

# Arts Assessment For Learning

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MUSIC — 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

## **ACTION PLAN: ORFF - IMPROVISATION & COMPOSITION**

### **Who (the class or group I will focus on):**

5<sup>th</sup> grade general music class

### **Inquiry question:**

Does formative assessment improve improvisation and composition skills in a 5<sup>th</sup> grade general music class?

### **Student learning goals:**

- Increase improvisational skills/techniques
- Develop critical listening skills
- Develop a sense of freedom to create
- Develop a sense of 4, 8, 12 and 16 measure phrases
- Apply improvisation skills to various styles of music
- Utilize these skills as a foundation to begin composing
- Develop the ability to provide constructive feedback to their peers

### **Identify indicators from the *Blueprint* aligned with the student learning goals:**

1. Students apply understanding of elements of music through performance activities
2. Students become aware of themselves through performance, improvisation and composition
3. Students build and apply vocal and instrumental techniques
4. Students take responsibility for their instruments, music materials and learning environment
5. Students follow established routines that contribute to positive music making experiences
6. Students identify music in genre and style

### **What formative assessment strategy I will put into practice:**

- Self-Reflection
- Peer assessment
- Checklist
- Class reflections

### **Why this strategy will help my students achieve or improve the above goals:**

I hope formative assessment will help students become less teacher-dependent and more independent. I believe that peer and self-assessment will foster an environment for improvisation.

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## **How I plan to implement this assessment strategy in my practice and/or lessons:**

After reviewing improvisation, form and style from our previous jazz unit, we will discuss how to apply these techniques to historical work songs from Share the Music, Unit 4. This process will be implemented for 6 weeks (or 6 consecutive song activities) to track students' progress in improvisation and composition, as well as track the quality of their feedback.

### Step 1: Learn Melody by Rote

- Students learn a melody per lesson.

### Step 2: Develop an Orff Arrangement

- Each song is made into an Orff arrangement, beginning with a bordun (e.g., root and fifth of the scale) on a xylophone.
- Students practice the borduns while singing, accompanying themselves.
- Discuss the A and B sections in the form of the piece.

### Step 3: Improvisation over A Section

- Teacher models a four bar improvisation.
- Teacher and students co-create a checklist (see attached) for improvisation techniques. The checklist is posted on the board.
- Students improvise. Improvisation length can vary from 2-16 measure increments.

### Step 4: Peer assessment and revision

- Students pair up on xylophones and perform four measure improvisations.
- Partners give verbal feedback using the checklist.
- Students perform their four measure improvisations again, with revisions.
- Partners use the feedback form (see attached) to write comments.
- After both partners have performed and written feedback, they discuss the feedback.
- Students volunteer to share their feedback with the class.
- Students revise their improvisations again.

### Step 5: Informance (in-class performance)

Small group and individual solos incorporated into the arrangement will culminate in a class informance.

## **When I plan to implement this strategy (at which point in the teaching/learning cycle or unit plan):**

After completing a detailed jazz studies curriculum – 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (March)

## **Evidence of effectiveness of this assessment strategy:**

- Peer feedback sheets
- Video of student progress