

Arts Assessment For Learning

MUSIC — 4TH AND 5TH GRADE

REFLECTION: RECORDER TECHNIQUE WITH RUBRIC

Without judgment, describe what you did. just the facts:

- I explained the piece to the students. We discussed the history of the music, the composer and listened to various recordings of the music.
- I performed the piece several times and the students sang (in echo style, phrase by phrase) the musical notes.
- I taught the students the piece, following the steps of the rubric. i.e., taught the fingering for the notes first because it appears first in the rubric, then the rhythm. (I didn't put too much emphasis on phrasing yet—it will come after fluency of the piece is mastered.)
- I explained and went over the rubric
- I modeled how to use the rubric
- The students modeled how to use the rubric (peer to peer and self) by performing a phrase from the piece
- We discussed the accuracy of their student feedback
- Students took home their recorders, rubrics and music to fill out the self-assessment portion.
- I looked over the self-assessment sheets in order to decide what mini-lessons were needed and to select appropriate partners
- I paired the students up with appropriate partners
- Students completed a peer assessment with their assigned partner
- The remainder of the phrases in the piece were taught using the same procedure.

What went well?

- Some of the students were able to articulate what they need to work on
- Most of the students were able to understand the rubric

What was so-so?

- Timing: almost two whole periods were dedicated to explaining, teaching and modeling the rubric. It also had to be reviewed in following weeks.
- Keeping the marked up rubrics organized.
- Making sure the students were accurate with the feedback both for themselves and their peers.

What was the most challenging part of trying this?

- Pairing up groups; knowing who to put together - balancing personalities, work ethic, and ability
- The beginning of the process (modeling and preparing) was time consuming
- Noise and confusion: It was difficult for me to have the students perform and practice at the same time. The students also found it challenging to listen to and hear their partner while other students were practicing.

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What was the impact of this strategy on student learning? (specific examples)

- Students were able to articulate what kind of help they needed
- Students were able to raise the level of their performance by guiding their own learning

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

- Are the partners working well together?
- Are all students fully engaged or are they wasting time?
- Are partners really paying attention to their peer's performance?
- Did I pair up the students with the correct partner?

What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience? (share with group)

- How important it is to take the time to articulate rubrics (expectations) to the students.
- When the students are aware of what they are expected to do and how they can achieve that goal, learning happens faster.
- The time spent on explaining the rubric was made up later because they were able to improve their performance at a faster pace due to their ability to guide themselves and each other.

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

- Taking the time to write, explain, practice using, and review the rubric was worth it. It helped many students stay focused and on task during class. It constantly brought their attention to something visual, rather than just listening to me remind them of what to do and what their next goal was.
- I think using the rubric worked better in class than it did at home simply because of their lack of practicing. I feel that at home students just filled in anything on the rubric to "prove" that they practiced. Most of the improvement happened in class. However, I would use it as a helpful at-home practice tool for those who did correctly use it to monitor their progress.
- I would like to come up with a different way to guide students at home practice. Even though this piece was for their graduation, there were at least 25% who were not motivated to practice at home.

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

- Rubric (revised)
- Music sheets
- Videos