explain that they can create a round using the melody they have already created. Let them experiment with this concept by having one group begin, and the second group enter at an established point. Debrief by asking them how they felt about their round.

- Did the two melodies blend, or was there a sense of dissonance?
- If there was dissonance, was it in passing tones or long tones?
- Did the rhythms match?
- Could each group sustain their part easily?
- What would happen if you played it in a 3-part round/canon?

Notate the rounds and have them exchange them with other groups who in turn perform the composition. Debrief again by asking for feedback. Following this feedback, return all the rounds to their original composers and suggest that they revise their melodies based on the feedback.

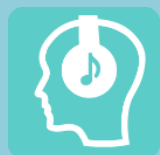


Play a Bach fugue to demonstrate how the concept of a canon appears in orchestral works.

Explain that when two or more tones are played together, the resulting sound is harmony. Try to locate two versions of the same choral piece, one sung in unison and the second in harmony. Discuss the differences in the two arrangements. If you cannot find two versions of the same song, look for an example of a choral work with the chorus sung in harmony and the verses sung in unison. Another way to demonstrate this is on the keyboard. Play a melody in octaves with two hands. Now play the same melody in the right hand with chords in the left hand. Explain that harmony can be created using descants, part songs, and partner songs

PART B: TEXTURE IN MUSIC (1 HOUR)

Place a number of articles in a bag, each one having a different texture; e.g., a cotton ball, sandpaper, golf ball, comb, pinecone. Pass the bag around and have students select an object from the bag guessing what it is without looking. Explain that they can recognize the object because of its texture. Now show them photos or works of art that clearly demonstrate texture. Explain that in music, composers use instrumentation and dynamics in the same way as a painter uses colours to create an overall effect. Texture in music can be modified by adding more instruments to create density and thickness, or by increasing the inner activity by making the instruments move more independently of each other.



Demonstrate this by playing a recording of Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*. Listen for variations in texture as the piece progresses from start to finish. What causes the changes in texture? Look for words like more voices, richer harmony, instrumental accompaniment, dynamics.

Have primary paints, brushes, water, and sheets of manilla tag (18" x 24") ready. Divide the class into groups of 4 – 6 and give each group 2 sheets of manilla tag. Have them experiment with the paints and see how many colours they can create. How can they create "texture" by just using colour? (Suggestions: mixing colours, placing contrasting colours alongside each other, adding "flecks" of colour on top of a contrasting colour). Play for students excerpts from Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion* and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. Individually, have them compare the textures of each using a "T" chart. Share their ideas with the class.

Now in their groups of 4, have them select either the Bach or the Stravinsky work and discuss what they "see" when they hear the piece. Explain that it is the texture of the piece that allows one to visualize what is happening. Have each group choose one of the pieces and do a visual representation of that work using the paints and second piece of manilla tag. After the paintings have been completed, have each group display the work and see if the other students can tell which composition is represented. After each artwork has been identified, have students who created them explain their painting as it relates to texture in the musical composition.



Unit 4: Composition with Graphic Notation (6 hours)

EXTENSION UNIT: To be completed if the module is 26 hours duration)

Introduction

This unit is a continuation of Unit 4 in *Explore Music 7* which was completed in those schools where the module was taught over 26 hours. If you have students in your class who have not had this previous opportunity to explore graphic notation, it will be necessary to refer to the grade 7 curriculum to design preliminary activities that will give them sufficient experience in this genre.

When introducing students to this unit, reinforce the fact that all the elements of music presented to this point are evident when composing with graphic notation. In particular, melody, harmony, timbre, form, and orchestration are all important elements in graphic compositions. Moreover, students are encouraged to include fragments of traditional notation for rhythm and melody in the graphic notation compositions, particularly if it will achieve a desired result.

Key Concepts

- Timbre
- Graphic notation

Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Process

PART A: EXPLORING SOUNDS (2 HOURS)

To reinforce students' ability to hear sounds around them with a more discriminating ear, ask 4 – 6 students who have keys with them to form a line at the front on the classroom. Take their keys, and without anyone seeing them, place a set behind each of the students in the line. Now have another student come to the front and rattle each set of keys in turn, asking the student directly in front of them if they think they belong to him/her. Repeat the procedure with each of the students in the line. Now go back to those who do not believe that the correct set of keys is behind them and shake them again. Ask for someone else in the line to identify them as their own. Repeat the process until everyone is content that the correct set of keys is behind them. Ask students to turn around and see if they were correct. Debrief the activity, making direct reference to the timbre of the sounds, and the properties that identify one sound from another.



Now choose two contrasting rhythm instruments, such as a tambourine and tone blocks. Play one of the instruments and ask students to describe its timbre. Have students close their eyes, while one student takes one of the instruments and moves it around the classroom. As the instrument moves, have students, with eyes closed, follow the sound with their arm. Choose a second student and ask her/him to do the same thing with the other instrument, moving around the classroom while the others follow the sound with their arm. Now have both sounds going at the same time, in different directions. Have half the class follow one with their arms, and the other half follow the other. Try the same activity with students following one instrument with their right arms and following the second instrument with their left arms. Encourage the two students playing the instruments to vary the dynamics to add interest. Discuss what happened.

Next, have a number of rhythm instruments at the front. Play sounds on each, varying dynamics, articulation, sound production, etc. As you play each, ask students to create in their journals a symbol that could represent that sound. Also, have them write one word that they associate with each sound. If time allows, ask them to share their visual representations with the class.

Give each student a piece of paper. You may want to vary the kinds of paper distributed:

- brown craft paper, legal size paper, tissue paper, construction paper, bristol board.

