

I Can . . . Compose!

Patricia Gingras, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor and Head of Music Education
Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers FL
pgingras@fgcu.edu

Setting the Stage



Lou

Lou can dance or sleep in response to your voice. What will you make Lou do?

Model a speaking voice for the children to make Lou dance.

Model a singing voice for the children to make Lou sleep.

Provide an opportunity for the children to make Lou dance or sleep.

Composition

Children are natural composers. Research indicates that if composition is encouraged, children will consider it a “normal” musical behavior.

Provide a composition activity for children in every class setting.

Composing Patterns

My Mother, Your Mother (Rhythm Patterns in Duple Meter)*

My Pony Bill (Rhythm Patterns in Triple/Compound Duple Meter)*

Mr. President (Tonal Patterns in Harmonic Minor; *Pennsylvania Dreamin'*)*

Embed pattern echo activities in the recitation of chants and singing of songs. Initially, the teacher is the pattern “caller.” Turn the “calling” of patterns over to individual students.

*Notation for these activities can be found in *Music Play* by Wendy Valerio, Alison Reynolds, Beth Bolton, Cynthia Taggart and Edwin Gordon. GIA Publications Inc.

Composing with Instruments

Planting Chant

I plant a little seed in the cold dark ground.
Out comes the yellow sun, big and round.
Down comes the cool rain, soft and slow.
Up comes the little plant, grow, grow, grow!



After children learn the chant, introduce the pictures that correspond with each line and allow them time to learn the sequence of the pictures. Turn some of the pictures over so that the children can audiate that line. When the children have internalized the chant, allow them to choose and play instruments to represent each line.

Children say the chant and play instruments.

Children audiate and play instruments.

Children can rearrange the order of the pictures to create and play a new composition.

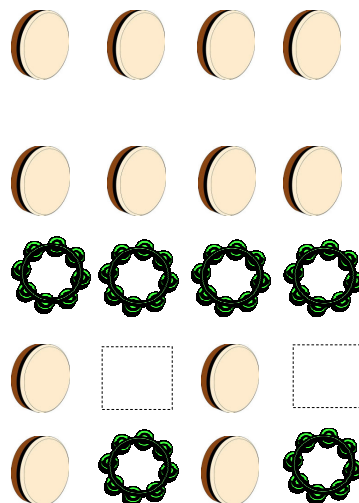
Engine Engine

Engine, engine number nine,
Going down Chicago line.
See it sparkle, see it shine,
Engine, engine number nine.

After students learn the chant, introduce a 4-beat introduction played on a hand drum. Continue playing the drum on the beat while students recite the chant. Allow one student to play the drum while the other students chant. Show four “drums” that represent the 4-beat introduction. Make the connection for students. Add additional drums for each drumbeat heard during the chant. Allow students to play the “drums.” Turn some of the drums face down so that students can audiate silent beats.

Introduce pictures of tambourines. Allow students to swap out a tambourine picture for a drum picture. Distribute tambourines to some of the students. Practice playing drums, tambourines and saying the chant. Allow students to work in pairs or small groups to create and play their own drum/ tambourine compositions.

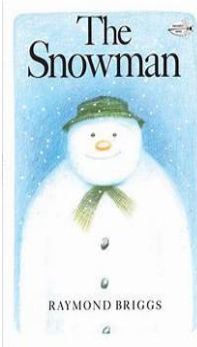
Introduction:



Composing Lyrics and Melodies

1. Prompt students to create a melody to match the lyrics from a well-known chant.
2. Initiate singing conversations with students and puppets, manipulatives or other students.
3. Travel to “singing land” where only singing (not talking) is understood. Provide students with topics about which they can sing. (What they had for breakfast, upcoming holiday celebrations, etc.)

The Snowman



Books without words are wonderful prompts for melodic and lyric composition. After the teacher models how to “sing the story,” children can take turns singing what happens next.

The Snowman by Raymond Briggs

Wave by Suzy Lee

The Red Book by Barbara Lehman

The Lion and the Mouse by Jerry Pinkney

The Umbrella by Ingrid Schubert and Dieter Schubert

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Additional information,
printable graphics
and music notation can
be found at:

www.do-re-mi-kids.com

