FOSTERING CREATIVE THINKING THROUGH COMPOSITION:

A CURRICULUM FOR FIFTH GRADE GENERAL MUSIC

By

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For my fifth grade students at Nottingham school. May you leave elementary school with a newfound lifelong love of music.
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Abstract

The purpose of the capstone project was to construct a curriculum that incorporates activities centered on creative thinking in music. The specific focus is creating through composition. The capstone begins with a review of literature on the topics of defining creative thinking, the significance, teaching creativity, methods of integration, assessment considerations, and curriculum design. Following the review of literature, the curriculum presented is comprised of three units and nine lessons. Topics of creating original compositions using computer software, nonstandard and standard notation are addressed. A variety of assessments and rubrics are also incorporated to measure student achievement. The goal of this project is to make students comfortable with expressing themselves through the creative process, providing lifelong skills that can be applied to music and other areas.
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Fostering Creative Thinking through Composition:
A Curriculum for Fifth Grade General Music

With the recent revisions to Bloom’s Taxonomy and the National Core Arts Standards (2014), creative thinking is increasingly seen as an important part in children’s cognitive learning processes. The notion of teaching using creative tasks has been studied in depth, and the literature on this topic is rich. Creative thinking is growing in emphasis in the business and education world. Bloom’s Taxonomy and Music National Core Arts Standards have placed heavy emphasis on creative thinking. Bloom’s Taxonomy was recently updated, changing “synthesizing” to “creating” as the top level of higher-order thinking. National Core Arts Standards (2014) have placed creating as one of the three main standards for music learning. With creative thinking ranking high in the music and general education world, it is important for teachers to consider activities that foster this ability in the classroom.

Creative thinking should have an important place in education, but not just because the standards suggest. Integrating creative thinking into lessons enables students to construct an experience that occurs naturally as well as teach children resourcefulness and independent problem solving skills. Kaschub (2009) explained that creativity happens naturally in the world of a child and should be an integral part of the classroom. Giving students opportunities to create and make musical decisions independently provides an engaging experience that they can take with them for the rest of their lives. Activities that incorporate creative thinking can also assist in the evaluation of student understanding of music concepts or skills alleviating test anxiety. Creative thinking activities are useful in the assessment of student understanding (Green & Hale, 2011; Hickey, 2001; Hickey & Webster, 2002).
Teachers include composition in their lessons, but do not always emphasize creative thinking through composition. According to the results of a survey of 339 Indiana music teachers, Strand (2006) found that the majority of teachers incorporated compositional tasks in the classroom, but not often. Most used composition for skill presentation, development, or assessment; but few identified composition activities as a time for students to express creative thinking. Teachers also did not include revision or reflection as part of the creative compositional process, and some teachers even felt that composition is not an activity of value. Strand noted that issues such as class size, time, and discomfort toward adding another activity into an already jammed curriculum were factors toward avoiding creative tasks. With curricular challenges, it may be easy to overlook concepts that are less tangible such as creative thinking.

While incorporating creative thinking may be challenging, studies show that fostering it in classrooms is still important. Crow (2008) studied pre-service music teachers throughout their 120-day student teaching experience. Participants were interviewed at the beginning and end of their experience with respects to their views on creative tasks in the classroom. The results of the qualitative longitudinal study showed that there were differing views on the role of creative thinking in the classroom. While some maintained that creative thinking teaches skills for life, some respondents felt that they were not prepared well enough to teach these activities. After the year came to an end, many pre-services teachers continued to emphasize the importance of creative activities in the classroom despite the challenges of time or pre-service preparation.

Birnie (2014) identified another reason for lack of emphasis on composition as the deficiency of pre-service education in learning how to teach composition to children. Birnie emphasized the importance of composition incorporation into the classroom because of the differentiation it offers, and he suggested that composition be taught in conjunction with a skill
students already know or are currently working on. To combat the obstacle of a lack of training in teaching composition, Birnie suggested starting small, to avoid the feeling of being overwhelmed. Birnie offers that educators should provide compositional activities where students write music based on prior knowledge through sequential instruction that is modeled by the teacher. In addition to incorporating creative thinking activities based on prior knowledge, educators can consider strategies, skills or concepts that are familiar and comfortable to them (Whitcomb, 2013).

Fostering an environment that cultivates active learners is also important in the development of creative thinking tasks. Burnard (2000) presented a review from a doctoral study that took place over a six-month period and focused on how 18 12-year-old middle school students think about and engage in composition. The information presented according to Burnard, was useful for music educators to learn how to best incorporate creative activities in the classroom. Burnard found that teacher perspective of compositional tasks and the environment developed by the educator directly affect how creative thinking tasks are taught in the classroom. Burnard stated that providing children with experience to explain their understanding is an essential part of encouraging creative thinking because it provides them with a sense of pride and ownership of their work. In a journal article, Whitcomb (2013) proposed several additional methods for overcoming the obstacles teachers feel when it comes to creative tasks in order to provide the best environment for teaching creative thinking. Establishing a safe environment that encourages expression and teacher modeling, along with providing a wealth of rhythm and melodic experiences to create music are also measures the teacher can take to begin encouraging the creative process.
Creative thinking is also a helpful coping method for anxiety. Boyce-Tillman and Walker (2002) conducted a study that followed several children suffering from anxiety disorders. With their music teachers, they engaged in the creative process and established a trusting student-teacher relationship. During the lesson time, the focus was on creative activities with an emphasis on process as opposed to product. The results of this study showed that three out of the four students examined were able to manage their anxiety without heavy medication use. The students reported feeling empowered by the experience and identified a higher level of self-efficacy due to the relationships established and demonstrated an ability to convey emotions that were once seemingly difficult through the language of music.

