Explore Music 9:
Music and Film

Contents

Music and Film

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 9: Music and Film
(13 Instructional Hours)

Overview

Rationale

When we view a film, we are often unaware of the music playing in the background. Without it, the film would not have the impact and appeal that is created when it is there. The role of music in film and video is often considered one of the most critical elements, and yet most people think very little about it unless it is a familiar tune that is being played to accompany a scene.

Music in film is sometimes called the soundtrack and consists of songs that are often popular at the time and relevant to the story line. However, this is not the only music one hears in a film. The film score would be another component of the soundtrack and may contain music composed especially for the film.

The film score has several important roles including:

- providing necessary music to define the action
- setting the period, location, and ethnicity
- providing an emotional focus

If we look at contemporary films, we see masters of film scores such as John Williams take a short motif and utilize it for special effectiveness in key places throughout the score. Examples of this can be found in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind, Star Wars: Return of the Jedi, Harry Potter*, and *The Sorcerer's Stone* among many others.

Important components of the film score can also be heard during the opening and closing credits, and also to identify character themes in the film. However, some films use silence for the opening credits as a special effect to introduce the theme. From a musical point of view, silence is as important as the actual sound, and so it too becomes a critical aspect of the score.

Like opera and Broadway musicals, an overture can be used in film, and to be effective it must include major themes from the score. This can provide insight into the drama that is about to unfold. For example, if a love theme is heard in the overture, it can recur during scenes where love is portrayed. Likewise, if we consider the movie, *Jaws*, we know that that we must be prepared for action whenever we hear that simple two-note motif that describes the danger that sharks inflict.

Film scores may have function outside the film as well. Recordings of famous film scores are often heard in homes, on TV and radio. Sometimes, musical selections composed specifically for a film will become hits in their own right and enjoy popularity for a period of time. Similarly, arrangements of film scores, overtures, and other original music for film can be heard by bands, choirs and orchestras of all levels, from beginner to professional.

This module will explore the role music plays in films. The activities are suggestions that can be elaborated upon, and outcomes have been identified as a guide to help you as teacher track the progress of students. If a particular unit or activity goes in a different direction, you will want to highlight the outcomes being achieved by students.

Glossary

- soundtrack
- film score
- functions of music in film
- video game music
- genres of films
- programme music
- character music

Outcomes Addressed

CREATING, MAKING AND PRESENTING

Students will be expected to

1.1   using appropriate terminology, demonstrate an understanding of rhythm by creating and performing rhythmic compositions in a variety of meters
1.2   by performing a repertoire in group music making, demonstrate an understanding of melody (i. e. , melodic direction, tonal centre, contour)
1.3   use the elements of music to express and communicate meaning
1.4   interpret non-verbal gestures making connections to notation and musical expression
2.1   maintain a part within a variety of textures and harmonies using a range of musical structures and styles
2.2   use a variety of notational systems to represent musical thoughts and ideas
2.3   apply skills and attitudes appropriate to a range of group music making activities demonstrating audience etiquette, performance skills, and responsibility to the group
2.4   perform, alone and with others, music expressing a broad range of thoughts and feelings

UNDERSTANDING AND CONNECTING CONTEXTS OF TIME, PLACE AND COMMUNITY

Students will be expected to

4. 1   examine ways in which music enhances and expresses life's experiences
4. 2   choose music for a variety of purposes and justify their choices
4. 3   reflect on ways in which music expresses the history and cultural diversity of local, national and international communities
5. 1   define relationships among music, other arts, and other subjects
5. 2   examine the roles that music plays in local and global communities

PERCEIVING AND RESPONDING

Students will be expected to

6. 1   examine and explore a range of possible solutions to musical challenges
6. 2   use processes of description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation to make and support informed responses to their own and others' music and musical performances
6. 3   critically reflect on ideas and feelings in works of music, and identify patterns, trends, and generalizations
7. 1   identify and describe instruments common to cultures and countries included in the social studies curriculum
7. 2   explore technology applications to creating, making, and presenting their own and other's music
8. 1   evaluate choices of the elements of expression in musical compositions based on the composer's intent
8. 2   use feedback from others to examine their own musical works in light of the original intent
8. 3   analyse performances and provide critical commentary on aspects of musical presentation in light of the performers' intent

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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 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 treat the actual assessment as 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 *Music Primary – 6, Explore Music 7 – 9: Appendices,* Appendix D, *Dance 11*, and other curriculum documents.

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 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.

