



artsNOW

Integrated learning solutions

CREATING A COMPELLING STORY FROM MUSIC

Grade Band: Kindergarten - Grade 2

Content Focus: Music & ELA



LEARNING DESCRIPTION

Encourage your students to exercise their imaginations and write with courage and conviction. Using music from a wide variety of cultures, students will develop good listening skills and write from the heart using their own voices. This aural exercise will help students think creatively.

LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	"I Can" Statements
Essential Question: How can music be used to inspire narrative writing?	Compose an original story inspired by a piece of music.



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GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
Grade 2: ELACC2W3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.	Grade 2: ESGM2.RE.1 Listen to, analyze, and describe music.
Grade 3: ELAGSE3W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.	Grade 3: ESGM3.RE.1 Listen to, analyze, and describe music.

SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
Grade 2: 2.MCC.3.1 Explore multiple texts to write narratives that recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events; include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal event order; and provide a sense of closure.	Anchor Standard 6: I can analyze music.
Grade 3: 3.MCC.3.1 Gather ideas from texts, multimedia, and personal experience to write narratives.	

KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
<u>Character</u> - A person, or animal or other entity that has human characteristics, in a story.	<u>Dynamics</u> - The volume of sound; how loud or soft it is.
<u>Setting</u> - Where and when a story takes place.	<u>Pitch</u> - How high or low a note sounds.
<u>Event</u> - A happening, something that occurs in a story.	<u>Tempo</u> - The speed at which a musical piece is played; how fast or slow.



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<p><u>Detail</u> - A small, interesting part of a larger whole.</p> <p><u>Title</u> - The name of a creative work.</p>	<p><u>Duration</u> - The length of time a sound lasts; how long or short.</p> <p><u>Timbre</u> - The quality of a sound (round, brassy, sharp, bright).</p> <p><u>Form</u> - The structure or pattern in music; how the sounds are put together.</p> <p><u>Rhythm</u> - A pattern of sound which can be repeated to a regular beat.</p>
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MATERIALS

- pencils
- crayons
- paper
- audio recordings
- sound source (CD Player, iPod, etc.) - 3-5 selections of instrumental music
- photographs and prints (optional)

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Opening/Activating Strategy

Warm-Up: Moving to Music

- Tell the students they are going to have a chance to move to music. In order to stay safe, remind them to stay in their own personal space. Have students stand by their desks or tables, or spread them around the room. Have them keep their feet in one spot, and then stretch out their arms all around; if their hands or arms touch each other, reposition them, or have them reposition themselves, so that each student has ample personal space.
- Tell students you are going to play instrumental music – just instruments, no words or singing - and as they listen they can sense how it makes them feel, and then move accordingly. Remind them they must stay in their assigned places, and move only in their own personal space.
- Put on a selection of instrumental music, possibly from another culture.
- Model different ways of moving to the music, describing as you do (e.g., “I am waving my arms slowly,” or “This part makes me want to go up on my toes”) and encourage students to move in their own ways. Possibly, use observational language to comment on some student choices (e.g., “I see Arianna swaying gently,” “Terrence is shaking his knees very quickly”).
- After the activity, reflect by asking the students how they felt moving to the music, and why they made some of the movement choices they made. Ask if the music made them imagine particular kinds of people, animals, places, times of day, weather, landscapes, etc. Perhaps share some ideas of your own (e.g., “I imagined a teenage girl in a long blue dress. I imagined a big rock along the seashore.”)

Work Session



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- Ask students to describe, in general, what we hear when we hear music, and how pieces of music are different from one another (e.g., some are faster, some have loud drums, some are sad, some have quiet parts). Lead them to discussion of various elements of music – dynamics, tempo, pitch, duration, melody, etc. Talk about the extremes in each (loud/soft, fast/slow, etc.)
- Explain that students will listen to another piece of instrumental music. This time, they will not move, but should listen for the musical elements, and think about the images these elements create in their minds.
- Play a different piece of instrumental music, ideally one that contrasts the piece used in the opening activity. Encourage students to listen with their eyes shut.
- Tell students that they will be creating/composing original stories in response to the music. Post and review with the students the following questions:
 - What is the title of my story?
 - Where does my story take place?
 - When does my story take place?
 - Who are the characters?
- Give students paper and writing/drawing utensils. Depending on the teacher's goals and the students' skill level, students can write and/or draw to create their stories.
- Play the music again. Ask the students to listen carefully again and to write or draw answers to the questions.
- Repeat the process with two or three more contrasting pieces of instrumental music. Have students create an idea page for each.
- Have each student choose their favorite piece of music and compose a story that includes the title, setting, characters, and events inspired by the music. Encourage them to include details.
- Have students share their stories in pairs or trios. Possibly, have volunteers share their stories in front of the entire class. If they can speak loud enough, possibly play the selection of music softly as they are reading/telling their story.

Classroom Tips:

- A wide range of music is best (e.g. Native American, Scandinavian, African, Asian, Latin American, flute, international jazz, violin, saxophone, harp); avoid using music familiar to or easily identified by students.

Closing/Reflection

Ask students: How did the music inspire story ideas in your mind? Which elements of the music were most important to you in creating your story? What did you like about this activity? What was easy or hard about this activity?

ASSESSMENTS

Formative

- Students participate actively in the warm-up.
- Students cite the elements of music in their reflections on their music-listening and story composition.
- Students use their time efficiently to write or draw ideas for their stories.



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Summative

Student stories as written or drawn show clear evidence of having characters, settings, events, and titles.

DIFFERENTIATION

Acceleration:

Add in the concepts of conflict/problem (“a challenge that the main character faces and must resolve”) and/or protagonist and antagonist (“the main character in the story,” and “the character who is opposed to or in conflict with the main character”) as elements that the students must clearly develop in their stories.

Remediation:

Work as a full class to develop the first story. Then develop more stories as a full class, or have students work in small groups.

Take care to choose musical selections that are not too challenging or jarring.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Putumayo World Music can be accessed at Putumayo.com, or accessed through streaming services like Spotify or Apple Music.
- Longer loops in GarageBand or similar apps can be useful.
- A search of “World Music” will bring up links to YouTube videos that feature varieties of multicultural instrumental music.

**This integrated lesson provides differentiated ideas and activities for educators that are aligned to a sampling of standards. Standards referenced at the time of publishing may differ based on each state’s adoption of new standards.*

Ideas contributed by: Janice Akers

Modifications, Extensions, and Adaptations Contributed by: Peggy Barnes, Candy Bennett, Lindsey Elrod, Jennifer Plummer, Vilma Thomas, and Barry Stewart Mann.

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