In addition to the wealth of benefits it provides, several research studies (Peterson & Madsen, 2010; Hargrove, 2010; and Boyce & Walker, 2002) also find that creative thinking is important to most teachers and meaningful to children. Creative thinking opens a new world of skill sets for students to learn to become independent musicians who feel good about the work they create. Overcoming obstacles of time, comfort, and curriculum make creative thinking activities a challenging topic to incorporate.

**Purpose of the project**

This capstone project was inspired by a moment in the classroom where I noticed students “doodling” on the backs of their papers after they had completed a music assignment. As I directed them to hand in their paper, I had to pull them away from their drawings. I realized that the art teacher had made art skills accessible outside of her classroom and wondered why I could not do the same with music. As part of the Masters of Music Education program at the University of Florida, I took the class, *Creative Thinking in Music*, taught by Dr. Peter Webster. I found that the resources I was supplied with in this class would be the best way to equip all of
my students with skills that could be accessed without the prerequisite of a certain skill level, an instrument, or the understanding of Western standard notation. Akin to the quote, give a man to fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime, teachers that are guides provide students the gift of lifelong learning. By constructing a comprehensive curriculum built around activities that foster creative thinking, I will be using creative thinking at the pinnacle of Bloom’s Taxonomy and the National Core Arts Music Standards. Providing activities for my students that focus on creative thinking help to develop resourcefulness, critical thinking and problem solving strategies through trial and error. These are life-long learning tools that students will be able to take and continue to create music in the way that works for them.

While creating music may seem intimidating to some, a careful understanding of learning styles, a nurturing classroom environment, and a variety of approaches that present structured and unstructured activities will develop exciting and meaningful experiences for all students in the fifth grade general music classroom.

This project focuses on the topic of creative thinking through composition. Three units and nine total lessons are presented in part three of this document that directly align with the National Core Arts Music Standards creating processes and the Virginia Standards of Learning. The three unit themes are: composing an original composition using GarageBand for iPad, creating an original composition using graphic notation, and constructing an original recorder composition using standard notation. The first lesson of each unit will focus on imagining and planning the creative work. Lesson two will focus on working with students to guide them toward evaluation and refinement of the creative work. During this time students may find that they need to move back to the imagining or planning stages. The lessons will remain flexible for such circumstances. Lesson three will focus on the process of presenting. Students will share
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their inspiration for their work as well as perform their creation. Throughout the lessons
assessments in the form of reflection and rubric will be given to evaluate the process of student
learning. Videos will also be shown that model the objectives of the lessons, support National
Core Arts Standards essential questions, and be used to elicit class discussion and exploration of
creative thinking. Questions posed come directly from the National Core Arts Standards essential
questions (2014). They include:

• How do musicians generate creative ideas?
• How do musicians make creative decisions?
• How do musicians improve the quality of their creative work?
• When is a creative work ready to share?

Potential significance of this project is to explore and challenge students as well as
teaching to create music actively. Also significant is the effect on student self-efficacy and
ability of expression through music. Teachers will also be able to access this curriculum and use
it as a resource in their classrooms. The project will include finding effective methods of
assessment of creative tasks that do not take away from student motivation. Many of the
assessments provided were acquired from the class, Assessing Music Learning, a course designed
by Dr. Timothy Brophy of the University of Florida. Assessments supplied throughout the units
are in the form of reflective entry or exit tickets as well as rubrics for written and performance
evaluation.

Review of Literature

There is a large amount of research that has been undertaken on the subject of creative
thinking in education. The following review of literature will begin by defining creativity. I will
continue with sections discussing the importance of creative thinking, the application of creative
Defining Creativity

There are many variations on the definition of creativity. Through the variations one can see commonality within what defines creativity. Balkin (1990) stated that one could not develop creativity in the classroom until one knows what creativity is. Balkin also cleared up misconceptions about creativity stating that a person who is creative is not necessarily more intelligent than others, nor are they part of an elite creative club or have to produce completely original products. Balkin wrote that creativity is a behavior that is acquired and that it is different from having talent. He provided a simple definition of creating, meaning it is to do and that a creative person demonstrates persistence and patience. The National Assessment of Educational Process (NAEP) identifies creating as producing original art. The National Core Arts Standards (NCCAS), 2014 define creativity as devising and constructing artistic ideas that are new. The revised edition of Blooms Taxonomy identifies creating as the generation of a novel idea, product, or perspective (http://www.utar.edu.my/fegt/file/Revised_Blooms_Info.pdf, 2000).