Unit 1: The Role of Music in Film (5 hours)

Introduction

This unit is designed to introduce students to the role of music in film, and to raise awareness for the value of film scores outside the film world. The suggestions presented will serve as a guide as you craft effective lessons for your students. It should be noted that to be successful in achieving the outcomes, students must have experiences in creating their own film scores on a small scale and editing software will assist them in this task.

Key Concepts

- function of music in film
- video game music

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

PART A: DISCOVERING THE FUNCTION OF MUSIC IN FILM

Begin the lesson with an activity such as "Find Someone Who. . . ". A sample is provided in the Appendix that you can adapt to suit the individual needs of students.

Play a short excerpt from a film with the sound muted. Discuss with students their general reaction. Ask them to speculate the kind of music they would be hearing if the sound were turned up. They might even be able to name specific songs they hear on the radio that might suit, or they could use descriptors to talk about selections that would portray the mood and setting.

Continue the discussion by talking about their favourite movies. What was it that made the movie appealing? Do they remember the music that accompanied the movie? Was it a character that was appealing, such as Shrek or Superman? If so, is there specific music that was always played when that character was prominent in the scene?

Refer to pages 367 – 372 in *Music! Its Role and Importance in our Lives* as a guide for discussing how music enhances film drama. You may wish to try Activities 3, 4, 5, and 6 on these pages in the book to reinforce the concepts of music to establish character, to provide psychological insight, and to give the film continuity. For recordings of the selections named, you may wish to explore I-Tunes and YouTube.

Discuss other functions of music in film. Brainstorm with students a list of "jobs" that sound must do in a film. Here is a sample list:

- suggest a mood, or evoke a feeling
- set a pace
- indicate a geographic location
- indicate a period in time
- clarify the plot
- define the character
- connect otherwise unconnected ideas, characters, places, images, or moments
- heighten realism or diminish it
- heighten ambiguity or diminish it
- draw attention to a detail, or away from it
- indicate changes in time
- smooth otherwise abrupt changes between shots or scenes
- emphasize a transition for dramatic effect
- describe an acoustic space
- startle or soothe
- exaggerate action or mediate it

Most often in North America we think of Hollywood movies as the big blockbusters. There are wonderful movies being filmed in other parts of the world including Canada, and European and Asian countries. As in Hollywood film, music is an important component of the overall effect and appeal of the film. These films often use local folk songs to reinforce location and ethnicity. For example, the Canadian film, *Shipping News*, is set in Newfoundland and uses folk songs and instrumental music reminiscent of that culture. If we explore movies that are filmed in India, we hear a musical score that is very different from that of a western nation, such as Australia or America. For instance, in *Slumdog Millionaire* we hear the wonderful ethnic sound of the music of that part of the world. Thanks to movies like *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Kung Foo*, and those produced in Bollywood, people are much more familiar with music of other cultures.

Have students do a research project on a film that uses music from another culture in its film score. In their report they should include style of music; key rhythmic, melodic and harmonic features; cultural instruments used; and names of performers and composers if possible.

The activity described above could become a useful assessment piece for reporting on the outcomes from the strand entitled "Understanding and Connecting Contexts of Time, Place and Community." Have students do a presentation for the class including samples of the music heard in the sound score.

PART B: OTHER INSTANCES WHERE MUSIC ENHANCES ACTION

Play samples of music used in movies, TV shows and video games. For each selection discuss the excerpts using the following questions as a guide:

- What instruments do you hear?
- How does the choice of instruments impact the atmosphere of the music?
- What impact does tempo, dynamics, combinations of instruments, etc. have on the mood created by the music?
- How does the music support the action on the screen?

Examples of excerpts you may wish to consider include

Movies	Video Games	TV Shows
Jurassic Park Harry Potter Paranormal Activity Out of Africa Titanic	Final Fantasy Super Mario	X-Files Star Trek

These examples and others can be found on YouTube. You may wish to record other titles on the chart for future reference.

In groups of 4 – 6, ask students to create a game that reinforces the functions of music in film. The game can be modelled after an existing popular game show or board game, or it can be totally unique. Examples of games they might wish to consider as a model are:

- Trivial Pursuit
- Bingo
- Jeopardy
- Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

Before beginning this task, brainstorm with students a list of aspects they may wish to include in their game, including:

- sound segments
- composers of film music
- instrumentation
- theme songs
- character development and how it is associated with a main character

Once the games are completed, have groups play each other's games.

