



Music Speaks: Using the Language of Music to Embody Social Emotional Learning through Mindfulness

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Elementary General Music, Grade 5

Keywords: Mindfulness, Social Emotional Learning, Music, Arts Education, Music Education, Creativity

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis:

This curriculum unit was developed within the CTI Course Mindfulness and Education: Transforming Learning through Awareness led by Dr. Donna M. Sacco and Dr. Adriana L. Medina. This curriculum unit is focused on the teaching of mindfulness as part of the elementary music curriculum. Mindfulness is the act of being deliberately “present” or “in the moment.” As life for students and educators can be filled with distractions and anxious thoughts, mindful activities serve to bring us back to the present moment so that we are able to pause and make decisions from a place of peace and calm. Mindfulness based activities will include breathing, attention anchoring activities and body scans. As this course is part of the elementary music curriculum, students will create musical projects reflecting social emotional learning and with mindfulness as their topic of focus. Music and arts related activities will be analyzed within the context of mindfulness, and with the intention of learning how to be more mindful while performing both arts and non-arts tasks.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to (77) students in (Elementary General Music in Grade 5).

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Esther Alcamo

Introduction

The 2019-2020 school year was one we never anticipated turning out the way it did. School closures, quarantine have had an impact on students, parents and teachers alike, as we strived to maintain curriculum, consistency and emotional stability throughout this difficult period. One perhaps unforeseen development was the absolute desire for creativity and connection arising from the time of physical and social distancing. As we spent time learning how to navigate online learning, checking in with students and posting assignments to our Canvas Courses, teachers in the Arts knew instinctively that our students would be missing the concrete arts experiences we provided for them. After all, our classes were the classes that gave them an hour each day to move their bodies, express themselves through art or music or explore the wonders of the school library. As a music teacher, one of the aspects of my class my students enjoyed the most was getting to play instruments. We worked on creative composition projects where they would select instruments from what we had available in the classroom. Sometimes the process of choosing instruments would be their favorite aspect of the work!

In a curriculum unit focused on mindfulness through music, the intention is to utilize the aspects of my class that students are the most highly motivated by: the act of creating, connecting and feeling heard and seen. How does one create an opportunity for mindfulness in what can potentially be a loud, busy music classroom? How can we be “in the moment” in a way that is unique to music? What are the components of mindfulness that align the most effectively with music? The intention for this curriculum unit is to teach mindfulness and show students applications for it in their own social emotional learning. The opportunity unique to teaching mindfulness in music class is the potential that music has for both eliciting and expressing emotion.

This year I was a fellow in the Charlotte Teachers Institute seminar *Mindfulness and Education: Transforming Learning through Awareness*, led by Dr. Donna M. Sacco and Dr. Adriana L. Medina. As fellows in the seminar, we studied and practiced mindfulness and meditation, incorporating reflection and journaling into our work. As part of our coursework, we studied texts on mindfulness. One of these books was *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, by Kevin Hawkins. The author covered the topics of what mindfulness is, how it is supported by scientific evidence and how mindfulness helps teachers and students in learning and overall well-being. Through developing our mindfulness practices, we prepared ourselves to “teach mindfulness” to our students and to “teach mindfully.”(1)

Rationale

I have chosen to write this curriculum unit, *Music Speaks: Using the Language of Music to Embody Social Emotional Learning through Mindfulness* because teaching the practice of mindfulness can help students to be happier and more emotionally stable. As a music teacher, I have chosen to integrate mindfulness into my curriculum so that students will use music and other creative art forms in order to practice and comprehend mindfulness practices. As a musician and a student of mindfulness, I have often noticed a connection between the two disciplines. As music and mindfulness share many valuable attributes, which will serve students and help them to be happier and healthier individuals, my hope and intention is to provide my students with an opportunity to experience these connections. Music teaches us to be present in the moment, in both performing and experiencing it as a listener. Musicians learn that there are several correct solutions to questions posed in musical composition and performance. There are many lessons in music with applications outside the music classroom.

Music is part of the lives of my students. They react to music in class, and as fifth graders have already developed opinions about the musical performers and style which they enjoy. As we use musical and social-emotional language to react to and discuss music in an inquisitive way, students will increase their understanding and self-knowledge. These skills of musical analysis or mindful listening apply to listening and observing in the other senses. There is much opportunity for developing the practice of mindfulness within the context of the music classroom.

School/Student Demographics

I am the Elementary Music teacher for Collinswood Language Academy, a K-8 Spanish Language Immersion school in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School system. The demographic makeup of our school is 60.9% Hispanic, 19.5 % White and 16% African American. 48.5% of our students receive free or reduced lunch. I plan to teach my CU to my fifth grade music classes. Current data for the 2020-2021 school year shows 77 students enrolled in this grade. As a Special Area teacher, I see my students on a four or five day rotation. As such, I would plan to cover my Music and Mindfulness curriculum unit over a 12-week period. This would allow me to spend a few weeks introducing the topic of mindfulness, and would allow me to extend activities over several weeks. As a special-area teacher, I see my students approximately once a week. During virtual-instruction, students receive instruction weekly for thirty minutes per week. During hybrid instruction, teachers instruct students for 60 minutes, with approximately half of the students receiving their instruction virtually while the other half receive instruction in person.

Unit Goals

I would like my students to be more mindful and more creative people.

The goals of this unit are:

- The students will learn to practice mindfulness daily in order to cope better with stress
- The students will apply mindfulness to their creative practice in music classes as measured by student-written affirmations and musical compositions.
- The students will use mindfulness and music vocabulary to describe and reflect on their music and mindfulness practice as evidenced by journal entries
- The students will use music, poetry and other art forms to create original compositions which demonstrate their reaction and responses to mindfulness practices

In this curriculum unit, *Music Speaks: Using the Language of Music to Embody Social Emotional Learning through Mindfulness*, the teacher will introduce the practice of mindfulness within the context of weekly general music classes. Mindfulness activities will become part of the procedure for beginning class and will provide students with the opportunity to be ready and able learners. As students become familiar with mindfulness activities, they will relate them to music and the arts. Students will participate in creative music making projects, which will involve spoken word, instrumental and vocal performance when possible. In class activities and projects, students will include mindfulness and use it as a tool to prepare for creativity and to analyze their creative efforts and process as well. Students will develop the skill of listening mindfully and be attentive observers of their physical and emotional reactions to musical and arts related tasks.

My curriculum unit, although written for fifth-grade music classes, will also relate to and incorporate other subjects such as language arts and social emotional learning. Other arts subjects, which would relate are dance, drama and possibly visual art.

Content Research

Mindfulness

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness has become a popular trend in self-help as well as education. What is mindfulness? Before we relate mindfulness to education and a specific discipline, it is important to have an understanding of the practice and concept of mindfulness. Jon Kabat-Zinn, a molecular biologist at Massachusetts institute of technology wrote, “Mindfulness is the awareness that arises when we pay attention, on purpose in the present moment, with curiosity and kindness to things as they are.” Kabat-Zinn introduced Buddhist meditation to mainstream society. Having found the benefits of meditation practices, he sought to bring this teaching to secular society, without the necessity of studying Buddhism. (2)

Mindfulness is the act of being deliberately “present” or “in the moment.” This state can occur naturally, when we are deeply absorbed in something. As we move through our lives, the tendency is to become distracted with our thoughts and the natural wanderings of our minds. These habits can distract us from experiencing life fully, as we become absorbed with worries of moments that have passed and anxiety about what is to come. Mindfulness is a practice of bringing oneself back to the essence of the present moment.

The Practice of Mindfulness

In his “Letter to a Young Teacher,” Thich Nhat Hanh, (3) describes mindfulness as “bringing our mind back to our body.” This is a concept that at first may seem abstract, but it is real and tangible. Our thoughts can take us out of ourselves, and as we consider what we believe to be reality, we may be traveling very far from it. How can we return to ourselves? How can we decrease suffering and learn how to generate happiness? The practice of mindfulness can provide techniques and opportunities to influence our own well-being in the moment. By practicing mindfulness, we can improve our ability to reflect and react over time, and we can condition ourselves to react to stress in ways that are more manageable.

In Mindful Teacher, Mindful School, Kevin Hawkins describes two “modes of mind” which are “sensing” and “thinking.” (4) Often when we are feeling anxious due to concerns about work to be done, or an unpleasant experience, we become entrenched in our thoughts. This creates a cycle of stress and worry that can be difficult to break. Hawkins describes the process of shifting from our inner narrative to experiencing the present moment: “A key component of training in mindful awareness is learning how to bring our attention out of thinking mode and into our bodies and senses- into sensing mode. We train for this not to stop our thinking, nor to be permanently in our bodies, but in order to have greater choice over where attention goes.” (5) The practice of taking time to focus on our physical body, whether through breathing or body awareness, can help us to find balance. It can give us a needed break from the cycle of overthinking and allow space for clarity of thought.

Practicing Mindfulness

- The Breath
- Body Awareness
- Observing Thoughts and Feelings
- Walking

Mindfulness practices can encompass a number of activities; however, one of the most central concepts is focusing on breathing. In Mindful Games, Susan Kaiser Greenland describes a breath activity: “breathing on purpose: a cooling out-breath” (p.14) When teaching this breathing work to students, the teacher counts to two for the inhale and to four for the exhale. Another technique is “breathing in a little, and breathing out a whole lot.” This can be a valuable calming tool when a child is feeling anxious or upset.

Body awareness is a practice of noticing the sensations in your body. By becoming still and focusing on one part of the body at a time, the mind becomes calm. After practicing body awareness techniques, it is helpful to ask yourself what you felt and how your mind reacted to it. In his book, Planting Seeds (6), Thich Nhat Hanh describes mindful walking: “Anytime you move your feet and touch the ground, anytime you go from one place to another, you can practice walking meditation. Every time you walk it should be walking meditation.” All activities can be mindful activities. Washing dishes, cooking and eating are just as important as sitting and performing mindfulness exercises.

