

Composition Shopping Cart

Embracing Musical Limitations in Songwriting

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Grade Level	6th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	60-120 minutes
Subject	Performing Arts	**Duration**	1-2 class period(s)
Course	Music		

Essential Question

Can musical limitations increase creativity in songwriting?

Summary

In this lesson, students will create a composition using a limited number of musical elements by selecting from a menu of pitches, dynamics, rhythms, and symbols. Students will then reflect on their experience and engage in a discussion concerning the benefits and drawbacks of musical limitations in songwriting.

Snapshot

Engage

Students generate lists of different musical elements.

Explore

Students choose a limited number of musical elements and create a four-measure composition.

Explain

Students listen to famous melodies that use very few notes and complete an I Notice, I Wonder activity.

Extend

Students revisit their own composition, this time using two more elements.

Evaluate

Students complete a How Am I Feeling, What Am I Thinking activity.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Fine Arts: Music (Middle School to High School (Accomplished)))

CR: Creating (CR)
M.CR.1 : Generate musical ideas for various purposes and contexts.
AC.M.CR.1 : Compose and improvise musical ideas for a variety of purposes and contexts.
M.CR.2 : Select and develop musical ideas for defined purposes and contexts.
AC.M.CR.2 : Select and develop composed and improvised ideas to construct musical works organized for a variety of purposes and contexts while preserving them through notation and/or audio recording.
M.CR.3 : Evaluate and refine selected musical ideas to create musical work that meets appropriate criteria.
AC.M.CR.3 : Evaluate and refine varied musical works based on appropriate, context-specific criteria.
M.CR.4 : Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.
AC.M.CR.4 : Share varied, personally-developed musical works - individually or as an ensemble - that address identified purposes and contexts.

Attachments

- Composition Shopping Cart 2.0—Composition Shopping Cart - Spanish.docx
- Composition Shopping Cart 2.0—Composition Shopping Cart - Spanish.pdf
- Composition Shopping Cart 2.0—Composition Shopping Cart.docx
- Composition Shopping Cart 2.0—Composition Shopping Cart.pdf
- Composition Shopping Cart—Composition Shopping Cart - Spanish.docx
- Composition Shopping Cart—Composition Shopping Cart - Spanish.pdf
- Composition Shopping Cart—Composition Shopping Cart.docx
- Composition Shopping Cart—Composition Shopping Cart.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Composition Shopping Cart.pptx
- Music Stave—Composition Shopping Cart - Spanish.docx
- Music Stave—Composition Shopping Cart - Spanish.pdf
- Music Stave—Composition Shopping Cart.docx
- Music Stave—Composition Shopping Cart.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Composition Shopping Cart handout (attached; one per group)
- Composition Shopping Cart 2.0 handout (attached; one per group)
- Music Staves (optional; attached; one per group)
- Computer or iPad (one per group)
- Speaker with auxiliary connection (optional)
- Sticky notes

30 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Technology Integration

Prior to the lesson, have students use their school email to register for Flat, a music notation and composition software. Flat can be accessed and used online at Flat.io or downloaded as an iPad app.

Alternatively, if access to instruments and skill level permits, students can use the attached **Music Staves** to write their composition by hand and play their compositions on their personal instruments.

Introduce the lesson by displaying **slide 2** from the attached **Lesson Slides.** Review **slides 3-4** to introduce students to the essential question and learning objectives.

Break students into groups using your preferred method, then have students open a blank document on their computer (alternatively, they can use blank paper and a writing utensil). Display **slide 5** and introduce the Collective Brain Dump strategy. Have students follow the instructions on the slide, listing as many examples as possible of each musical element listed. After groups have generated their lists, have them share out with the class. Write group answers on the white board in their appropriate categories.

Teacher's Note

Students might list musical components in the wrong category, such as a quarter note under symbols, or a crescendo under dynamics. This is your chance to make sure that everyone has a firm understanding of the categories as defined in the lesson by correcting them in the sharing out section.

Have students make corrections to their list where necessary.

