

Lesson 3:

Composing a Percussion Ensemble Piece

Overview: Inspired by the creation of their own poem or rhyme, students will have the opportunity to explore a variety of musical forms while composing a percussion ensemble piece. The element of ensemble work will be part of the experience because all students will be encouraged to explore the tasks by working in small groups

Objectives: Students will work in small groups to create their own original percussion piece based on rhythms derived from the poem or rhyme of their creation.

Activity I. Experiment and Have Fun

1. Working in small groups (with the teacher's assistance as needed), students will write an original poem or rhyme to use as the basis of their percussion composition. Using the first 4 lines of their poem or rhyme, students will complete activities 1 and 2 from Lesson 2.
2. When the group is comfortable playing each rhythm/line from the poem in unison, assign each group member a different line (depending on the size of the group, some rhythms may be played by more than one student). Begin with student 1 repeating the first rhythm over and over as the other members gradually add in each additional rhythm until all the voices are added. Switch parts and perform again. Emphasize the importance of keeping a steady beat
3. Develop the composition by adding dynamics, changing the number and order of repetitions, assigning different timbres to different groups, etc. Use variation techniques including rhythmic augmentation (double the rhythmic value of the rhythms) and diminution (shorten the value of the rhythms), creating new rhythms to use in your composition. Also play the rhythms backwards to develop new rhythms.
4. Add dynamics. Experiment with musical form (Example A B A form could be created by playing the A sections as described above and creating a B section by playing all the rhythms from A backwards).
5. Begin the piece with a call and response or end with everyone playing in unison. Experiment and have fun!
6. Perform the pieces for one another. Discuss each example with the class.

Assessment for Lesson 3:

- [Rubric Generator](#)
- [cedfa: the center for educator development in fine arts](#)

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