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Supporting Literacy K-8

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Differentiated Unit Plan

4th Grade General Music

Part One: Essential Skills and Concepts

**Overall Theme: Timbre and Personality of Musical Instruments**

Major Learning Objectives:

1. Aurally identifying timbres of the different instrument families: strings, brass, percussion and woodwinds.
2. Aurally identifying timbres of individual instruments within those families.
3. Understanding the connection between timbre and affect
4. Understanding the differences between timbre, pitch, and volume.
5. Identifying traits in the different movements of the piece that evoke animal traits.

**National Standards for Music Education:**

Content Standard: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

Achievement Standard: Students

a. identify simple music \*forms when presented aurally

b. demonstrate perceptual skills by moving, by answering questions about, and by describing aural examples of music of various styles representing diverse cultures

c. use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances

d. identify the sounds of a variety of instruments, including many orchestra and band instruments, and instruments from various cultures, as well as children's voices and male and female adult voices

e. respond through purposeful movement to selected prominent music characteristics or to specific music events while listening to music

8. Content Standard: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Achievement Standard: Students

a. identify similarities and differences in the meanings of common terms used in the various arts

b. identify ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music

**Common Core ELA Standards:**

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/4/4/) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.D](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/4/2/d/) Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.7](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/4/7/) Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/4/4/) Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/4/1/) Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.2](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/4/2/) Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.5.C](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/4/5/c/) Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).

Part Two: Content, Process, and Product

**Content:** In this unit, the content consists of lessons having to do with timbre. Timbre is described as the character of a musical sound or voice as distinct from its pitch or volume. This is an important element of music that is used to help aurally identify instruments from one another. Once students understand how to distinguish musical instruments by timbre, they can start to form opinions about the kind of sounds they like and dislike. This is an important step in developing a seasoned ear, and would be an excellent unit to precede choosing a band or orchestra instrument in fourth grade.

**Activities:** The activities in this unit will help facilitate the development of sound preference. The introduction to the unit will consist of reading the book, “The Carnival of the Animals” by Jack Prelutsky. The teacher will then divide the sections of the book into three distinct lessons to span over a three-week period. Activities will be implemented using many different styles of learning. During the first lesson, after reading the book, students will have a chance to move to the music pretending like they are that animal. For example, the first section is called, “March of the Royal Lion.” Each time the music changes, there would be a new image projected up on the board. Students would also be given either scarves to wave, or stuffed beanie babies to move in time with the music. In this way, students are processing the information aurally, visually, tacitly and kinesthetically. This is how the first lesson would be spent, just so that the students would have an idea of how each of the different instrument groups sound together. The next lesson would involve reviewing each of the instruments in each of the sections. Students would listen attentively to each section again, and come up with words that describe the timbre of the sound. They could also draw a picture to go along with words that they write down. This activity would also involve incorporating words from the text that goes with each section. During the third lesson, students would have a chance to work in class on their final “project,” which would be used as a summative assessment.

**Product:** This unit’s summative assessment would be for students to pick an instrument/animal from the list of animals studied in the book: lions, chickens, wild donkeys, tortoises/turtles, elephants, kangaroos, any aquatic animal, cuckoo birds, any type of bird in an aviary, fossils (so any kind of prehistoric animal), or the swan. The student would have to do some research on the computer or using books from the library to find five facts about the animals, and similarly find five facts about the particular instrument each animal represents. Then, the student would have to describe in three sentences what they like or dislike about the sound of the instrument, using words previously discussed in class. This would likely take the entire class, and perhaps students would need time to work on their projects at home, so the next class period would be solely devoted to sharing time.

At Risk: For students who are at-risk, I would adapt the lessons to meet their educational needs. For the first lesson, I would create visual aids to help with word identification, as well as separate reading guides, with words and pictures for any student who might want an extra boost. They would be available at the front of the classroom in a bin, and students would be free to take one while we read the story aloud. During the second lesson, when students would write down words to describe the sounds, I would only ask at-risk students to write down one word, accompanied by a picture. This way, I can assess if the student truly understands what the word means. Since the final project is open- ended, I would offer any assistance needed to students at-risk, and would be happy to pair them up with a research partner who is above grade-level who could help them.

At Grade Level: For students at grade level, I would expect them to be able to use context clues in the story to figure out what some of the more challenging words meant. They would be able to think of three words to describe the sounds of instruments. They would also be able to do simple research in the library in pairs with other students who are at grade-level, or choose to work individually.

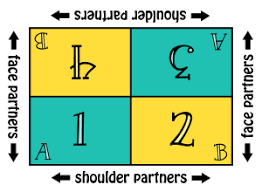
Above Grade Level: For the above grade level students in my class, I would allow them to write down more than three words to describe the sounds of instruments. I would also give them the opportunity to help students who are at-risk by grouping students accordingly in flexible groups. This way, the students who are more advanced will have a chance to master the material by helping their peers understand it. Above grade level students will be able to show their creativity by taking this project and doing something that will engage them at their own appropriate level.