Why Teach Mindfulness in Schools?

Mindfulness addresses a growing concern: mental health, and the prevalence of depression and anxiety among students and young adults. In Mindful Teacher, Mindful School, Kevin Hawkins cites data from the World Health Organization predicting, “by 2030 depression will be the single biggest cause of ill health worldwide.”(7) Data has shown that young people are greatly at risk. 1 in 10 of the 5-16 year olds in the UK now have a diagnosable psychiatric condition (Mental Health Foundation 2015). Depression is the top cause of illness and disability among adolescents with suicide as the third highest cause of death (WHO 2016). The early onset of mental health issues is of great concern and deeply relevant to educators and schools.

In The Mindful School, Patricia Jennings reviewed research involving 34 studies working with students aged 3-18 years during the school day. The public and private schools were in the United Kingdom, United States, Australia, Canada, Thailand, the Netherlands and Wales. The study measured mental health and well-being, self-regulation, executive functioning and physical health. Most studies reported improvements in criteria, although some data did not show improvement. (8) A 2007 study on mindfulness showed that mindfulness training increased the ability of subjects to move from thinking mode to sensory mode. A study at Massachusetts General Hospital (2011) showed a change in brain structure in those areas connected with emotional regulation and stress after an eight-week mindfulness-training program. (9)

Schools are places where students and teachers come together to learn, accomplish goals and gain valuable life skills. Students spend six to eight hours of their day at school, in the care of trusted adults, namely teachers. With stress and anxiety affecting young people and adults, mindfulness provides training to help individuals work through challenging situations. In order to be prepared to teach mindfulness, teachers need to learn these skills themselves. The three aspects of mindfulness in education as described by Kevin Hawkins are *be mindful, teach mindfully and teach mindfulness*. (10) As concerns over mental health in young people continue to rise it is clear that mindfulness programs have a place in schools.

In *The Social Neuroscience of Education*, Louis Cozolino’s research showed students are predisposed to learn in groups from adults who fit the mold of being a *tribal leader*. A strong teacher uses their natural authority to lead and protect the students they serve. (11). Mindfulness teaches us to “increase our sense of presence, increase our sensitivity to our own needs and the need of our students and to heighten our awareness of bodily and emotional cues that guide us in developing that sensitivity.” Mindfulness can help students and teachers in challenging situations and help them to enjoy the experience of the present moment.

Arts Education

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts describes an art form as “any branch of creative work in the arts (visual arts, dance, drama, music); the products of creative work.” (Silverstein 4). Arts disciplines have many factors in common, but have specific skills and areas of focus. The term artist can refer to a visual artist, but can also refer anyone involved in the process of creating or performing in the arts, including music, drama and dance as well. The arts are part of

a well-rounded curriculum and are represented by the Essentials Standards for Arts Education in the State of North Carolina.

Arts Integration

What is Arts Integration?

“Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.” (12) Arts integration is larger than an arts-related activity. It is embedded in the teacher’s daily practice. Integrating the arts is a many-layered process in which deep connections and rigorous learning occurs in both the arts discipline and the other subject area studied.

For over twenty years, the Kennedy Center has worked with partner schools in the metropolitan DC area training these teachers in the implementation of arts integration through a program known as Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA). With over 400 teachers in the program, Arts integration is dependent on an approach to teaching which allows students to experience what they learn through carefully planned activities. (13)

In breaking down this definition, and examining its key terms, we use keywords that have deep connections to the arts and education. The first keyword discussed is “approach”. The approach must be alive and fluid, allowing for hands-on learning and authentic problem solving. Students should have the opportunity to reflect on their learning. They should be able to revise and improve their work. A positive classroom culture should exist, providing students the opportunity to take risks and a social and cooperative learning community. This approach provides the fertile ground for developing artists who can integrate their learning throughout other subject areas, allowing for deeper and more profound learning experiences.

The second keyword is, “understanding.” Often when considering “understanding” one thinks of information being passed on, or handed down. The unique aspect of teaching in the arts is that much of the learning and understanding must come from active experience and practice. As students construct and demonstrate understanding in the arts, they go beyond learning and recalling information. Students take the facts they learn and create something new and original through the synthesis of knowledge and experience. (14)

“Students’ visible demonstrations of learning serve as both formative assessments to guide instruction and summative assessments to determine what students have learned.” (15) In order to create a work of art, whether it be choreography, visual art, or song, that reflects a concept in a subject area, they must build their understanding of that subject deeper than the level of recall. Vocabulary for the subject studied is synthesized with performance of the arts discipline. This creates a deeper level of understanding.

“Creative Process” or “creativity” is central to arts education and therefore an integral part of arts integration. Creativity is defined as “an imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are original and of value. The heart of arts integration is engagement in the creative process. Arts integration requires that students do more than repeat (a song) copy (an art project) or follow directions. They must create something that is original and of value. (16).

This is organic inquiry based learning, which occurs naturally through using the creative opportunities provided by working in the arts. Students develop resilience through experimentation and inquiry. This resilience allows them to be better artists, and prepares them for challenges in their academic lives and future careers.

“Interdisciplinary connections,” are connections made between a specific art form and a specific curriculum area. Both connections are strongest when they are mutually-reinforcing. (17) Arts integration may also be used in making a connection between a specific art form and a school’s concern or need, such a social-emotional learning or character building. As the connections are made between the arts area and a specific curriculum area, both subjects are reinforced and greater learning occurs. “Evolving objectives” in both the arts and other subject areas suggest that teachers set dual objectives in both the art form and the other subject. These objectives are balanced, and students are held accountable for their learning in both areas of study. (18) As students develop in both their knowledge and skill, objectives evolve and they are able to take on more involved tasks.

In examining research around arts education, Arts Integration has proven to be an important subject. It provides an avenue to define the contributions that the arts make, by showing them in juxtaposition with other subjects. When arts concepts are integrated with other subjects, they provide opportunities for deeper learning through arts projects. Students synthesize their knowledge because they are working to create a new and unique work in order to demonstrate the concept they are studying in the non-arts subject.

Artfulness and the Artful Teacher

Artfulness is a term defined by Tatiana Chemi, a researcher and professor of Culture and learning at Aalborg University. Artfulness is a cognitive and emotional response to stimuli that individuals experience within artistic or arts-based environments. Within artfulness, there are four categories

- Aesthetic: This refers to recognition of the senses. Examples are time in nature, mindfulness activities, culinary experiences
- Arts-based: This is based on hands-on experience with art and its processes, but not necessarily created by professional artists or occurring in traditional artistic contexts.
- Art, artistic: work in the arts performed by professionals or skilled amateurs
- Artful: when using art and its processes as a metaphor for something else. (19)

"The Artful Teacher: A Conceptual Model for Arts Integration in Schools," by Tatiana Chemi examines the role of arts education in schools through the concept of “artfulness.” The paper examines data from a research study entitled “Making the Ordinary Extraordinary: Adopting Artfulness in Danish Schools.” In the schools participating in the research, teachers committed to experiment with new teaching forms that incorporated the arts in order to improve learning. Teachers were committed to this process and believed that arts integration would have a positive effect on the students, although they did not know exactly how the benefits would

occur. The teachers relied on their instincts for which projects would provide benefits for learning processes, and ended up establishing several courses of study, which continued after the research was completed. The study focused on the learning areas (cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and relational) and showed social emotional benefits to the arts integration but positive findings on the relationship between the Arts and learning.

In addition, the author defined the concept of artfulness as “cognitive and emotional response to stimuli that individuals experience as situated within artistic or arts-based environments that they share with others.” This concept of artfulness closely aligns with mindfulness and examines the meeting between learning and the arts. In addition, the value of arts within the curriculum is often measured in two ways: art for its intrinsic value and art as an application to other contexts. Either model has worth as well as risk. If the arts are taught only for their own sake, applications to artistic learning in other subjects may be overlooked. As the author states, arts educators have often sought to hold up the arts for their morally uplifting or therapeutic benefits. However, this means that educational institutions that are not predisposed to value “elevation of spirit” may have little use for arts education. The other argument, that the arts allows students to learn better, has its pitfalls as well. Research has claimed that the arts are a remedy for school literacy, and educators readily agree that the arts provide a benefit. However, the necessity for defending the arts, requires a more systematic and defined causality for its positive effects. Empirical data shows a correlation between artistic activity and academic achievement, but this does not provide causality. Although, studies have shown that schools with disadvantaged students show improved learning when the Arts are present. If the benefits of arts integration are known, it is worth examining what the reasons may be, which prevent these programs from being fully implemented.

Chemi’s Artfulness study encompassed several learning areas; cognitive, emotional, interpersonal and relational. Field observation consisted of interviews with teachers and cooperating artists, as well as interviews with the heads of schools. The research confirmed positive findings on the relationship between the arts and learning. (Rabkin & Redmond, 2004) In the artfulness model, the positive emotional reaction broadens the individual’s confidence and competence, which builds resilience and enables them to face complex tasks. “The Arts generate an emotionally safe environment in which individuals can dare to experiment, learn, and deal with complexity. (20)

This points to the relevance of arts integration, as it shows the arts subject side by side with traditional academic subjects, allowing them to work through each other and gain mutually deeper understanding. When teachers of arts and non-arts subjects commit to experiment and try new teaching forms that include the arts to generate better learning, there is potential for growth in both disciplines. The value of artful exploration, and the resiliency that occurs as a result, make music and the other arts prime opportunities for mindfulness.