Webster and Hickey (2001) suggested considering the definition of creativity through four viewpoints—person, process, product, and place—in order to demystify the confusion defining the causes of creativity. The person being the students in the classroom, and what makes them creative, the process consists of the steps taken to construct a creative work, product being an original, and unique end result to the creative task and place the environment of the classroom. Webster and Hickey stated if a teacher examines creativity through these viewpoints that it will draw them closer to developing creative thinking tasks in the classroom. While Webster and Hickey argued for process and product to be considerations of creativity, Webster
(1990) felt the emphasis on process rather than product should be paramount when defining what is creative. He defined creative thinking as:

- Dynamic mental processes that alternate between divergent (imaginative) and convergent (factual) thinking, moving in stages over time. It is enabled by internal musical skills and outside conditions and results in a final musical product that is new for the creator. (p. 28)

**Importance of Creative Thinking**

Creative thinking is part of human development. Moore (1990) found that exploration with music begins at infancy and is met with personal satisfaction. As children grow, they begin to make intentional choices to manipulate music—these ideas are the first steps to creative thinking. Beaty, Nusbaum, and Silva (2014) studied 141 college students participating in a creative task. The study found subjects were able to heighten their creative abilities when asked to be creative and can choose to construct better ideas. The study also stated that schools are switching to a focus on the emphasis of quality over quantity which aligns with the study findings that subjects came up with less ideas, but the ones they had were of better quality.

As a part of human development, constructing links between creative thinking is important to the acquirement of knowledge. Peterson and Madsen (2010) noted in an article that supports the development of cognitive transfer through creativity, that knowledge retention is heightened when paired with creative activities. The article focuses on creating a community in the classroom, encouraging discourse about creative ideas and teaching through synthesis. Peterson and Madsen stated that students do not see great value in what they are learning unless they are able to apply it directly. The researchers advocated a variety of lessons based on sequencing and making connections that enable students to find common traits of items
such as vacation with music, or discussing what would happen if a composer lived in a different time period and using knowledge acquired about the periods to identify how the music would be different. Completing tasks like these help students to close the gap of music and the world around them as well as demonstrate how their knowledge helps them to think and connect to other topics. The ability to apply knowledge is the foundation of the educational experience and activities that encourage creative thinking are useful in taking knowledge and affording students with the chance to think independently.

The arts also support the future of innovation. In an article about partnering with art agencies and post-secondary schools to advocate for arts education and develop a framework for arts policy, Carlisle (2011) stated that the arts provide potential for students of all abilities to be successful. Carlisle also observed that the arts develop active learners who play an important role in their own creative development. Carlisle stressed the importance for the arts, and called for the arts to be placed at the center of education. Creative Capital is a non-profit agency that funds media, film, literature, performing, and visual arts. Creative Capital provides grants to artists who have innovative ideas and help them to create a career that is sustainable (2014). Music teachers can use resources like creative capital and the community to support budding musicians.

The implications for fostering creative thinking are not only important for the music room, but also the classroom and in future career development. Sawyer (2012) stated that creativity is increasing in value due to globalizing markets, advancing technologies, the transfer of non-creative jobs to automation, and the increase of leisure time calling for the need for creative devices to occupy that time. Hargrove (2013) conducted a study focused on assessing long-term creative skill development through the metacognitive approach. He cited the US Department of Labor considering creative thinking as an important skill that is essential for high
quality job performance in the future. Hargrove advised that in order to encourage student creativity, teachers need to take risks as well, and find new and challenging ways to develop deeper thinking.

**Application of Creative Thinking in the Music Classroom**

The National Association for Music Education (NAFME) identified improvisation and composition as essential to student learning because they foster an understanding of the formal structure of music and creative thinking. In a position article, Fautley (2004) recommended that the concept of creativity be reinstated in the music curriculum. Fautley discussed the viewpoint that many teachers considered creative thinking important but creative activities are often lost due to the notion of it being perceived as intangible. Other curriculum demands take the place of creativity because they are less elusive (Fautley, 2004). Schmidt and Sinor (1986) also investigated variables that relate to music creativity and found that teachers’ lack of knowledge on creative process, measurement and cognitive style contribute to a low level of creative thinking activities in the music classroom. Curriculum demands, tangible skills or concepts, and lack of knowledge are contributing factors for the struggle to place creativity at the forefront of activity in the music room, but there are methods for overcoming these obstacles.

One method of combating the lack of experience with teaching composition is for teachers to combine curriculum skill and concept demands with creative activities. Teaching students concepts and skills necessary to music development provide a solid basis for creative thinking. Webster (1979) sought to identify the variables that contribute to creative ability. He studied 77 high school students engaged in creative activities. Students also completed the Torrance, Colwell, and Gordon tests. In addition to the tests, students participated in recorded sessions where they engaged in improvisation and at the end of the session given forms for
composing and analysis activities. Webster found that analysis, composition and improvisation along with a strong ability of aural discrimination were strong contributing factors to creative ability. That means that skills and concepts such as those listed above provide a foundation for the development of creative ability.

It is important for teachers to consider constructing creative activities based on what students are already familiar with. In his discussion reporting results from a longitudinal study, Mang (2005) observed a group of children between the ages of two and four performing original songs in play settings. This observation occurred over a 42-month period and the participants were personal contacts of the author. The participants received a visit from the researchers every four to six months. During these visits, each child was tape recorded in a familiar setting and asked to sing their favorite song as well as answer questions. As he observed the children, Mang found that they used parts from songs they already know and rearranged parts of the song, known as referents, to create new ones-known as referent-guided original songs. Mang noted that it was important to provide students with time to interact and play in order to cultivate creative thinking. Kaschub (2009) observed children in play and found that they naturally created songs that accompanied the activity they were performing. With composition being an activity that is natural and part of a person’s sense of self-expression, Kaschub constructed a model for composition in the classroom. The model builds a connection between humans and music based on the natural way music making occurs in young children. An understanding of the natural ways children make music comes from observation of the process children take to compose and an understanding of what motivates them to create music. Once the understanding of the process is found, teachers can plan lessons accordingly. Kaschub stated that composition is an extension of self through the music creating process. Observing the natural way and reasons why children
create will help teachers to construct learning experiences that cultivate thinking in sound and assist in adding more expression to children’s compositions.

