

Arts Assessment For Learning

MUSIC — 6TH GRADE

REFLECTION: AABA RHYTHMIC COMPOSITION

Without judgment, describe what you did:

See HOW TO & TIPS

What went well?

Students enjoyed most of the jazz artists/music. They had fun improvising and composing, and especially loved performing their compositions on xylophones. It was a challenge and most were stimulated with the task. The discussions were accountable and constructive and improvements were made in performance. The performances were exciting to hear! I have very good video evidence of verbal peer feedback and revision.

What was so-so?

They weren't as thrilled to notate music although they did do it accurately and I think some of them will have a better appreciation for what it takes to compose, not just aurally but on paper. The written feedback was not as good as the verbal feedback. Students would rather talk than write.

What was the most challenging part of trying this?

The most challenging part of this research was having enough time in each class period to experiment, write, play and revise. Revision done days later does not work. Revision needs to take place immediately within the same 45 minute class period to have an impact and to stay in their memory until the next time they have music class. There never seemed to be enough time, and I always felt like I was rushing to get results.

What was the impact of this strategy on student learning?

Students had to apply their improvisation/composition choices to staff paper and performance. Accuracy with notes, rhythm, staff placement and group performance improved their musicianship, intellectually and as an artist. Students became more aware of what it takes to compose a piece of music and perform it with skill and pride.

What questions were raised for you as you implemented the assessment practice?

Can these skills help students outside of the classroom? Can confidence in music skills apply to other classes or real life? How will I be able to elicit quality feedback from students?

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What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience?

My iPad was useful in documenting this process and evidence. I edited and put together a formative assessment story on my own computer using imovie. It would have been helpful to have a working smart board to teach mini lessons/powerpoints that everyone could see instead of drawing everything on whiteboard and trying to explain tasks using 8x11 paper worksheets.

Revision is the key to continual improvements, and students need to be given time for revision and reflection. This process encourages students to be more responsible for their own learning and growth.

How do the results of your action plan inform your inquiry question?

I am very pleased with the results, and pleasantly surprised that partners worked so well to produce high quality work. Partner work and peer feedback gave students more opportunities to hear different ideas and implement them in performance. Students developed confidence in their choices and performance.

Documentation to bring (student work, photos, writing, teacher journal, etc.):

7 minute video compilation, student work, photos, tools.