Music Curriculum

The North Carolina Essential Standards for Music give focus and shared goals to the music curriculum throughout the State of North Carolina. Within the music standards, there are three

strands: Musical Literacy, Musical Response and Contextual Relevancy. Within these areas of focus, students gain knowledge and practice in musical literacy and technique, create original musical compositions and reflect on their work. They also relate music to other concepts and areas of study. The goal of the music curriculum is for students to be actively involved in making music through singing, playing a variety of instruments and listening to, responding to and discussing music. (21)

Music and Mindfulness

Mindfulness can be a natural and beneficial addition to the music classroom. As teachers seek to deepen their student's music understanding, they can do so through including mindfulness in their routine and lesson plans for music. Mindfulness can be beneficial in helping students to self-regulate, can lead to increased learning outcomes including heightened listening sensitivity and more enjoyment (E. Falter) Mindful music activities can be a way of teaching music concepts and skills with a deeper level of understanding.

There are several ways to practice mindfulness in music class

- Mindful practice
- Guided mindful activities
- Mindful transitions

In a journal article "Mindfulness: An Underused Tool for Deepening Music Understanding," the author, Ellie H. Falter uses research and classroom examples to show the process for incorporating mindfulness in the music classroom. She describes a mindfulness activity related to a song the class was familiar with, "On my Toe there is a Flea" by John Feierabend. During the mindfulness activity, the teacher directed students to close their eyes and imagine the flea sitting on their toe, and then jumping to other parts of their bodies. Students were using a song that was already part of their curriculum and repertoire. They had explored the song in various tempi and forms of articulation. This familiarity created an emotional connection with the song and the ability to follow the teacher's instruction in guided visualization, or a guided mindful activity. The focus on the sensory aspect of feeling the flea as it landed on their knee, or belly allowed students to be mindfully present and aware of their physical bodies. When the teacher wishes to continue this activity and teach musical steps and skips, or melodic direction, mindful practice builds on the activity because they have already experienced it through sensory exploration and mindful practice (22)

There are occasions in music class when it is important to examine how to perform a musical skill. Music teachers can use guided mindful activities as a tool to deepen understanding. These activities can be used to examine an instrument and how it is played, or the breath and body mechanics involved in singing. Falter uses the example of the "Raisin Activity," where a person examines a few raisins as closely as possible, taking the perspective of someone who has never seen a raisin before. In music, we can apply this process to an instrument, mindfully examining

and exploring the instrument. When we explore instruments in mindfulness, we find new ways of playing and better understand the techniques with which we are already familiar. By examining a tambourine, which is a standard classroom instrument, we can discover new ways of using it. We can play shake the entire instrument or strike the head, as it is traditionally played. We can also glide a hand around a jingle, rub the drumhead or tap the frame. As the author states, this exploration is valuable and important to musical understanding. (23)

Mindful planning can help solidify the structure of music class. Music class often contains a series of transitions. Students enter the music classroom, and their brains and bodies need to be ready to participate in class. Often students enter and are unsettled or troubled by something that occurred earlier in the day. It is helpful to use mindfulness to help the students transition by using calming music combined with breathing. Students can improvise on an instrument, taking turns creating meditative music. (Falter)

As students become familiar with mindfulness practices and their applications in the music classroom, they will become better learners and musicians. Music is deeply connected to our emotions, and has the ability to effect both the practitioner and the listener alike. Through using music and mindfulness together in this curriculum unit: *Music Speaks: Using the Language of Music to Embody Social Emotional Learning through Mindfulness*, students will have the opportunity to become more mindful students and musicians. This will enable them to demonstrate deeper knowledge in music and other subjects. Learning mindfulness techniques will equip them with strategies to handle stressful situations with peace and clarity.

Instructional Implementation

Teaching strategies

This curriculum integrates the subjects of mindfulness and social-emotional learning with music class. Arts integration, as discussed in the research incorporates both arts learning and in this case, mindfulness, allowing both subjects equal attention and focus. The objectives addressed in the curriculum unit evolve in depth and difficulty as the unit progresses.

Mindfulness is a topic I have not previously covered as part of my music curriculum. In order to meaningfully integrate it into music, it is important that students understand mindfulness through direct experience. The first lesson, “Natural Stress Response and the Calming Breath,” serves as an introduction to mindfulness. This allows the teacher to integrate “Mindful Instrument Exploration” The composition assignments “Creating an Original Composition to Reflect Emotions with Sound” and “Labyrinth Composition” utilize social-emotional and mindfulness concepts as the basis and subject matter for musical pieces. This provides an opportunity for students to utilize the creative process to demonstrate understanding of mindfulness concepts. At the same time, mindfulness plays an important role in a student’s understanding of music. Mindfulness allows an openness to the creative process. Through greater awareness comes greater creativity.

Whole Group

Students participate in whole group activities as mindfulness concepts are introduced. They also benefit from singing and creating music as an ensemble in a whole group setting.

Small Group

Students have the option of working in small groups for composition projects such as “Creating an Original Composition to Reflect Emotions with Sound” and “Labyrinth Compositions.” While working in a small group, the teacher is able to facilitate and offer feedback tailored to the needs of the group.

Gradual Model of Responsibility

In the Gradual Model of Responsibility method, the teacher introduces the activity and demonstrates for the class. After observation, students try the activity along with the teacher with assistance. As more independence is established, the students take increasing responsibility for their work. An example in this curriculum unit is “Mindful Instrument Exploration.” After teacher demonstration, students practice and then explore and write about

Journaling and Reflection

Journaling is used in the unit in order to allow students to reflect on and process their mindfulness practice. The teacher provides journal prompts and students are given the option to discuss their reflections with peers and the classroom community.

Project-Based Learning

Students will acquire skills and understanding through planning and completing composition projects. These projects are designed with objectives that are flexible enough to evolve throughout the course of the project.

Classroom Lessons/Activities

Lesson 1: Natural Stress Response and the Calming Breath

Lesson 1	Grade Level 5	Vocabulary: mindful, breath, singing bowl, stress
Materials/Technology: bell, singing bowl or chime. Recorded music “I Follow My Breath” Post-its or paper writing observations during class (student)		
North Carolina State Standards: 5. MR.1.2 Use music terminology in explaining music including notation, instruments, voices and performances		
I Can Statement		

I Can discuss the relationship between breathing and stress responses and practice a calming breath

Summary: This lesson discusses the natural brain/ body stress responses all human beings have and introduces the “calming breath” and noticing the breath as a way to work through these responses.

Introduction: As students enter class, or during beginning of class play “I Follow My Breath” recording.

Invite students to repeat “I follow my breath” refrain.

Teacher: We are going to discuss stress and how our bodies respond to it. Stress begins in our brain and nervous system. There are different regions of our brains to process feelings of fear, anxiety and other challenging emotions. There are also parts of our brain that are able to help us notice and change our emotional responses. We have a natural stress response that will let us know we are in danger, and help us move quickly to safety. Sometimes our stress response causes us to worry, such as when we are behind in our schoolwork and instead of helping us get the work done, the worry can get in the way. Sometimes the worried thoughts can trigger more thoughts, which lead to stronger emotions. This thinking can get us stuck, and we find that we are going around in a cycle of unhelpful thoughts.

There is something that can help us when we are stuck in this cycle of worry. We can learn and practice breathing to help us focus on our breath. This will help us to activate the part of our brain that can help us calm down.

Activity #1 Mindful Game: Breathing on purpose: a cooling out-breath

Life Skills: Focusing. Quieting

1. Sit with your back straight and your body relaxed with your hands resting on your knees. Breathe naturally for an inhale and exhale.
2. Let’s notice how many seconds our in-breath lasts and how many seconds our out-breath lasts. (Teacher demonstrates by inhaling while showing counts on fingers. This helps to establish a natural pulse for counting with the students.)
3. Now breathe in for two counts and breathe out for four counts. (These are a slow count of two and four. There should be a natural pause between the inhale and exhale.) After a few repetitions -
4. Let’s go back to breathing naturally.
5. Ask: How does it feel to breathe longer on the out-breath? You can also try breathing longer on the in-breath and compare the two.

Activity #2 Introducing and Breathing with the bell

1. Show students the bell or singing bowl and ask: *Do you know what this is? Do any of you have one at home? What do we do when we hear the sound of the bell?*
2. I am going to strike (or invite) the bell. (Teacher plays once, allowing sound to ring.) We are going to listen to see how long we can hear the tone. (The idea is for students to focus and hear the sound as long as possible.)
3. This time I will play the bell, and we will breathe, and count the number of out-breaths while listening to the bell. Count the number of breaths silently, and then put your hand up when you can no longer hear the bell.

Activity #3 Mindful Listening *Choose two pieces of music. Genre is not important, but they should show contrast.*

1. We are going to listen to some music. While you are listening you will have a blank sheet of paper. As you are listening, notice what words or images come into your mind. In order to do this, you will want to avoid talking or making sounds. When the music has stopped playing, write down any words that come into your mind. They do not need to be complete sentences or thoughts. Do not worry if they don't make sense, there is no right or wrong answer.
2. Do the same for the second piece of music.
3. Students move into groups of two and share their observations with a partner. After each partner has taken a turn, what similarities or differences did you notice?
4. Discuss student observations and reactions to pieces. How did musical elements such as tempo, mode, timbre and form relate to emotional reactions?

Reflection: Take 5 minutes to write in your music journal about one of the three activities today.

Lesson 2: Breathing Anchor; Mindful Instrument Exploration

Lesson 2	Grade Level 5	Vocabulary: mindful, breath, singing bowl, chordophones, aerophones, membranophones, idiophones
Materials/Technology: bell, singing bowl or chime. Recorded music "I Follow My Breath", raisins (enough for each student to have a few) instruments for study and exploration: hand drums, woodblocks, shakers, guiro, ukulele or guitar, Worksheet: Mindful Instrument Exploration.		
North Carolina State Standards: 5.MR.1.4 Classify classroom, Western orchestral, and world instruments into categories based on how their sound is produced.		
I Can Statement with Language Objective: I focus on my breath and find my breathing anchor I can mindfully examine a musical instrument		
Welcome Ritual: "I follow my breath" as students enter, play recording. Ask students if they noticed anything new in the song this week.		
Activity #1 choose your breathing anchor		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sit with your back straight and your body relaxed, resting your hands gently on your knees. You may close your eyes if it feels comfortable. Notice what it feels like to breathe in and out right now. 2. Place one finger under your nose and feel your breath going in and out. Can you feel it? 3. Next, place your hand on your chest above your heart. Can you feel your hand moving as you breathe? 4. Place your hand on your belly and feel the movement of your breathing there. 5. Now put your hands on your knees and breathe naturally. Notice where you feel the movement of your breath the most easily. Is it at your nose, your chest or your belly? 		

