

The “Simple Gifts” Composition

This month, the perfect lesson is one that adds a little "BAM" to your winter concert! It is a chance for our students to show off what they have learned thus far and for us to remind the parents how a well rounded education must include music! We took the Shaker song “Simple Gifts” written by E.J. Brackett as an example to use in this lesson.

Content Standard 4: Composing and Arranging Music Within Specific Guidelines

Objectives:

- Students will create and arrange short songs and instrumental pieces within specified guidelines

Materials:

- The song “Simple Gifts”
- 4 Sets of Note Knacks and Time Signature Frames
- Recorders or other pitched instruments in your classroom

Methods:

1. Teach the song as you normally would to your students
2. Tell your students that they will be composing a B Section to be played in-between the verses
3. Break your students up in to 4 groups.
4. Give each group a set of Note Knacks and Time Signature Frames.
5. Have each group compose 2 measures in 4/4 time and write it in *Representative Notation*, *Phase 2 Notation* or *Conventional Notation*
6. Have each group clap their rhythm.
7. Have each group use their recorders or their pitched instruments to add pitch to their rhythm
8. Have each group record their chosen pitches by writing letter names under the notes or on a staff
9. Have each group then play their rhythm on their instruments.
10. Compile each of the rhythms and decide on an order to compose a full B section
11. Everyone practices the B section
12. Sing the song and play the B section then sing the song again to make it an ABA form

Assessment:

- Did the groups compose a 4/4 measure?
- Were they able to clap and play their rhythm accurately?
- Did they play at the correct time