In groups, have students create a short score for a video game. Encourage them to listen and discuss music heard in video games, and the instrumentation heard. Use editing software to record their music. Arrange a time in class for each group to present to the others.

As each group performs the music for their video game, whether it be live or recorded, elicit from the others their reactions to it, and the effectiveness of the sound in relation to the action. Look for key words that are tied to the function of music in film (see page 9).

Teacher Notes

Unit 2: Composing a Film Score (6 hours)

Introduction

In this unit, students will reinforce their composition skills and apply them as they create a score for a short film.

Key Concepts

- genres of films
- programme music
- characterization music

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

PART A: SETTING THE MOOD BY USING MUSIC

To reinforce the function of music in film, ask students to investigate examples of films that use music in unique and effective ways. This can be done individually, in pairs, or small groups. Have them select three examples, describe the music, and explain why the music in each film is so memorable.

Explain to students that different genres of film use very different and often distinct types of music. Play selections of music from recent or popular films. For each example, ask students to identify the genre of film (science fiction, love story, war, cultural film, documentary, cartoon, children's movie), justifying their comments and observations.

In pairs, have students select a scene from a film. Ask them to discuss and describe the music that the composer of the film score used to accompany the scene. Next, have them select contrasting pieces of music that might accompany the same scene. In deciding which music to use, tell them that the music must change the interpretation or overall effect of the scene. For example, if it is a scene of war, first play Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* and then play the same scene this time with Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. How did the two types of music affect your interpretation of the story line? Have each group present their findings to the class, allowing time for discussion after each presentation.

PART B: CREATING A SOUND SCORE

Some movies use classical music as an effective means to set a particular mood. For example, in *The King's Speech*, the second movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A Major, is used very effectively as a backdrop in the climax of the movie when the king is giving his address over the radio. Have students investigate the main theme and structure of this musical selection. Why is this so effective in the background for the speech? In the scene that immediately follows the speech, the second movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 is played. Have students compare and contrast the two.

Programme music can be described as a piece of music for instruments which describes something or tells a story. There are definite similarities between programme music and music for film and video.

Play for students excerpts of programme music written by the masters. Examples include:

- Beethoven 's Pastoral Symphony
- Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture
- Liszt's symphonic poems
- Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique

For each excerpt, ask students to interpret the storyline based on the sound and overall effect of the music. Have students investigate to discover the true meaning of the programme music heard.

In programme music, composers sometimes linked a tune or theme to a person, event, or idea. An example of this is Wagner, who used leitmotifs in his operas. This technique was copied by others such as Richard Strauss who used leitmotifs in his symphonic poems to describe the person that the poem is about. Examples include *Don Juan, Don Quixote,* and *Ein Heldenleben.* Play excerpts from these examples for students and ask them if they can interpret the character of each person based on the music.

As a follow up to the above two activities, ask students to make comparisons between programme music and the music used in film to identify and reinforce a main character. Examples may include

- Hedwig's theme (*Harry Potter*)
- Fiona's theme (*Shrek*)
- Darth Vader's theme (*Star Wars*)
- Theme used to identify *Superman*
- Theme used to identify the shark in *Jaws*

Discuss how the music represents the personality of the character. Identify the instruments used, and describe the tempi, the dynamics, etc., used to represent different character traits.

Music! Its Role and Importance in Our Lives, pages 376 – 377 discusses the process of film scoring. Based on the ideas presented so far, both in this resource and in the preceding activities, have students do Activity 7 on page 377. This should be done in pairs or small groups, although there may be enthusiastic students who may wish to do it on their own. Since time is limited in this module, it is most likely impossible for students to create a short film. However, alternatives may be to work with a Film and Video 11 class in the school or in a neighbouring high school, taking a film produced by those students and creating a score for the film. Editing software is encouraged for this activity, and the end goal after completion should be a viewing when students can demonstrate their creations. This can be for their peers in the class, or another class(es).

This activity may appear to sound more daunting than it really is. The film being scored could be as little as 30 seconds and should not exceed three minutes in length.

As an alternative to the above activity, create a piece of programme music based on a poem such as *The Headless Horseman* by Walter de la Mare.

- In pairs or small groups, have students read the poem and brainstorm the mood and feelings evoked by the words. Now have them do a story board by creating three different works of art inspired by the moods and feelings. These can be as simple as pencil sketches, or as elaborate as mixed media images or three-dimensional objects. Time, availability of materials, and space will play factors in determining the approach taken.
- Now have students arrange their story boards to identify the structure of the composition, giving it three separate sections. In the same groups, have them use the story board to select pitched and non-pitched instruments to create a different musical theme for each frame of the story board. Have them think about timbre, rhythm and texture to describe each frame. The score should contain both traditional notation and non-traditional notation.