6. Now we will practice our breath and I will ask you to make a choice and focus on the place where you felt the breath the most. This will be your “anchor.” See if you can keep your body relaxed and focused on your “anchor” at the same time.

Activity #2 Raisin Activity

1. Today we are going to examine something we have seen many times before, but we are going to try to look at it as if we have never seen it before.
2. Show raisin to students. I am going to look at this raisin. I notice the color, the texture and how it feels. I look at it from different angles and notice that it is wrinkled.
3. If you choose, students can also have a few raisins and do the same. Notice the way the raisin feels, the way it looks, the way it smells. Examine it with all your senses. You can also think about how the raisin came to be.

Chordophones, idiophones, aerophones and membranophones. These are labels for instruments based on how their sound is made. A guitar is an example of a chordophone, because its sound is made from strumming or plucking the string. Aerophones are instruments that are blown into to make a sound. Idiophones make their sound by being shaken or tapped, or scraped. The entire instrument is involved in making the sound. Membranophones

Activity #3 Mindful and Musical Exploration

1. In music class we play instruments and this is one of the ways to learn about music. Most of you have probably seen these instruments many times before. Today we are going to look at the instruments in the same way we examined the raisin.
2. For example, I can look at a drum and imagine that I have not seen a drum before and did not know the usual technique for playing it. I might examine the skin of the drum, look under the drum and put the drum on its side. I can try making a sound by tapping the skin of the drum with my fingers, or with my entire hand. I can tap the rim of the drum. I can also run my fingernails over the drum in a circular pattern. In all this exploration I am respectful of the instrument and careful. I know that it is a tool that I can use to make music. I appreciate this tool and all it has to offer me.
3. Instruments are placed around the classroom for you to explore. Remember to take time to examine the instrument as well as play it. As you try an instrument, make notes on your *Mindful Instrument Exploration Worksheet*.

Reflection in Journal: Pick one of the instruments you explored and write about it. What did you notice about it today that you have noticed before? What did you notice that you have not noticed before? Did this change the way you played the instrument?

If time allows, students may share their observations about instrument exploration time.

Lesson 3: Seeing Clearly and Listening with Attention

Lesson 3	Grade Level 5	
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Materials/Technology: bell, singing bowl or chime. Recorded music “The Island Within”, glitter ball or snow globe, drum, shekere or other shaker

Vocabulary: mindful, breath, singing bowl

North Carolina State Standards:

5.MR.1.2 Use musical terminology in explaining music, including notation, instruments, voices and performances.

5.MR.1.3 Exemplify appropriate behaviors as a participant and observer of music in relation to the context and style of music performed

I Can Statement

I can exemplify the connection between mind and body

I can listen closely to a sound to help me relax and focus

Introduction “This Island Within” Begin class with this song. Share lyrics of song with students and invite them to sing along. What do you think of when you picture an “island within.”

Activity #1 Shake it Up

1. When I do this activity with my youngest students, I tell them to put magic glue on their feet. If you want to pretend to have magic glue, you can! Or just imagine that your feet are stuck to the floor. Wiggle your knees and keep the bottoms of your feet flat on the floor.
2. Let’s move our bodies to the sound of the drum, keeping our feet “glued” to the floor. *Teacher plays drum and also does movements.*
3. Make small movements when you hear quiet drumming : *Teacher drums quietly*
4. What do you do when you hear fast drumming? *Move fast.* What do you do when you hear slow drumming? etc.
5. See if you can follow these sounds, and when the drumming stops, freeze.
6. This activity can be extended to allow students to lead by playing the drum. This activity can be repeated in later lessons with student leaders as well.
*It is recommended in Mindful Games to precede the following activity “Seeing Clearly” with a physical activity such as “Shake it Up.” This will help students to feel their body and brain moving from a more active to a calm and restful state.

Activity #2 Seeing Clearly (glitter ball or snow globe) * from Mindful Games

1. Can you describe how your body feels when you’re stressed? Can you describe what your mind is like when you’re stressed? When you feel stressed can you think clearly?
2. When the ball is still, like it is now can you see through the water to the other side?
3. What do you think will happen if I shake the ball? Will you be able to see through the water? *Shake the ball. The glitter will whirl about, and the water will become cloudy.*
4. Now place your hand on your belly and feel your breathing. *Stop shaking the ball, and the glitter will settle.*
5. Can you see through the water now?
6. Did the glitter go away? No. It is still there. Our thoughts are like that too. They can swirl around in our heads and cloud our thinking. But, if we feel our breathing and leave our thoughts alone, they settle down and we can think clearly again.
7. Repeat once more.

Activity #3 Fading Tone

1. Sit with your back straight and your body relaxed, resting your hands on your knees. If it feels comfortable you may close your eyes.
2. When I ring the bell, listen to the sound as it fades away. Raise your hand when you hear the tone stop. (This will be different for everyone)
3. I'll ring the bell a few more times. Sometimes the tone will be short, and sometimes it will be long. Pay close attention, so you can raise your hand as soon as you hear the tone stop.
4. Talking points: What was it like to listen to the tone? How do you feel now? Does your body feel relaxed? Is your mind busy or quiet? What do you think happened to the sound after it faded- where did it go?

Reflection: Take a few minutes to interview a classmate about the three activities today. Ask them to share one activity that helped them see something in a new way, or have greater understanding.

Lesson 4: Creating an Original Composition to Reflect Emotions with Sound

Lesson 4	Grade Level 5	Vocabulary: singing bowl, xylophone, metallophone, idiophone, pentatonic, emotions, improvisation, graphic music notation, form, dynamics, tempo, meter, rhythm, melody
Materials/Technology: bell singing bowl or chime. Recorded music "The Island Within", xylophones and metallophones in a variety of ranges, Mood Meter Visual, Mood Meter Composition Sheet		
<p>North Carolina State Standards:</p> <p>5.ML.2.3 Apply understanding of standard symbols and traditional terms for dynamics, tempo, articulation, rhythm, meter and pitch when reading and notating music</p> <p>5.ML.3.1 Use improvisation to create short songs and instrumental pieces, using a variety of sound sources, including traditional and non-traditional sounds, body sounds, and sounds produced by electronic means</p> <p>5.ML.3.3 Create compositions and arrangements within specified guidelines</p>		
<p>I Can Statement with Language Objective:</p> <p>I can describe recognize and describe emotions and reflect them in an original musical composition</p> <p>I can write a composition using the pentatonic scale that demonstrates musical expression and form.</p>		
<p>Introduction: Play "The Island Within" as you are beginning class.</p> <p>Activity #1 Fading Tone (see lesson 3 to review)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the "fading tone" activity from last week. 		

2. Repeat the game without verbal instruction.
 - Place your hand on your belly as if you are feeling your breathing- this prompts the students to do the same and signals that the game has begun.
 - Strike the bell and put one hand to your ear, letting the students know it's time to focus on the sound of the tone.
 - Students will raise their hands when they no longer hear the sound. Wait until all the children raise their hands before you continue.
3. Other extensions: ring the bell multiple times and ask children to count the number of tones they hear
4. Allow other sounds such as a xylophone, shaker, drum or other instruments you have available. Ask students how many different sounds they heard and to describe them.

Activity #2 Mood Meter * See Visual

1. The Mood Meter is a tool used to recognize and understand emotions. The Mood Meter helps us to understand and accept emotions in a non-judgemental way. We all experience many emotions throughout our day. By recognizing emotions and labeling them, we are able to put them in perspective instead of letting them overwhelm us. Feelings in the Mood Meter are separated by color as: Red feelings - high in energy and more unpleasant, Blue feelings low in energy and more unpleasant, Green feelings, low in energy and more pleasant and Yellow feelings high in energy and more pleasant.
2. Choose at least one emotion from each category. Recall a time in the recent past that you experienced this emotion. Take a few minutes to write about it in your journal. Remember as many details as you can using as many of your senses as possible. For example, yesterday I was feeling "inspired" because my friend read my poem and liked it. I felt a lot of energy in my body, I noticed that I was smiling. Three days ago I felt "concerned." I had been at the dentist and found out that I needed to have a cavity filled and possibly have the tooth removed.

Activity #3 Mood Meter Compositions

1. This activity can be done individually or in a group.
2. Using the Mood Meter, choose two or more emotions to create a musical piece with. Choose and list your emotions on the sheet.
3. Improvisation - or creating music on the spot is a way to arrive at ideas that you will use in your composition. Using a barred instrument (xylophone or metallophone) work out some ideas for each of the emotions you picked.
4. Write down some of your ideas using standard music notation or graphic music notation.
5. When you have some ideas ready, create a form and structure for your piece. Remember to consider dynamics, meter, tempo, rhythm and melody.

This activity can be continued over a few classes as students expand on compositions

Assessment: Students perform their compositions for the classmates.

Journal entry: reflect on your own composition or one of your classmate's compositions. How did they demonstrate the emotions described in their piece? Try to recall one part of their piece you responded to and write about it.