Living in a digital era also emphasizes the importance of integrating technology into lessons. A study by Wilson and Wales (1995) focused on children exploring music composition using computer software. Wilson and Wales found that students of all abilities were able to compose to some degree, the act of composing using software was engaging and that students found the software enjoyable. Mellor (2008) used a computer software composition program to provide compositional activities to students at the secondary level. Mellor found that creativity occurs despite the difference in student skill or understanding level and regardless of the fact that one computer program was used. Mellor also noted that the creative process was evident while interviewing students on how they constructed their compositions. In addition to Mellor’s findings, students reported enjoyment of the ability to use instruments they would not normally know how to play in real time but could manipulate using the computer program. Lastly, the use of technology provided non-musicians the chance to create music and giving them the opportunity to see themselves as musicians.

A potential challenge to some teachers is letting go of the structure of creative tasks. Wiggins (1999) suggested leaving creative activities like music composition unstructured so that students can construct musical ideas in their own way. Wiggins stated the notion of structure develops restriction and may drive students to focus on non-music parts of the composition rather than the expressive elements. The teacher does not have to be completely in the background, however. Wiggins promoted the use of encouraging conversation between student and teacher to guide a student in the right direction without judgment.
Maintaining flexibility and an environment that supports risk taking when presenting creative thinking tasks can support the individual needs of the variety of students in the music classroom. Burnard and Younker (2002) conducted a comparative analysis that studied students in the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. The research observed the creative process students used to compose music with the result of developing strategies for teachers to use in fostering creative thinking through composition. The study discovered that students have different processes of creating music, and that a balance of freedom and structure was important in meeting student need to enhance creativity. Burnard and Younker noted that teachers should know the creative process well. They should be sensitive to it, encourage student reflection of creative tasks, and design creative thinking activities like that of composition based on student need.

In addition to creating sensitive environments that accommodate individual student needs, teachers should also consider the world of a student outside of the classroom. Instead of focusing on objectives and how they will align with composition, Hickey (2012) suggests considering what inspires people to create authentic music. While working with adolescent adults, Hickey found that the greatest inspiration for composition came from students’ everyday lives. Music that comes from their lives becomes the most powerful and emotional for both composer and listener. The notion of everyday life may come from a mood, memory, or from beats and songs that children listen to in their own time. Hickey stated the goal is to help students find their own voice through music and not to get them sounding like someone else. Stauffer (2002) conducted a study based on the connections through the reflection of composition, music and life experiences. Students were observed using two computer composition programs, *Music Ace* and *Music Time*. Stauffer found that prior experience in music learning as well as
sociocultural influence were a large part of student compositions. Stauffer identified that students pulled inspiration from their home, social and school environments for composition inspiration. The conclusion of the study was a suggestion that teachers should consider the influences in their student’s lives that create inspiration for creative work. This understanding will help to develop experiences that will bolster the creative process.

Another method of fostering creative thinking in the classroom is through group work. Peer group work activities are useful for teachers to use as a time to observe students actively demonstrating their knowledge of the concept in question (Wiggins, 1994). Wiggins studied fifth grade students solving compositional problems and found that successful students are able to see compositional tasks as a whole first and then in parts with the end result always in mind. Kanellopoulos (2012) supported the findings of Wiggins and stated:

Collaborative improvisation and composition not only undermines domination and heteronomy, but leads to acknowledgment of the creative potential of each and every human being to create music, musical forms, forms of music-making together, and to imbue these processes with social imaginary significations that are not simply dictated by various forms of authority. (p. 169)

Faulkner (2003) comprised a discussion from results of a qualitative study on methods for incorporating group composition into the classroom. The discussion shared that group composition develops an environment that promotes creative thinking with the ability to express oneself freely. According to feedback, Faulkner found that students identified group composing as fun, implicit and relevant. Faulkner furthers with making the connection that group composing is similar to how popular musicians create music for mainstream listening in addition to the joy of sharing, celebrating and joint ownership. Another key factor from the study was social
development. The students enjoyed being presented with a problem that they needed to figure out how to solve. Peer validation and problem solving in groups lead to a greater understanding and individual creativity.

While there are many challenges or discomforts faced by teachers with encouraging creative thinking through composition, there are also a variety of ways to incorporate these activities without completely changing curriculum. Creative thinking can be very flexible and helps to meet the needs of teaching differentiation, teaching students how to work together through group think and problem solving. Technology is also an important factor to consider. There are many free websites that develop music skills creatively and shows the student that the world in the classroom can connect to the technology driven world that they live in. If teachers can create a supportive environment where everyone can feel free to take risks and that relates to students, creative thinking will only produce beneficial results.