Throughout this unit students will be working in a variety of settings: individually, in pairs, in small groups, and as a class. This is an important time in this module to assess their engagement with the material, and their ability to articulate key ideas presented in the content. You may wish to use a variety of assessment strategies to assess these key learnings which are imbedded in the curriculum outcomes. Strategies you may wish to consider are:

- checklists
- observations
- one-on-one conferencing
- coaching while engaging with pairs and groups as they work
- student self-assessment
- peer assessment

The activities described above in Part B require an opportunity to present the finished product to the class or other groups in the school. As in many other projects, it may be helpful to have a rubric for the finished product. Ideally, this should be co-constructed by the teacher and the class providing students with input into the expectations. As always, this should be created in advance so students will know and understand the expectations. Examples of rubrics are available in Appendix D, *Explore Music 7–9: Appendices.*

Teacher Notes

Unit 3: The Final Project (2 hours)

Introduction

The final project should be a culminating activity that allows students to demonstrate their learnings throughout this module. Although two hours is not a long time for this aspect of the module, students should be encouraged to first reflect on the experiences they have had with the previous activities, and then to combine these into a piece that describes themselves.

While it may appear that the final project has no relevance to music and film, it does personalize for students those elements of music in film by creating a compilation of existing music that describes themselves, much like characterization identification in film. The project can be adapted to suit the abilities of the students. It can, in effect, be looked upon as a way of putting music to a visual / multi-media presentation.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process

PART A: PERSONAL REFLECTION

In this project, students will be expected to create an artistic representation of themselves using several of the concepts described in the *Music and Film* module. This representation will include a compilation of music and sounds using editing software. The visual dimension may be a three-dimensional sculpture, a small installation, a video presentation, a short film, an animation piece, PowerPoint presentation, a moving photo montage, or other creation by the student. The music must fit the visual presentation in an effective way. It could be a compilation of existing music and may also include original music and soundscapes. The presentation must not be more than 5 minutes in length.

As a resource for this project, you may wish to refer to "Three-Dimensional Self-Portrait" found in Appendix D of *Drama 10 – 11* (page 217), or the "music autobiography" activity found in *Music 10* on page 82.

PART B: PRESENTATION

For the presentation aspect of the project, consider that these be displayed like an art exhibit. Space is very important, and you may wish to move to a location in the school outside of the classroom. Students will need access to power to play the music, which is another consideration. Once the display is set up, arrange a schedule so that students can walk around and view the exhibits. It may be possible for this exhibit to be shown to others in the school.

Following the presentation, have students complete a personal reflection that clearly articulates the learning journey and the significance of music in relation to the visual representation.

Teacher Notes

Appendix

Find Someone Who...

The idea of this activity is to have students get to know each other better, while at the same time demonstrating what they already know about music and film. This could be used as a needs assessment before you begin the module, or it may be meant as a fun "opener" for the module to set the tone for the content that is to be covered.

Find Someone Who…			
Has a unique ring tone on their cell phone	Can name a movie set in an Asian country	Has seen the first Star Wars movie	Enjoys foreign films
Can name a Disney animation movie	Can hum or sing the melodic 2-note motif that introduces the shark in *Jaws*	Has visited a film studio or movie set	Can name 3 science fiction movies
Can name a classical tune used in an animated film	Can name a contemporary composer of film scores	Can name a Canadian film	Can hum a key melody used in a video game
Knows what NFB stands for	Can name the main characters in the first Harry Potter movie	Has played a movie theme on piano or in the school band	Can name the most recent winner of the Best Song category in the Academy Awards

References

Cooper, D. (2007). *Talk about assessment: Strategies and tools to improve learning.* Thomson Nelson, [NSSBB# 18457]

Fowler, C., Gerber, T., & Lawrence, V. (2006) *Music! Its role and importance in our lives.* Glencoe McGraw Hill.

NS Curriculum Documents
>   *Explore Music 7*
>   *Explore Music 8*
>   *Dance 11*
>   *Music 10*

FILMS

Close Encounters of the Third Kind
Star Wars
Return of the Jedi
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
Jaws
Shipping News
Slumdog Millionaire
Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon
Kung Foo
Jurassic Park
Paranormal Activity
Out of Africa
The King's Speech
Titanic
Shrek
Superman