Record final performances of each musical selection

Lesson 5	Grade Level 5	Vocabulary: visualization, relaxation
Materials/Technology: bell, singing bowl or chime. Breathing in, breathing out song (recording or sheet music) Ball, large enough to roll on the floor, Waterfall Relaxation Meditation, May the Day be Well (recording or sheet music)		
<p>North Carolina State Standards</p> <p>5.ML.1.1 Illustrate independence and accuracy while singing and playing instruments within a group or ensemble</p> <p>5.MR.1.3 Exemplify appropriate behaviors as a participant and observer of music in relation to the context and style of music performed</p>		
<p>I can statement:</p> <p>I can use relax my mind and body in order to become more calm</p>		
<p>Introduction: Today we will begin class by breathing with the bell. As you hear the bell, breathe in and out slowly. Notice the sound and your breath.</p> <p><u>Activity #1 Breathing In, Breathing Out</u></p> <p><i>Breathing in, breathing out (2x)</i></p> <p><i>I am blooming as a flower.</i></p> <p><i>I am fresh as the dew</i></p> <p><i>I am solid as a mountain.</i></p> <p><i>I am firm as the Earth.</i></p> <p><i>I am free</i></p> <p><i>Breathing in, breathing out (2x)</i></p> <p><i>I am water reflecting what is real, what is true</i></p> <p><i>And I feel there is space deep inside of me</i></p> <p><i>I am free, I am free, I am free</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am going to sing (or play recording of) a song for you. This first time you hear it listen and think about the words. As the words “breathing in, breathing out” are sung, you may find it comfortable to breathe in time with the music. Sit tall and straight but relaxed. 2. As I sing the song for a second time, you are invited to join me in singing “breathing in, breathing out” 3. The last time you may sing along with me. <p><u>Activity #2 Mind, body go! (ball to roll on the floor)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We’re going to roll this ball to one another, and when it’s your turn quickly name one thing that you’re feeling in your mind and one thing that you’re feeling in your body. Here’s an example: ”My body feels relaxed, and my mind feels happy.” 2. I’ll start: “My body feels still, and my mind feels a little nervous” <i>roll the ball to another person in the circle</i> 3. Continue until everyone in the circle has participated and possibly speed up! <p><u>Activity #3 Mindful Movement *</u></p> <p>This is a 2 minute Mindful Movement practice for strengthening the mind and body</p>		

1. (Separate your feet hip-width and bring your hands together in front of your chest, interlocking your fingers.
2. Take a deep breath in, then as you exhale, press your palms forward, opening your back.
3. Inhale and reach your arms up, straight above your head, stretching your palms to the sky.
4. Exhale, release your interlocking fingers and fan your arms down and behind your back.
5. Interlock your fingers behind your back.
6. Inhale, look up and lift your heart towards the sky, bending your back slightly.
7. Exhale, bend your knees and bend forward, pointing your hands towards the sky, and your face towards the ground.
8. Inhale and come up to standing, releasing your fingers and fanning your arms up towards the sky, pressing your palms together.
9. Exhale and bring your hands together, palms touching, at your heart.
10. Repeat steps 1 through 9. But this time, at step 9, bring your hands behind your head instead of to your heart.
11. Open your elbows wide, and breathe in.
12. Exhale, lean to the right, bending at the torso, and reaching your left arm overhead and right arm towards the ground.
13. Inhale and come back to center, with your hands behind your head.
14. Exhale, lean to the left, bending at the torso, and reaching your right arm overhead and left arm towards the ground.
15. Inhale, bring your arms back to center, reaching to the sky above your head, pressing your palms.
16. Exhale, twist your torso to the right, lowering your arms to your sides.
17. Inhale, face center and reach your arms up to the sky over your head, pressing your palms.
18. Exhale, twist your torso to the left, lowering your arms to your sides.
19. Inhale, face center and reach your arms up to the sky over your head pressing your palms.
20. Release your arms by your sides.

Mindful Moment:

After your stretch, close your eyes for a moment, you can even take this time to sit for your practice. Notice what it feels like to be right here in your body:

- Notice your heartbeat
- Notice your chest and belly lifting a lowering
- Notice the sounds around you and the sounds inside of you.
- Take few more moments and be still with yourself. (Cara Bradley)

Activity #4 Waterfall Relaxation Meditation

Read the following text to students or record yourself speaking it and play it during class.

Say: We are going to prepare to quiet our bodies and minds. This is another way of practicing mindfulness. As I read, listen and visualize the words you are hearing.

Ring Bell to begin meditation

A beautiful waterfall of white light is flowing down on you. It flows down on your head, helping your head to relax. You feel your head relaxing. The waterfall of light moves down over your neck and shoulders. Your neck and shoulders are relaxing and letting go of all the tension and stress they carry. Now the waterfall flows down over your arms. You feel your arms releasing, there is nothing for your arms to do. The waterfall flows down your back. Your back is letting go and relaxing. The waterfall flows over your chest and stomach, helping your chest and stomach to relax, letting go of anger, hurt and sadness. The waterfall moves down over your

legs and feet. You feel your legs and feet letting go and resting. The beautiful waterfall of white light is flowing over your whole body. You are very peaceful and rested. Just stay in the waterfall of light for a few moments, and feel how it relaxes and heals your body.
 (After finishing the reading, wait for as long as it feels natural. Ring the Bell to end the meditation.)

Reflection: Answer the following questions in your journal: What did you notice during the Waterfall Relaxation? How did your mind feel? How did your body feel?

Activity #5 Closing song May the Day be Well (song)

*May the day be well, may the night be well
 May the midday hour bring happiness, too.
 In every minute and every second,
 May the day and night be well*

Using the chord chart, add a few students on barred instruments to play an accompaniment

This is an effective closing activity and can be used to end class throughout the year.

Lesson 6: The Labyrinth as a Mindfulness and Musical Journey

Lesson 6	Grade Level 5	Vocabulary: labyrinth, metaphor, form, composition, melody, rhythm, soundscape
Materials/Technology: bell, singing bowl or chime, In, Out, Deep Slow song or recording, paper labyrinth, visual of labyrinth, ropes, masking tape or chalk for making labyrinth, xylophones and metallophones, hand drums, shakers, device to record performances,		
North Carolina State Standards: 5.ML.3.1 Use improvisation to create short songs and instrumental pieces, using a variety of sound sources, including traditional and non-traditional sounds, body sounds, and sounds produced by electronic means 5.ML.3.2 Create compositions and arrangements within specified guidelines 5.CR.1.2 Understand the relationship between music and concepts from other areas		
I Can Statement I can create music to reflect the my personal experience in the labyrinth		
Introduction: Begin class with the bell, and mindful breathing. Warm-up: Mindful Movement (see Lesson 5) Activity #1 Finger Labyrinth 1. We are going to work with something called a labyrinth today. Does anyone have any ideas about what a labyrinth is?		

2. (Show Visual of Labyrinth)A labyrinth is a path that can be walked on as a type of walking meditation. It may look like a maze, but it is not. There is no way to get lost in a labyrinth and you walk out the same way you walked it. The labyrinth can be a metaphor for our journey to discover peace and calm within ourselves.
3. Distribute finger labyrinths. This is a smaller version of a labyrinth that you can use your finger to travel through. Your finger will enter slightly to the left, and follow the path. Remember, there are no wrong turns and there is only one way to travel through. Another important aspect of the labyrinth is the center. When you reach the center, it is a time to pause. You can breathe and wait for thoughts to come to you. If there is something that has been on your mind, it is a special time to let that go, or find clarity. After you are finished in the center, you travel out of the labyrinth the way you came in.
4. Now I will lead you in following your finger labyrinth. (Lead students in entering labyrinth and describing the turns until they reach the center.) Now you have reached the center. You may want to picture someone who is important to you there with you. Do they have advice or knowledge for you? Pause and breathe for as long as you would like. Now it is time to begin your journey out of the labyrinth. (Describe each turn for the students).
5. Now that we have made our way out of the labyrinth, take a few minutes to think about the experience. What did you feel in your body as you traveled the labyrinth with your finger. What did you experience in your mind? Write a few sentences in your journal.

Activity #2 Creating a Labyrinth

1. We are going to create a labyrinth that we can walk through in our classroom (or outside).
2. Students will walk through the labyrinth one at a time, giving plenty of space so that each person can go at their own pace. (It may be helpful to have music playing, or a few students at a time can quietly improvise softly.)

Activity #3 Composing for the Labyrinth

1. Now that you have traveled the labyrinth, what music would you create to reflect your experience? What kind of music would you imagine hearing as you walked through the labyrinth? Here are some choices for your composition: I suggest choosing one of these possibilities to develop, or come up with one of your own.
 - a. Labyrinth as Form: Play a piece of music that shows the form of the labyrinth. What form would you use to show walking in, the center and walking out? (This would be a contrasting ABA form. How would you allow the listener to hear the difference in the sections?)
 - b. Labyrinth as Melody or Rhythm: using the idea of walking in the labyrinth and turning left and right, what musical patterns can you develop? It is possible to chart every turn of the labyrinth and show it as a melody. How will you show the center? Will the way out be the same as going in?
 - c. Labyrinth Soundscape: Imagine your journey through the labyrinth taking place outside of the classroom. What kind of location would you imagine? Would you be inside or outside? Where would you be? What would the season and time of day be? Now create a soundscape that tells the story of your labyrinth experience. Imagine the sounds you hear. What does it sound like as you travel and when you reach the center?
 - d. Labyrinth Poem: write a poem about your experience in the labyrinth. Add instruments to express the mood and character of your poem.

This activity is a culminating experience for the class and can occur over a series of classes.

Assessment: As students complete their Labyrinth Compositions, time will be set aside for sharing of performances. Students will assess their own performances and those of their peers.

Assessments

Student work will be assessed through teacher, peer and self-assessment. Student work is archived through process worksheets as well as video and audio recording. The worksheets are found in appendices 2, 4 and 7. These worksheets provide information on student work and mastery. Recording of performances is recommended so that students and peers may review and assess their work using teacher provided rubrics and questions. The rubric for compositions assignments is found in Appendix 8. The culminating activity, the “Labyrinth Composition” demonstrates student knowledge of both mindfulness components and musical experiences throughout the course.