**Assessment Considerations**

Hickey (2012) stated that assessment in creative activities such as composition could be very difficult, due in part to the subjectivity. However subjective creative assessment may be, the evaluation of creativity happens often and unknowingly. Engaging in discussion or comparison of movies, songs, and videos are one-way humans evaluate creativity (Sawyer, 2012). In addition to the evaluation of creativity occurring through regular discussion, assessment is important in the arts because music is considered a core subject (Colwell, Lehman, Morrison, & Shuler, 2009). Like other core subjects it is important to provide the policy makers with quality measurements of student learning to promote advocacy. Due to a lack of quality assessment that measure creating and performing, MENC (Music Educators National Conference) now known as NAFME (National Association for Music Education) is requesting that the federal government
put forth a more substantial assessment that adequately measures learning in the arts (Colwell, Lehman, Morrison, & Shuler, 2009). Incorporating quality assessment bolsters advocacy for the arts.

In addition to advocating for music education, assessment is helpful for students and there are ways to evaluate creative thinking despite the notion of its abstract qualities. Stauffer (1999) stated that when children understand the goal to be accomplished, they are motivated to work toward that goal. Assessment is one method of collecting data that evaluates the process of reaching a goal that is observable to teacher and student. Reflection is one way to assess student understanding. Green and Hale (2011) advocated the use of portfolios to evaluate student understanding. They suggest that students put together portfolios with the help of the teacher that share their best work. The portfolio not only provides an opportunity to show what students have learned, but also shows students their own progress and where they fall in their musical understanding. Other methods of assessment are through the connection of concept or skill with a creative activity. Hickey and Webster (2002) suggested blending the curricular skill or concept being taught with a creative activity such as composition. For example, if a class is learning about sixteenth notes, they can apply this skill to a composition lesson using this type of rhythm. Teachers can assess students on their ability to notate and perform sixteenth rhythms with accuracy while using composition—a creative thinking activity.

Consensual assessment is another method of assessing student understanding. Hickey (2001) applied Amabile’s Consensensual Assessment Technique to explore the idea that creativity can be assessed under the evaluation of qualified participants. Hickey’s study observed 12 compositions by fourth and fifth grade students. They were evaluated by five groups of judges: music teachers, second-grade students, seventh-grade students, composers and theorists.
Each judge group listened to the composition and rated what they heard based on the relation to the “absolute standard in the domain of music” (p. 238). The results suggested that Amabile’s procedure is reliable and that the most qualified judges were the music teachers.

Assessment does not have to be a multiple-choice test, but rather an opportunity for discussion and reflection of the creative process. The methods of assessment discussed help to maintain student confidence and ability to risk take while opening their eyes to what they have learned or still need to learn. Assessment also provides teachers with quality feedback on which they can evaluate student understanding and inform their lesson planning. In a world where data fuels advocacy, assessment, even through creative thinking activities is vital in the development of a classroom curriculum.

**Curriculum Design Considerations**

Regardless of perception on the notion of curriculum, having a curriculum is essential as it explains what is attempting to be taught (Hoffer, 1995). Hoffer stated, “there are many ways to perceive or define a curriculum” (p. 271). A curriculum is identified as ongoing or operational and they are useful guides for the explanation of music philosophy, providing information on a topic and training other teachers (Hoffer, 1995). Barret (2005) discussed a re-conceptualized curriculum that focuses its’ attention on student understanding. This type of curriculum pulls from prior knowledge, connects to the community outside of school, presents activities in varied manners, and encourages student independence to teach new topics. Barret stated when curriculum is focused on meaning: it provides a greater amount of time for student and teacher reflection.

Many new curriculum formats focus on backwards planning and the establishment of meaning. Snyder (2001) suggested interdisciplinary curriculum planning that focuses on
connection, correlation and integration. Snyder stated when choosing units with a theme, the greatest success comes when students have an active role in choosing the theme because it then becomes meaningful to them. Once the theme is chosen, teachers can then determine the big questions to be explored and then decide on appropriate assessments. Hunter and Standerfer (2010) discussed the use of creating a unit plan based on establishing goals to be accomplished first. Once an end goal is set, the teacher can establish the understandings that will be essential for student attainment. Hunter and Standerfer also suggested maintaining flexibility throughout the lessons in the unit, making changes as necessary based on pre assessment, and ongoing student assessments.

Arlington County Public Schools uses a unit and lesson plan template that is an adaptation of Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), History Alive, Understanding by Design, and others. The unit and lesson template are aligned with twelve components of best practices: unit and topic lesson, enduring understandings, essential questions, standards, content objectives, language objectives, key vocabulary, materials, procedure, plan for differentiation, formative or summative assessments, and home school connection. The template promotes the idea of backwards thinking with an emphasis on procedure through motivation, presentation, practice, and application. Planning a unit or lesson unique to the template is the home school connection that asks teachers to consider how families can connect what their child learned in school to the world outside of the classroom.
Part 2

A Curriculum for Grade Five General Music Incorporating Creative Thinking for

Nottingham Elementary School
The following units and lesson plans are written for a curriculum that fosters creative thinking through composition. This capstone project will be a comprehensive curriculum for fifth grade general music class. The project consists of three units, each with three lessons. The curriculum will be based on developing this topic by emphasizing the construction of original compositions through diverse methods. This curriculum directly aligns with the Virginia Standard of Learning strand 5.6: “The student will create music by improvising melodies and rhythms of increasing complexity, composing a short original composition within specified guidelines and using contemporary media and technology” (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/fine_arts/). The curriculum also aligns with the National Core Arts Standards Creating process: “Imagine, generate musical ideas for various purposes and contexts; Plan and Make, select and develop musical ideas for defined purposes and contexts; Evaluate and Refine, evaluate and refine selected musical ideas to create musical work(s) that meet appropriate criteria; and Present, share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality” (http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/).