Ask them to experiment with the paper to see how many ways they can produce a sound with it. Now, in groups of 4, have them create a soundscape for paper, using only the pieces of paper that they have in their group. For every sound, there should be a graphic symbol. Have them notate their composition and give the directions for performing the piece. After sufficient time to rehearse, have each group perform their composition for the class.



As each “composition for paper” is performed, have the audience (the other students) tell one thing they liked and one thing that they would suggest for improvement. If time allows, have the groups trade compositions and using the notes for performance, see if they can perform the piece. This is a real test for accuracy, realizing that compositions like this may sound different every time they are performed.

Do the same activity substituting another medium, such as water, marbles, etc. for the paper.

You may want to do this activity in the art room if it is available, and with the help of the art teacher, organize a “paint to music” class. Give each student a sheet of 18” x 24” manila tag. Have paint stations set up with enough brushes for everyone to use. Now, play for students the You Tube video, *Epitaph for Moonlight* by R. Murray Schafer [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHk_mnez4S4&feature=related]. Ask them to describe what they heard. Look for key concepts/words like:

- vocal sounds
- part singing
- dissonance
- traditional singing
- variations in tempo
- variations in timbre
- variations in dynamics
- not rhythmical

Ask them to describe what they saw in their minds. Look for key concepts/words like:

- variations in colour, dark to light
- sometimes no colour
- symbols rolling on the screen
- small symbols and large symbols
- water
- warm glow of the moon

Play the video a second time, and as it is playing, lead students in a discussion as to what is happening with sound and images.

Now, play the piece again, this time with sound only. Ask them to paint as they listen to the piece. They may paint symbols, or variations in colour. It is totally up to them.



One at a time, ask students to hold up their paintings and explain their representation. Hang these in the classroom and refer to them during the remainder of the unit.

At this point you may want to play for students another example of the same piece (*Epitaph for Moonlight*) performed in a concert hall. Check You Tube [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oYpvTMEzmqQ&feature=related>]. Ask students to compare both videos.

PART B: COMPOSING WITH GRAPHIC NOTATION (3 HOURS)

Show scores that use graphic notation. Have the class try to perform one of the compositions.

Put students in groups of four. Their challenge is to write a composition using a set of parameters that you determine in collaboration with students. An example of the requirements might include:

- at least 3 minutes in duration
- written for a combination of voices, instruments, body percussion, and found sounds
- is at least 3 minutes in duration
- includes two changes in tempo
- uses 5 different dynamic markings
- includes 8 measures of traditional notation
- written for a minimum of 8 people and a maximum of the entire
- can be based on a poem, or a theme such as celebration, ozone layer, warfare, etc.
- includes directions for performance

Students will use class time to compose their compositions and are encouraged to experiment with various “solutions” to problems that arise.



During the second hour of working on the piece, organize a songwriters circle where each group performs their work in progress, and seeks feedback from the other students. Suggestions received during the songwriters circle can be incorporated into the works.

At this point, co-create a rubric to evaluate their finished work. This can be a self-assessment, group assessment, peer assessment, and/or teacher assessment.

When the compositions are complete, allow sufficient time for each group to rehearse their piece. Have students complete the rubric that they created together.

PART C: THE PERFORMANCE (1 HOUR)

Organize an “informance” where another class, parents, staff, and/or school are invited to attend. In planning, assign specific tasks to students to ensure that all aspects are arranged, such as venue, seating, equipment, publicity, etc.

During the informance, have each group, or the entire class, perform their compositions. For each one, have a student or two from the group that composed the piece should present an overview of what the audience will hear.



Following the performance, complete an evaluation of the performance using a form similar to ones found in Appendix D of *Explore Music 7–9: Appendices*.

Unit 5: Culminating Activity

(3 hours)

Introduction

This culminating assignment should be given at the beginning of the module, so students are made aware of the final outcome at the end of the 26 (13) hours. It should be presented in terms of the overall assessment, and they should be encouraged to begin the composition early. Although 3 hours have been designated for this assignment, it represents the in-class portion. This assignment will most likely take additional time, and it is expected that homework may be required.

Once students have a basic understanding of the musical elements and how they function in compositions, they are ready to engage in broader compositional problems that call on their musical understanding for resolution. In this assignment they must consider the effects of tempo and dynamic change, texture and form, and specifics of melody and rhythm. This is an individual assignment.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

Have students select a short poem, either rhythmic or free form, to use as the basis for their composition. Before they begin, have them create a “blueprint” of how they are going to approach their composition. Assign times to meet and conference with each student individually to go over the blueprint to ensure that everyone has a clear focus and knows how to approach the task. Provide them with as much latitude as possible, encouraging those who have more skill to do more challenging work. The final composition should be structured using traditional notation. All compositions must demonstrate key features:

- a clear understanding of structure
- an identifiable form
- harmony and texture
- a strong rhythmic element
- some improvisation

These features should be obvious in a that you and the class co-construct.

Once students have been given suggestions and the blueprint is approved, they are ready to begin. Hopefully, they will start the process early on, and throughout the duration of the module teachers should be reminding students to be working on their blueprint and their compositions. The three hours designated as class time are to be used for the individual conferences, and for a songwriters circle where each students presents their work in progress and other students respond and offer suggestions. In addition, time should be scheduled for in-class performances of the compositions. Depending on the success of students in this assignment, you might even consider arranging a public performance of the compositions.



Based on observations as well as the many formative assessments completed during the module, teachers will be able to track progress of each student during the 26 hours. In addition, the final assignment – the composition they just created and the subsequent performance of it – will be evidence of the proficiency level of each student and her/his success in achieving the outcomes.

Using a rubric which you as teacher have created, assess each student's composition, and include this assessment, as well as on-going assessments throughout the module, to arrive at a final mark.

References

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