Part Three: UDL Supports

This unit will be structured to provide multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement, following the Universal Design for Learning model. The first lesson will include reading the book as a class. Students will be able to follow along visually with scanned pages projected on the board. Reading it aloud will provide auditory reinforcement. When we encounter new vocabulary words, they will be written on the board, and we will discuss how that word fits into the context of the story. This whole unit is designed to incorporate as much transfer as possible, using cross curricular elements to supplement the musical aspects. The summative assessment for this unit can be completed through multiple ways of expression. There is no “correct” way to display the information that the student has learned, and so in this way it complies with Universal Design for learning. By providing a rubric and outlining the specific guidelines for the project and what needs to be included, this will make it very straightforward for the teacher to assess the learning. The self-reflection portion will be a small journal in which the student would have to describe in three sentences what they like or dislike about the sound of the instrument, using words previously discussed in class. Students will also have the option to form groups to work on their projects if they’d rather not work individually.

Part Four: Differentiated Instructional/Management Strategies

Cooperative learning is truly the best way for students to learn and be confident about what they are learning. Flexible grouping allows for positive interdependence, individual accountability, equal participation, and simultaneous interaction.  By placing students in flexible groups, instruction can be differentiated based on students’ ability levels. Also, flexible grouping allows for heterogenous instruction with collaboration as the central goal. Here are three different strategies for differentiated instruction and management:

* + **Kagan Strategy:** Grouping students by four, sitting in designated areas on the carpet with their particular group and having students interact with their shoulder partners, face partners and letter partners. Each number can also be grouped with all of the other students in the class with that same number, so for example all of the 1’s together for even larger groups. Similarly, the class can be divided into 2 large groups: A’s and B’s. (See diagram below) This will allow the students to be more engaged during the second lesson, when their tasks include reacting to different instrument sounds and helping each other come up with different words to describe the timbre.
  + Using the **Literature Circle** model, the music teacher can adapt this model to a music classroom. Students can have roles assigned to them, so for example the scribe can write down the words that are being discussed on the board and keep them in a folder, while the runner can go get the different materials needed to complete the activities, such as the beanie babies, scarves, crayons, etc. Having these groups shift periodically gives students the chance to interact with their peers and be more socially involved. The teacher can be free to walk around, monitoring student progress and helping when needed.
  + **Giving Choice Activity:** This will help motivate student learning by giving them the power to choose how to represent the information that they have learned through summative assessment. Acceptable project formats are not limited to, but can include:
    - Reciting an original poem for the class
    - Presenting a drawing/artistic representation of the animal/instrument, and explaining the facts orally
    - Giving a short puppet show introducing the animal and the instrument
    - Making a mini-book using the different facts and illustrating the pages and presenting it orally
    - Creating a powerpoint presentation and presenting orally
    - Creating a costume using art supplies and dressing up as the animal to present facts
    - Writing a rap or song about the animal and the instrument and presenting it in front of the class

Part Five: Literacy Areas

**Vocabulary:** Vocabulary plays a huge role in this unit. I have chosen a vocabulary-rich book as the central text of the unit, and in it are many words that fourth graders would probably not know. I am using this opportunity to teach advanced words, so that they can start to incorporate them in their own vocabulary. We will use the index card model to collect the words, and I will be working with the classroom teacher to supplement the learning. The students can make a list of the words and take it back to the classroom as part of a vocabulary lesson where they will make index cards. For at-risk students, learning synonyms of the words will be crucial in understanding and will be supported with visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile styles of learning to further understanding. Doing frequent vocabulary checks will also support the learning of these words.

**Reading Comprehension:** Reading comprehension will go with the vocabulary element of this unit. In order to understand the story, students must understand the vocabulary. The vocabulary instruction will serve as a building block for the reading comprehension portion of the unit. Using a TWA chart will help at-risk students prepare to read the book with the class. This can be completed as a bell-ringer before the book is read at the beginning of the class. The TWA chart contains three components: “Think before you read”, “Think while reading” and “Think after reading” and is a great way to get students to organize their thoughts before, while, and after listening to the story being read.

**Writing Skills:** Writing skills are addressed in this unit by creating index cards for the vocabulary words, as well as the self-reflection mini-journal at the end of the second lesson about the different instrument timbres. Students must also use researching skills, which is to find information from outside sources and summarize them in five sentences about a particular animal and its corresponding instrument. For at-risk students, this is a very crucial skill, but can be completed using bullet points summarizing the information instead of writing complete sentences about each of the facts.

**Oral Language Skills:** Each student must present their final projects using oral language skills. This is a very important skill that will be assessed during the presentation of the summative assessment. Each student must explain to the class what they did for their final project, recite the ten facts that they wrote about the animals and instruments, and give a brief summary of their self-reflection mini-journal. For at-risk students, a brief summary would be appropriate, or just reading off the bullet points with any assistance needed. This could also be a good opportunity for some of the higher achieving students to help by reading the facts for the at-risk student.