Included in the curriculum are three units and nine total lesson plans. The units are written for fifth grade general music classes that meet for 40 minutes once a week. Students will explore the creative process through standard and nonstandard notation, technology, instruments, and art to construct original compositions. To meet the needs of all students as well as the varying activities of creative thinking, the structure and teacher derived guidelines within the units will also vary. I chose lessons based on standard, nonstandard, and technology based composition with the idea of varying structure in mind. Creative thinking provides a wonderful
opportunity to explore music in many ways, and each lesson can be catered to teacher and classroom need.

I chose a unit based on using technology to connect to my student’s world outside of the music room. I want to provide them with several free websites and applications that require little to no prior music knowledge that afford them the ability to create instrumental music without needing instruments. As I learned from, Technology Assisted Music Learning, children are technological natives. In the book, Music Outside the Lines, Hickey (2012) cited a quote from Upitis (1992, p. 10) that stated “in order to understand formal symbol systems, individuals must first construct their own versions of symbol systems.” I created a unit on graphic notation because it is a style of composition, one that allows an opportunity for students to demonstrate what they know about music through the method that works best for them.

While understanding Western standard notation is traditionally considered as important for many musicians, general music is about experience and providing a variety of opportunities to make music in different ways. I chose a unit on composition with standard notation because I have many students who take private lessons or play an instrument. This was a helpful way to connect with what they are reading in instrumental ensembles and is a style of notation that has been practiced in general music since kindergarten. In addition, learning Western standardized notation allows them the ability to document music in a way that can be easily reproduced by other musicians. I chose to use recorders for this unit because all students are required to have one and they have been playing the recorder since third grade.

Reflection templates and assessments with grading rubrics will be included with corresponding lesson plans. These worksheets are what I intend to use with my students. The worksheets focus mainly on fostering reflective learning of the creative process. I do include one
performance rubric to measure student performance ability. A sample of different types of graphic notation is also included for the unit. I would pass this out to my students or display on a SMART board to give them more ideas about what graphic notation can look like and how the symbols can be represented. In the graphic notation unit, I choose to have individual students fill out all exit tickets despite the group work nature of the project because I felt that doing it in this manner would yield honest results and provide me the ability to read about each student’s level of understanding of the project.

The units will provide a foundation for embarking on fostering creative thinking through composition. I hope to eventually expand to the other grades I teach. The end goal is find ways to incorporate skills and concepts with creative learning opportunities. Providing creative activities teaches resourcefulness, problem solving, critical thinking, and gives students confidence. When students have the knowledge and know how to make music on their own then they can take it with them for life-long use.

Overview of State of Virginia Standards of Learning

Adopted by the Virginia Board of Education in 2013, the Virginia Standards of Learning are a series of objectives for teachers to use in curriculum development. The standards also provide a framework of the necessary skills and concepts students should learn in each grade. There are five categories under which the standards fall: Performance; Music History and Cultural Context; Analysis, Evaluation and Critique; and Aesthetics. Creativity falls under the category of performance. In fifth grade, students are synthesizing music skills acquired in previous grades to create. According to the Virginia Standards of Learning (2013) students in fifth grade will:
Read, write and compose music, using increasingly complex rhythms and meters. They begin to develop choral skills, including singing in two and three-part harmony. Students explore and perform a variety of music styles and develop personal criteria to be used for describing and analyzing musical performances.

(Virginia Department of Education: Fine Arts Standards, 2013)

A detailed description of the objectives for the Virginia Standards of Learning objectives can be accessed at the following link:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/fine_arts/2013/music/std_finearts_music.pdf

Classroom Environment

I work in what is considered a neighborhood elementary school in Arlington, Virginia. The students come from mostly from middle to upper level, Caucasian families. The image of the “nuclear family” comes to mind when one thinks of my school. We have a very strong Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and are afforded the benefits of easy access to a plethora of technology, including teacher and student lap tops, iPads, SMART boards, Bose sound speakers, iPods, and a beautiful room specifically designed for teaching music. Our school follows Responsive Classroom (2015), a method of establishing positive teaching environments, positive discourse and logical consequences. With Responsive Classroom in mind I have many bulletin boards that support student learning and social development. The boards consist of word walls with vocabulary words for student access, a “bravo board” that celebrates students taking musical risks, a chorus bulletin board and an “instruments of the orchestra” bulletin board. Plastered all over the room are quotes about the power of music from famous people and students in the school. Orff instruments and a variety of pitched and non-pitched percussion are
on the shelves along the perimeter of the room. Students keep recorders in the classroom. They are in buckets assigned to each class. Students sit in “teams” on the carpet along the perimeter of the room, facing the SMART board. The goal of my classroom environment is to build confidence in my students so that they are not afraid to try and to learn from their mistakes, while making music.
Arlington County Public Schools Lesson and Unit Planning Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Elements</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>What is the lesson or unit focus?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enduring Understandings</td>
<td>What are the big ideas that students will understand about this topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Questions</td>
<td>What provocative questions will guide inquiry and learning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>What are educational objectives for identified courses approved by the VDOE?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Objectives</td>
<td>How will students demonstrate content knowledge?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Objectives</td>
<td>How will students demonstrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Vocabulary</td>
<td>What is the essential vocabulary?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>What materials are required for the lesson?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure: Motivation</td>
<td>What concrete experience will introduce the topic, activate background knowledge, and help make a meaningful connection to student’s lives and prior learning? How will students analyze and reflect on this concrete experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>How will you make the connection between the concrete experience and the new concept, while previewing the topic and emphasizing the key vocabulary? How will you teach the concept?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>How will students reinforce new knowledge and skill development using reading, writing, listening, and speaking, while interacting with each other? How will students add their won touch to the concept?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>What will students do to start applying or doing something with - their new knowledge in an authentic situation? How will students share their final product?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation</td>
<td>How will you adapt the content, product, or process to meet the needs of all learners? Who is need of additional support? Who is in need of extension? What are your plans to accommodate students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative or Summative Assessment</td>
<td>How will you know if students have mastered your objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home School Connection</td>
<td>How will families have the opportunity to connect with the learning experience of their child?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Lesson Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Applying Creative Thinking to Construct an Original GarageBand Composition: Unit 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Enduring Understandings**