Appendix 1: Teaching Standards

The North Carolina Essential Standards for Music contain three strands: Musical Literacy, Musical Response and Contextual Relevancy. This curriculum unit covers at least one Essential Standard for Fifth Grade Music within each strand as follows:

Music Literacy

Music Literacy is the largest point of focus for the music curriculum. Music Literacy describes the ability to perform music with accuracy and expression, to read and write music notation and the process of creating musical compositions.

- 5.ML.1.1 Illustrate independence and accuracy while singing and playing instruments within a group or ensemble.
- 5.ML.2.3 Apply understanding of standard symbols and traditional terms for dynamics, tempo, articulation, rhythm, meter and pitch when reading and notating music.
- 5.ML.3.1 Use improvisation to create short songs and instrumental pieces using a variety of sound sources, including traditional and non-traditional sounds, body sounds, and sounds produced by electronic means.
- 5.ML.3.2 Create compositions and arrangements within specific guidelines
- 5.ML.3.3 Create rhythmic compositions using notation for whole, dotted half, half and quarter notes; whole half and quarter rests and beamed eighth notes in duple, triple, and common time and which are arranged using a variety of sound sources.

These teaching standards are implemented when teaching students to sing and play in the curriculum unit. Improvisation and composition objectives are used specifically in Lessons 4 and 6. In these lessons, students create original compositions based on guidelines set within the curriculum unit.

Musical Response

Musical Response is the standard of interacting and responding to music as a listener, observer and performer. Music students should be able to explain the music they experience using musical terminology. The skills learned in music class should be applicable to music they will encounter both in school and in other settings

- 5.MR.1.2 Use music terminology in explaining music, including notation, instruments, voices and performances.
- 5.MR.1.3 Exemplify appropriate behaviors as a participant and observer of music in relation to the context and style of music performed.
- 5.MR.1.4 Classify classroom, Western orchestral, and world instruments into categories based on how their sounds are produced.

Standard MR.1.4 is demonstrated in Lesson 2, during mindful instrument exploration. As students examine the way a sound is produced on the instruments, they categorize the instruments. In Lesson 3, mindful music listening allows students to discuss the music they listen to in class using musical terminology.

Contextual Relevancy

Contextual Relevancy is the ability of students to relate music to a global, 21st Century perspective.

- 5.CR.1.2 Understand the relationship between music and concepts from other areas.

In creating the Labyrinth and then creating a “Labyrinth Composition” students expand their understanding of the labyrinth by creating a composition which represents their own unique experience with this mindfulness tool.

Name _____

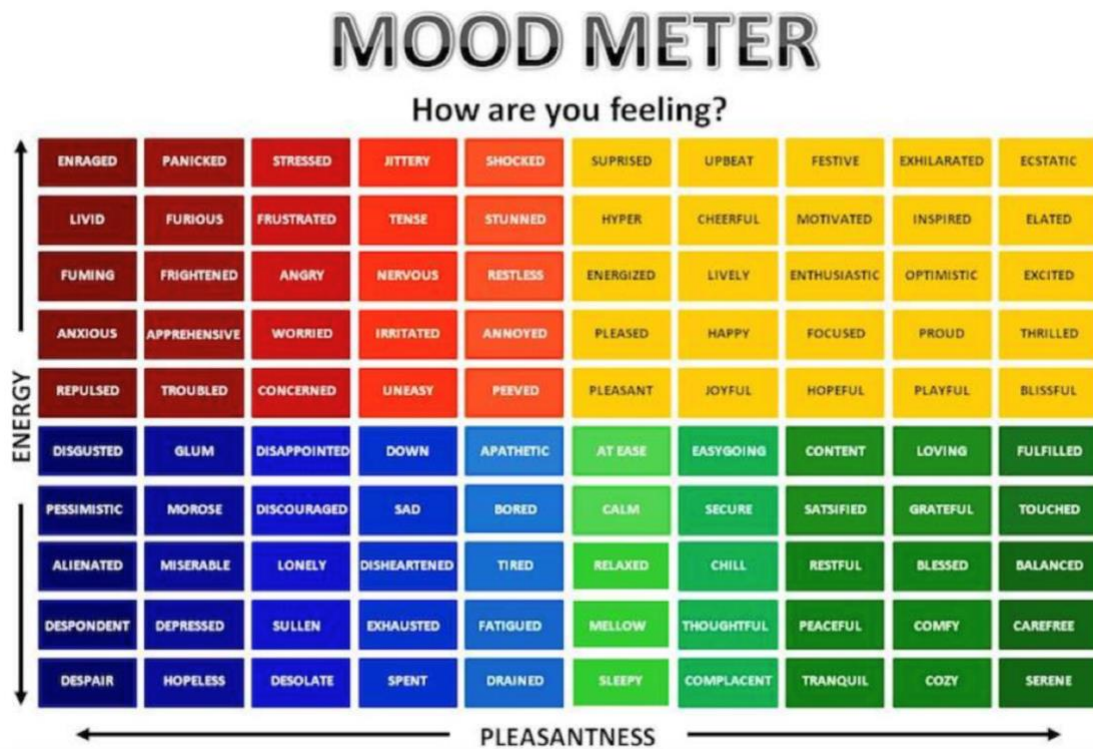
Mindful Musical Instrument Exploration Worksheet

Name of Instrument	Write about how you played the instrument today	What did you notice when you played this instrument

Appendix 3

Mood Meter

<https://www.ps120q.org/mood-meter>



Appendix 4

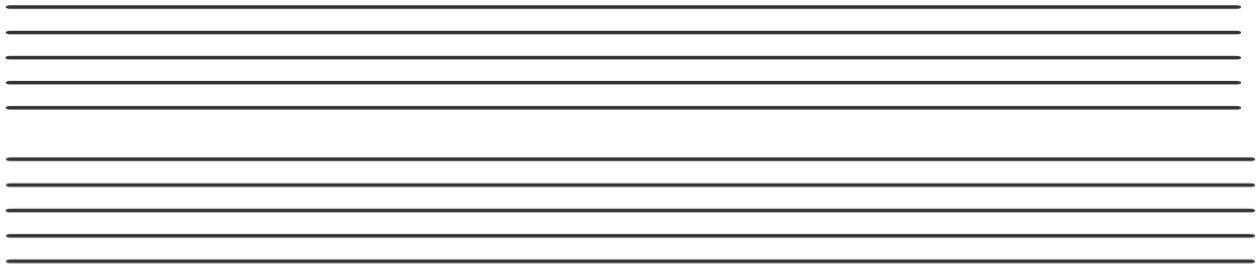
Mood Meter Composition Sheet

Name _____


1. Choose two or more emotions from the “Mood Meter” to create a musical piece. The Mood words I have chosen are

_____.

2. Improvisation is “creating music on the spot.” Using the Orff instruments provided, improvise a few musical ideas for each emotion.

A set of ten horizontal lines for writing musical ideas, arranged in two groups of five lines each.

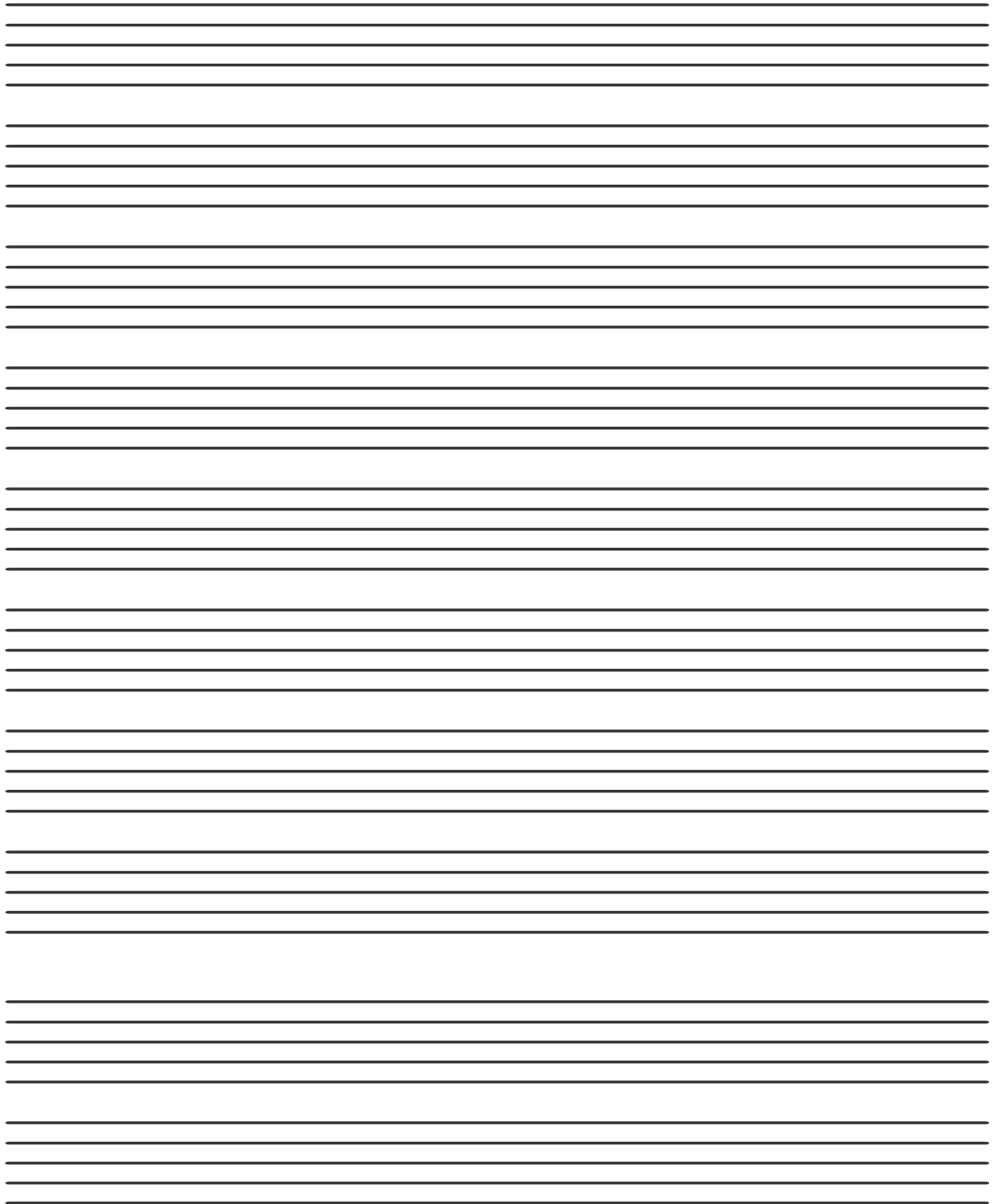
3. Plan the form of your piece below. For example will you use an ABA form, (Emotion 1, Emotion 2, Emotion 1 repeats?) What dynamics will you use? What will the tempo be? Do you have any other ideas you want to explore with this composition?