30 minutes

Explore

Pass out the attached **Composition Shopping Cart** handout. Display **slide 6.**

Using the Justified List strategy, have groups select the musical elements from each column that they will use to create their song. After selecting their elements, have students write one sentence in each column explaining their choices.

Display **slide 7**. Have students open Flat using either their browser or the app. Instruct students to sign in and make a new composition with the melodic instrument of their choice. Students can now use any number of musical elements from their list to make a melody that is four measures long.

Teacher's Note

If you are not using technology, pass out the Music Staves so students can write their compositions. Note that students will need longer to complete the exercise this way, as they need to experiment using their instruments in order to find a melody they like.

Display **slide 8**. Use the Airplane Landing strategy to decide the order in which students will share their song. Display **slide 9** and instruct students to share their compositions with the class. If the class is large, you can have students plug their device into a speaker before playing for the class. Alternatively, have students perform their song on their personal instruments.

If dividing this lesson into two class periods, end day one here.

25 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 10**. Use the questions on the slide to generate a class discussion. As you conclude the discussion, prepare the students to hear some famous examples.

Display **slide 11**. Play the video Beethoven 9 - Chicago Symphony Orchestra - Riccardo Muti at the indicated time (in slide notes) and point out the "Ode to Joy" melody to students.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=rOjHhS5MtvA?t=3325

Display **slide 12**. Play the video Beethoven's 5th Symphony - Vancouver Symphony Orchestra - Pre Social Distancing Recording and point out the opening melody of Beethoven No. 5.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=Bhp1i_6qgk4?t=39

Display **slide 13**. Play the video that showcases the Kendrick Lamar - Humble - Piano Tutorial melody from the Kendrick Lamar song, "Humble." You might also share with the students that Kendrick Lamar won three GRAMMY awards for this song, the melody of which is made up of only three notes.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=ZVBqkwV4ijI

Display **slide 14**. Using the I Notice, I Wonder strategy, have groups list one observation and one question for each of the three songs. This can be completed on devices or on a piece of scrap paper. When all of the groups have completed their list, have them share observations with the class while you compile the answers on the board.

25 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 15**. Pass out the attached **Composition Shopping Cart 2.0** handout to each of the students.

After hearing some examples, students should have a better understanding of some techniques or strategies for creating melodies. For example, the Kendrick Lamar melody needs either a flat or sharp symbol to create the correct intervals.

Have students repeat the Justified List exercise, but this time instruct them to choose two more musical elements from any column. When they've completed their new compositions, use the Airplane Landing strategy for share-outs.

Teacher's Note - (Optional) ICAP Video with Music Engraver

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=kFruZVH9y78

As an optional extension of the lesson, show students the video K20 ICAP - Music Engraver and Editor - Composition Shopping Cart featuring Mat Campbell, a professional music engraver and editor. Please note that the speaker has a disability that affects his speech, so it may be beneficial to turn on the subtitles for this video. After students have finished the video, ask them to share verbally their POMS: Point of Most Significance from the video.

10 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 16**. Pass out a sticky note to each student and have them complete the How Am I Feeling, What Am I Thinking? strategy.

Direct the students to place their sticky note on the whiteboard or wall as they leave the room.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Airplane landing. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/78
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Collective brain dump. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/111
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Fist to five. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/68
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Flat. Tech tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2179
- K20 Center. (n.d.). How am I feeling, what am I thinking? Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/187
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I notice, I wonder. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Justified list. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/164
- K20 Center. (n.d.). POMS: point of most significance. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/101
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Sticky bars. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/129
- K20 Center. (2023, September 25). *K20 ICAP - Music Engraver and Editor - Composition Shopping Cart* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFruZVH9y78&t=2s
- Piano Vampire. (2017, March 31). *Kendrick Lamar - Humble - Piano Tutorial* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVBqkwV4ijI
- Symphony Orchestra. (2015, May 8). *Beethoven 9 - Chicago Symphony Orchestra - Riccardo Muti* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOjHhS5MtvA&t=3325
- Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. (2020, April 8). *Beethoven's 5th Symphony - Vancouver Symphony Orchestra - Pre Social-Distancing Recording* [Video]. https://youtu.be/Bhp1i_6qgk4?t=39