- Using technology helps anyone create music
- Creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources
- Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent
- Musicians evaluate and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.

**Essential Questions**

- How does technology help me create music?
- How do musicians generate creative ideas using technology?
- How do musicians make creative decisions?
- How do musicians improve the quality of their creative work?
- When is creative work ready to share?

**Standards**

- **MU Cr1.1.5a** Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas and explain connection to specific purpose and context
- **MU: Cr1.1.5b** Generate musical ideas (rhythms, melodies and accompaniment patterns) within specific related tonalities, meters, and simple chord changes
- **MU: Cr2.1.5a** Demonstrate selected and developed musical ideas for improvisations, arrangements, or compositions to express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context.
- **MU: Cr2.1.5b** use standard and/or iconic notation to document personal rhythmic, melodic, and two chord harmonic musical ideas.
- **MU: Cr3.1.5a** Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal music, applying teacher provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback and explain rationale for changes.
- **MU: Cr3.2.5a** Present the final version of a personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship, and explain connection to expressive intent.
- **VASOL: 5.6.3** The student will create music by using contemporary media and technology.
- **VASOL: 5.15** The student will develop personal criteria to be used for determining the quality and value of musical compositions.

**Content Objectives**

- Students will imagine and plan an original composition using the iPad Application, GarageBand.
- Students will plan and refine an original composition using the iPad
App, GarageBand.

- Students will present the final version of personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship and explain connection to expression intent.

**Language Objectives**

- Students will respond through discussion, to an original composition, analyzing the level of creativity perceived.
- Students will refine and evaluate an original composition.
- Students will generate a list of reflection questions based on what makes a composition creative.
- Students will describe the inspiration behind their piece in writing.

**Key Vocabulary**

- iPad
- GarageBand
- Composing/Composition
- Create

**Materials**

- Teacher Lap top with internet access
- SMART board
- iPads with the application, GarageBand downloaded – one iPad per student.

**Procedure: Motivation**

- The motivation portion of each lesson will be a teacher-guided presentation of media that is free for music composition and are available for students to access from home.
- Lesson one will model GarageBand using the video, “GarageBand Original Composition – Cyberspace” by Threshold Seven
- Lesson two will model www.Classicsforkids.com
- Lesson three will model www.quavermusic.com

**Presentation**

- The presentation of each lesson will explain the goal or focus of each lesson.
- Lesson one: students will learn how to navigate GarageBand using the video, “How to use GarageBand on iPad, iPad 2” – Official Video Guide by Android News.
- Lesson two: students will discuss refining compositions and identify ways they can work on refining their piece.
- Lesson three: students will complete an entry ticket that answers questions generated from the previous class discussion.

**Practice**

- The practice of each lesson is where students will practice using GarageBand on their own iPad.
- Lesson one: students will be assigned an iPad and learn how to access and navigate GarageBand on their iPad.
- Lesson two: students will review how to access GarageBand on their iPad.
- Lesson three: students will access GarageBand on their iPad and run through their composition.

**Application**

- The application of each lesson is where students are actively engaged in imagining, refining or presenting their compositions using the iPad.
- Lesson one: students begin to explore and construct their composition
on their iPad.

- Lesson two: students will work to evaluate and refine their composition on their iPad.
- Lesson three: students present their composition on their iPad.

| Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation | Composing music using technology provides students with the benefit of making music accessing instruments that they do not need experience in playing.
- Composing music using technology takes away the need to know how to physically write music.
- All lessons will be differentiated based on 504/IEP and Gifted needs. |

| Formative or Summative Assessment | Lesson One: Student response through discussion of what they perceive as the level of creativity as observed in the piece “Cyberspace.”
- Lesson Two: Class discussion: Generated list of questions that you would ask about the creativity of a piece of music.
- Lesson Three: Entry Ticket: Students will respond to the questions generated. |