A large empty rectangular box for planning the form of the piece.

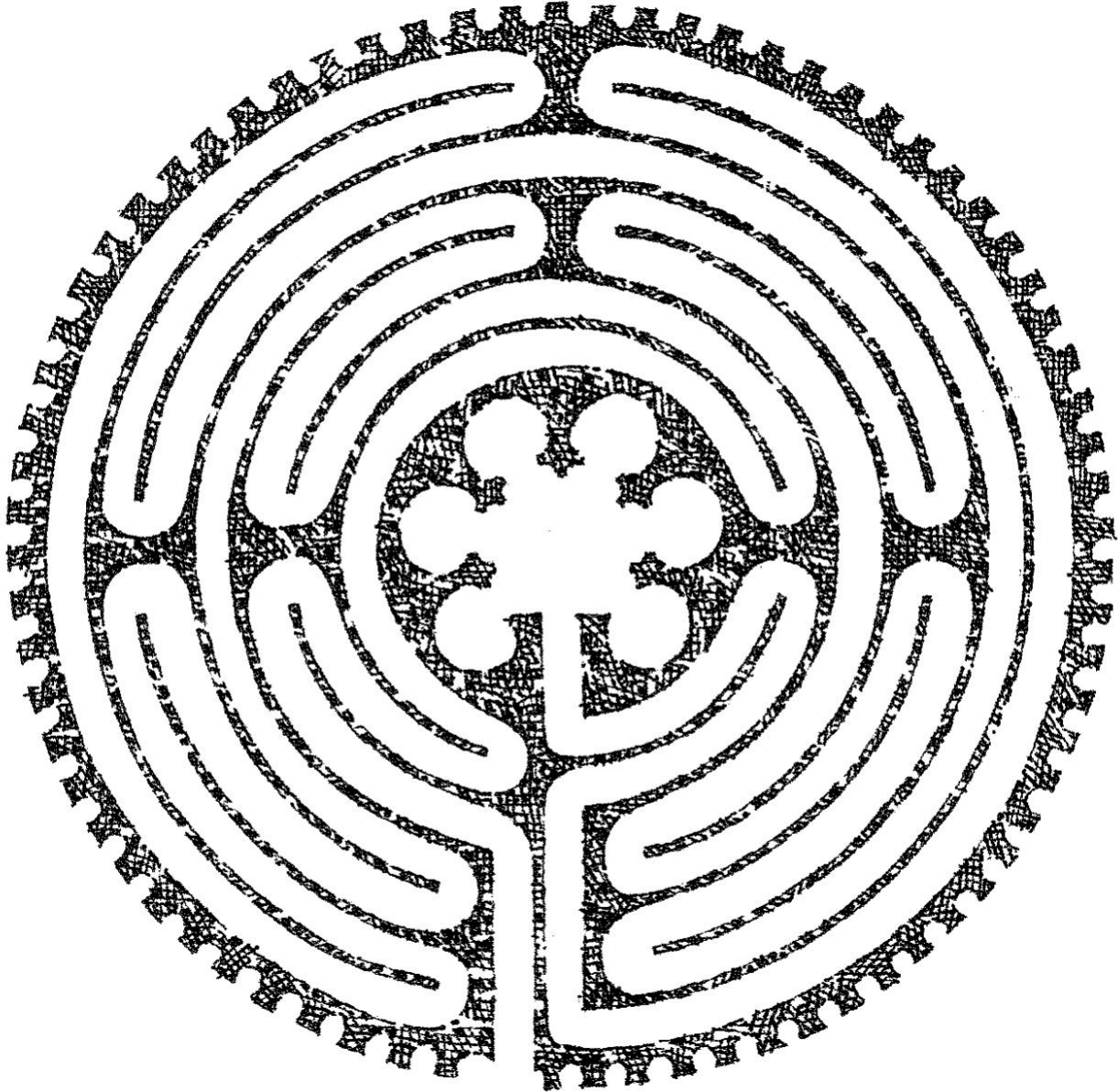
4. Use additional music staff paper to write your ideas. You may also use plain paper, or record your ideas in a video

Appendix 5

Musical Staff Paper



Appendix 6
Finger Labyrinth



Taken from: <https://devozine.upperroom.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Labyrinth-copy1.jpg>

Appendix 7

Labyrinth Composition Worksheet

Name _____

Now that you have traveled the labyrinth, what music would you create to reflect your experience? What kind of music would you imagine hearing as you walked through the labyrinth? Here are some choices for your composition: I suggest choosing one of these possibilities to develop, or come up with one of your own.

Choose ONE of these possibilities

My Labyrinth Composition

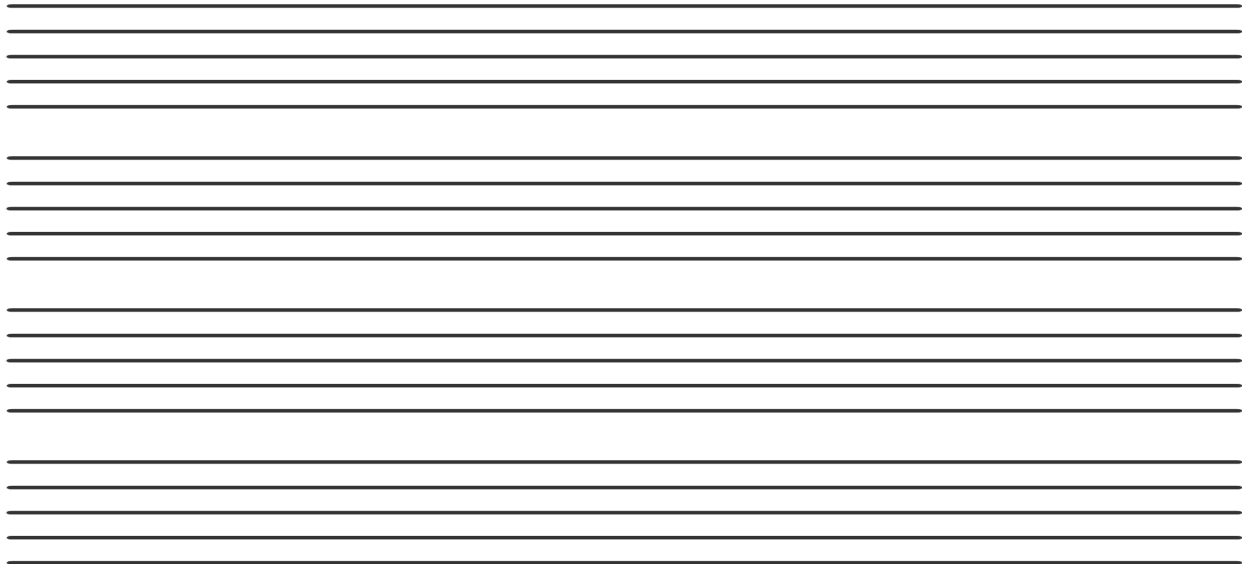
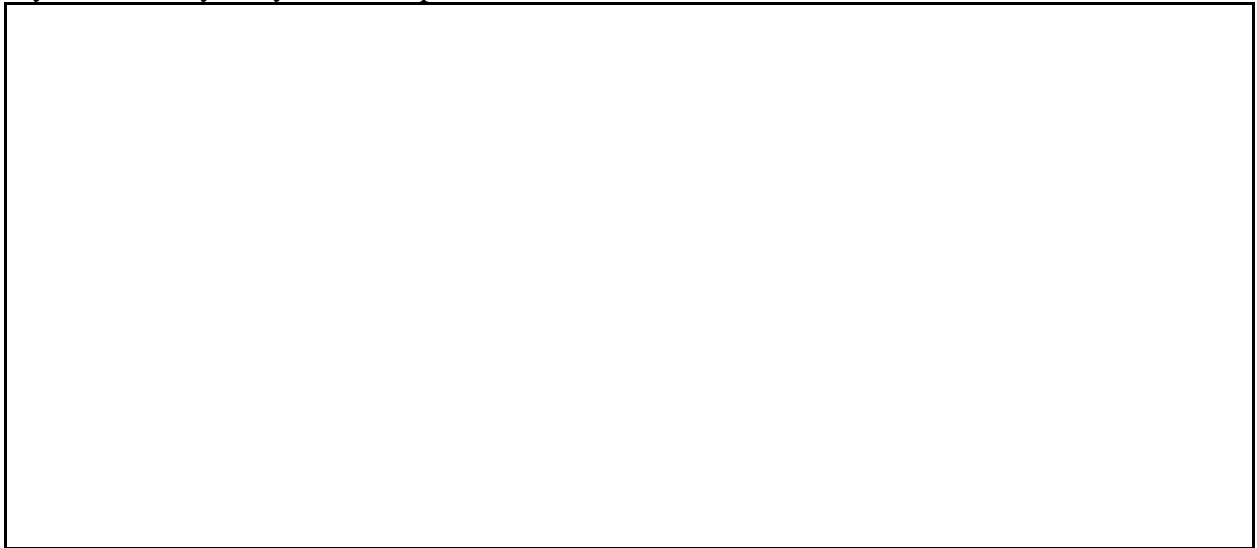
- a. Labyrinth as Form: Play a piece of music that shows the form of the labyrinth. What form would you use to show walking in, the center and walking out? (This would be a contrasting ABA form. How would you allow the listener to hear the difference in the sections?)
- b. Labyrinth as Melody or Rhythm: using the idea of walking in the labyrinth and turning left and right, what musical patterns can you develop? It is possible to chart every turn of the labyrinth and show it as a melody. How will you show the center? Will the way out be the same as going in?
- c. Labyrinth Soundscape: Imagine your journey through the labyrinth taking place outside of the classroom. What kind of location would you imagine? Would you be inside or outside? Where would you be? What would the season and time of day be? Now create a soundscape that tells the story of your labyrinth experience. Imagine the sounds you hear. What does it sound like as you travel and when you reach the center?
- d. Labyrinth Poem: write a poem about your experience in the labyrinth. Add instruments to express the mood and character of your poem.

