



Sample Lesson Plan

Focal Work: Haydn “Gypsy” Trio, 1st movement: Theme and Variations movement

Target Participants: 4th Graders

Line of Inquiry: How does a composer use combinations of the elements of music (tempo, dynamics, etc.) to create different characters?

Entry Point: Experimenting with different ways of playing the Twinkle theme and the Haydn theme - how these different ways create different characters.

Materials: Piano (or portable keyboard), labeled index cards, paper

Objectives:

- A. Introduction to the idea of character in music
- B. Introduction to 4 of the elements of music (tempo, dynamics, articulation, pitch) and how these can be manipulated

Warm Up (10 min):

- A. Playing Twinkle theme a few different ways—the students guess the character.
- B. “We see how music has a setting just like a story; it also has characters. We are going to introduce you to my friend named Twinkle. You might know her a little bit already. This is her song. What is Twinkle’s personality?”
- C. “We see that composers can create a setting in their music by making certain choices—what are some of these choices?”
- D. Today we are going to talk about 4 of these things. Write on board: *Tempo*: how fast/slow. *Dynamics*: how loud/soft. *Articulation*: how short/long or smooth/choppy/jumpy. *Pitch*: how high/low
- E. “Composers can also use these different things to show us what the characters in our story are feeling. Now Twinkle is feeling differently—what is she feeling?” (Play up high, fast, jumpy; low, slow, heavy).

Activity 1 (20 min): “Now I’m going to introduce you to someone new.”

- A. (5 min) What is his/her name? What is his/her personality? What musical elements help describe her personality? Let’s call him or her Tema for today (Tema = “main tune” in Italian).
- B. (10 min) Split class into 3 groups. “Don’t read your card out loud because we will guess what the other groups have!” Each student gets index card with their group’s “character” and either tempo, dynamics, articulation, or pitch. They have 5 min. to discuss and figure out their decisions. “What will you choose to best show us what Tema is feeling on your card? You are composers creating musical hints for your audience.” We play—rest of the class guesses the moods on the cards. (i.e.: “Tema is feeling very angry/lonely & sad/excited for tomorrow!”)
- C. (5min) Reflection: how were our guesses? Etc.



Sample Lesson Plan continued

Activity 2 (20min):

Listen to Haydn's theme, Theme, Var. 1, Var. 4, Var. 5. Stop between each—have them write down what the character is feeling (one descriptive word) and some of the 4 elements Haydn uses. Also—which instruments does he pick for which kind of feeling? Write ideas on board.