

Exploration Lesson For Your Little Ones

OBJECTIVE

- Students will begin to think about notation and what it means

MATERIALS

- Note Knacks Cushion Set or Magnetic Set
- Instruments of any kind

METHODS

1. Have kids sit in a circle
2. Show students the NK Cushion Set
3. (In a previous lesson kids looked at and compared shape, color and size. If they haven't already, you might want to start with that/ if you have done this lesson, remind them what they noticed)
4. This lesson will be about the symbols they see on each side of each cushion.
5. Ask students what they see written on each cushion
6. Each cushion has one symbol (you can define the word "symbol" for them) on one side and another on the other side.
7. Ask students what they think they mean.
8. Encourage kids to think about where they have seen those symbols before.
9. Inevitably a student will mention that it is music. Talk about how we write sound down. (There is no need to get into specifics. For example, this length is half of that length etc... unless someone notices it)
10. Ask kids:
 - Why would we want to write sound down?
 - What symbol do you suppose is for the longest length of sound?
 - The shortest?
 - Do all of the symbols look the same?
 - How are they different?
11. Let's record what is the same and what is different about the look of each symbol.
12. The questions and postulations could go on for as long as you want. The idea is to get kids thinking and asking questions about what they see. You might even want to record their findings. It would be very informative for them later on when they learn to read and compose music using conventional notation.
13. You can also have kids play their instruments for as long as you drag your hand across a cushion. They will learn how to start and stop together.
14. Have fun with it and use it as a time for kids to be detectives.