Composition Title:

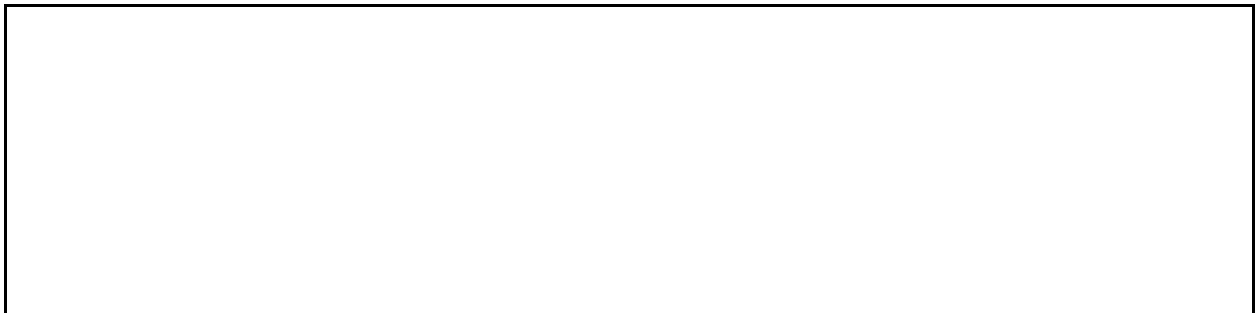
I chose to use (circle one)

- a. Labyrinth as Form
- b. Labyrinth as Melody or Rhythm
- c. Labyrinth Soundscape
- d. Labyrinth Poem
- e. Other _____

My ideas for my Labyrinth Composition



My notes about dynamics (volume) articulation, tempo (speed) and meter



*additional sheet music and paper is available for completing your composition

Appendix 8

Rubric for Compositions and Performances

5.ML.3.1 Use improvisation to create short songs and instrumental pieces, using a variety of sound sources, including traditional and non-traditional sounds, body sounds, and sounds produced by electronic means.
 5.ML.3.2 Create compositions and arrangements within specified guidelines

Learning Target	Developing	Progressing	Mastering	Exemplary	Points
Improvises on barred instruments to develop a musical theme	With prompting and support the student improvises on the barred instruments	Begins to improvise and create original material	Creates musical themes from improvisation that can be reproduced	Improvises original musical themes which are memorable and varied	
Creates a clear plan for the form of the composition	With prompting and support the student begins to create form and structure	Some ideas of form and structure noted	Clearly states form and structure for music	Creates a well-developed plan for the structure and form of the piece	
Uses accurate notation to show pitch and rhythm of composition	With a high level of support, the student attempts to show pitch and rhythm;	Student shows pitch and rhythm, with some support	Student shows pitch and rhythm notation independently, with moderate accuracy	shows pitch and rhythm notation with high level of accuracy, at grade level or higher	
Includes tempo and dynamics in composition	With prompting and support includes tempo and dynamics	With some assistance includes dynamics and tempo	Students shows an understanding of tempo and dynamics	Students includes tempo and dynamics to enhance the meaning of the piece	
Points	1	2	3	4	
				Total	

Resources

Materials List

- Audio Device with speaker. This will be used to play musical selections and recording students (optional)
- Barred Instruments with mallets. These include class sets of xylophones, metallophones and glockenspiels. If possible, there should be enough instruments for each student to use one. These instruments are available in most elementary music classrooms and are useful for students in compositions projects. In the lessons in this curriculum unit, I recommend using the pentatonic, or five-note scale, as it is useful in improvisation and composition.
- Glitter Ball or snow globe. The glitter ball is a plastic ball filled with water and glitter. When shaken, the glitter clouds the water, making it hard to see through it. When the glitter settles, the water becomes clear. The glitter ball is used Lesson 3 for the “Seeing Clearly” activity.
- Guitar or piano. Used by teacher to accompany students and sing songs within the curriculum.
- Journal. A journal of 100 pages or more. This will provide a place for students to write responses and reflect at the end of class.
- Pencil. Students will be using pencil to write responses in journals and to write musical notation
- Raisins. There should be enough raisins for each student to have two or three. They are used in the “Raisin Activity” in Lesson 2
- Rope. Approximately 50 yards is needed to create the labyrinth. Jump ropes from the Physical Education department could be used. Other options would be marking the labyrinth on the floor with masking tape or chalk.
- Singing Bowl or Standing Bell with an “inviter”. This is a musical instrument with a pleasant resonant tone. The “inviter” is used to play the bell. The bell is used in every class as it signals the class that it is time to focus or breathe. Use of the bell is demonstrated so that students are familiar with it and response to it becomes natural and habitual.
- Staff Paper. 8 ½ / 11 sheets of music composition paper provided for writing standard music notation.
- Unpitched Percussion Instruments. Variety of hand drums, shakers, guiro, triangle, woodblock. These are used for Mindful Instrument Exploration and can be used as part of students compositions.
- Video Recording. This can be done through a phone or other device. It is recommended to record culminating performances so that students can do self-assessments and peer assessments.

Resources for Students

- Journal. This journal is used during the curriculum unit for writing reflections after class activities. It is also a useful place to write ideas for class projects. Journaling is a way to see what changes throughout the unit.
- Pencil. This will be used to write on worksheets and journal.
- This is a Mindful Movement Video for students. <https://youtu.be/CGX2IU35Jqc>

Resources for Teachers

Falter, Ellie. "Mindfulness: An Underused Tool for Deepening Music Understanding." *General Music Today*, 30, no. 1 (2016): 20-24. This article describes techniques used by a general music teacher to incorporate mindfulness in to music class. The author provides detailed examples from her classroom experience.

Greenland, Susan Kaiser. *Mindful Games*. Boulder: Shambhala Publications LLC 2016. This book is highly engaging and easy-to-understand with very useful activities and explanations. The author draws on her deep understanding of meditation and mindfulness practice, as well as her extensive knowledge of child development and research.

Hanh, Thich Nhat. *Planting Seeds: Practicing Mindfulness with Children*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2011. This book contains simple practices for establishing mindfulness in the home and school community. The author, a Buddhist monk played a prominent role in bringing mindfulness to the West and showed a strong interest in educating children. The book contains sample lesson plans as well as a cd containing songs and meditations to be used with the lessons. Color illustrations and mindfulness cards are included.

Insight Timer App. <https://insighttimer.com/meditation-app> This free meditation app contains a timer, tracks how often you meditate, and offers thousands of guided meditations. It also has a virtual bell that can be used with your class during mindfulness sessions.

Mindful Movement Practice <https://www.mindful.org/mindful-movement-practice-before-meditate/>

This article contains a video of Cara Bradley's Mindful Movement, which is referenced in Lesson 5.

Mood Meter <https://www.ps120q.org/mood-meter> This resource is used in Lesson 4 for Mood Meter Compositions. The visual is useful in showing a variety of words to describe emotions and categorize them. The website contains additional information should the teacher wish to use this resource more extensively

Website for Plum Village. <https://plumvillage.org/> This website contains information about Thich Nhat Hanh as well as many mindfulness resources.

Website for Labyrinths: <http://discoverlabyrinths.com/> This website contains information on construction of labyrinths, which are used in Lesson 6, and contains helpful visuals.

Notes

1. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 35.
2. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 15.
3. Hanh, Thich Nhat, *Happy Teachers Change the World*, xvii.
4. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 16.
5. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 17.
6. Hanh, Thich Nhat, *Planting Seeds*, 96.
7. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 5
8. Jennings, Patricia A., *The Mindful School*, 14-37.
9. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 27.
10. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 35.
11. Hawkins, Kevin, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, 54-55.
12. Silverstein, Lynne B., Layne, Sean. "Defining Arts Integration"
13. Silverstein, Lynne B., Layne, Sean. "Defining Arts Integration"
14. Silverstein, Lynne B., Layne, Sean. "Defining Arts Integration"
15. Silverstein, Lynne B., Layne, Sean. "Defining Arts Integration"
16. Silverstein, Lynne B., Layne, Sean. "Defining Arts Integration"
17. Silverstein, Lynne B., Layne, Sean. "Defining Arts Integration"
18. Silverstein, Lynne B., Layne, Sean. "Defining Arts Integration"
19. Chimi, Tatiana "The Artful Teacher: A Conceptual Model for Arts Integration in Schools," 373.
20. Chimi, Tatiana "The Artful Teacher: A Conceptual Model for Arts Integration in Schools," 374.
21. North Carolina Essential Standards K-8 Music
22. Falter, Ellie, "Mindfulness: An Underused Tool for Deepening Music Understanding"
23. Falter, Ellie, "Mindfulness: An Underused Tool for Deepening Music Understanding"

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