| Home School Connection | You can write music using any symbol system that works for you! Look at the world around you to be inspired to create music. |
### Lesson Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Topic</strong></th>
<th>Applying Creative Thinking to Construct an Original GarageBand Composition: Imagining and Planning: Unit 1: Lesson 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Enduring Understandings** | • Using technology helps anyone create music  
• Creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources  
• Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context and, expressive intent  
• Musicians evaluate and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria. |
| **Essential Questions** | • How does technology help me create music?  
• How do musicians generate creative ideas using technology? |
| **Standards** | • **Mu:Cr1.1.5a** Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas and explain connection to specific purpose and context  
• **MU:Cr2.1.5a** Demonstrate selected and developed musical ideas for improvisations, arrangements, or compositions to express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context.  
• **MU:Cr2.1.5b** use standard and/or iconic notation to document personal rhythmic, melodic, and two chord harmonic musical ideas.  
• **MU:Cr3.1.5a** Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal music, applying teacher provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback and explain rationale for changes.  
• **VASOL: 5.6.3** The student will create music by using contemporary media and technology.  
• **VASOL: 5.15** The student will develop personal criteria to be used for determining the quality and value of musical compositions. |
| **Content Objectives** | • Students will imagine and plan an original composition using the iPad Application, GarageBand |
| **Language Objectives** | • Students will respond through discussion, to an original composition, analyzing the level of creativity perceived. |
| **Key Vocabulary** | • iPad  
• GarageBand |
| **Materials** | • Teacher computer with internet access for YouTube  
• iPads with access to GarageBand (one for each student)  
• SMART board |
| **Procedure: Motivation** | • Show the You Tube video: “GarageBand Original Composition – Cyberspace” by Threshold Seven:  
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1urQSIJ7gU  
• Ask students: Would you consider this piece creative? Why or Why |
Today, students will use technology to imagine and plan an original composition using GarageBand. They will first learn how to use GarageBand for iPad. To begin, show students the tutorial video, “How to use GarageBand on iPad, iPad 2” – Official Video Guide by Android News. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXOxYUDznLM

Pass out iPads to each student, label each iPad to a student so that they can access their piece in the future lessons. Show students how to access GarageBand. Provide time for students to explore GarageBand. Many students will figure out the program on their own, but some may need extra assistance. YouTube offers a variety of tutorials to become familiar with GarageBand.

Students will manipulate GarageBand to imagine and plan their creation: an original composition. Students will save their compositions and hand in iPads. Ask students: What do you think about using GarageBand to compose? What is your greatest challenge with using GarageBand? What do you like the best about using GarageBand to compose?

Nonstandard composition affords students the opportunity to work at their own level because they do not have to worry about writing pitch and rhythm in a standard method. Technology and the options GarageBand has offers students a variety of ways to create music catered to their level of learning or ability.

Student response through discussion of what they perceive as the level of creativity as observed in the piece “Cyberspace.” Student response through discussion of answers to the questions asked in the “application” section of the lesson.

You don’t have to be a musician to create an original composition. There are a variety of websites that offer free options to create music! GarageBand is a free application available to any apple product and can be downloaded in the App store.
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<td><strong>Topic</strong></td>
<td>Applying Creative Thinking to Construct an Original GarageBand</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Composition: Refine and Evaluate: Unit 1: Lesson 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Enduring</td>
<td>• Using technology helps anyone create music.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understandings</td>
<td>• Creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence</td>
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<td>musicians’ work</td>
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<td>• Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise,</td>
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<td>context, and expressive intent.</td>
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<td>new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate</td>
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<td>criteria.</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Essential</td>
<td>• How does technology help me create music?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>• How do musicians generate creative ideas using technology?</td>
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<td>• How do musicians make creative decisions?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How do musicians improvise the quality of their creative work?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• When is creative work ready to share?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standards</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>Mu:Cr1.1.5a</strong> Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ideas and explain connection to specific purpose and context.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <strong>MU:Cr2.1.5a</strong> Demonstrate selected and developed musical</td>
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<td>ideas for improvisations, arrangements, or compositions to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context.</td>
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<td>• <strong>MU:Cr3.1.5a</strong> Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to</td>
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<td>personal music, applying teacher provided and collaboratively</td>
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<td>developed criteria and feedback and explain rationale for</td>
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<td>changes.</td>
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<td>• <strong>VASOL: 5.6.3</strong> the student will create music by using</td>
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<td>contemporary media and technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Content</td>
<td>• Students will plan and refine an original composition using</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>the iPad App, GarageBand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Language</td>
<td>• Students will refine and evaluate an original composition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>• Students will generate a list of reflection questions based on</td>
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<td>what makes the composition creative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Key Vocabulary</td>
<td>• iPad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• GarageBand</td>
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<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
<td>• Teacher Lap top</td>
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<td>• SMART board to show students classicsforkids.com</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• iPads with access to GarageBand (one for each student)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Procedure:</strong> &lt;br&gt;<strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>• Model a free website where students can compose music.  &lt;br&gt;• Access <a href="http://www.classicsforkids.com">www.Classicsforkids.com</a>.  &lt;br&gt;• <a href="http://www.classicsforkids.com/games/compose/compose.html">http://www.classicsforkids.com/games/compose/compose.html</a>  &lt;br&gt;• With the class create a composition.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
<td>• Today, students will use technology to refine an original composition using GarageBand.  &lt;br&gt;• Discuss what refining using GarageBand might mean (listening to each track, listening to the entire piece, making changes, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice</strong></td>
<td>• Pass out iPads to each student.  &lt;br&gt;• Review how to access GarageBand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application</strong></td>
<td>• Students will use GarageBand to plan and refine their creation: an individual original composition.  &lt;br&gt;• A few minutes before the end of class, have students save their compositions and return iPads.  &lt;br&gt;• With students, work to generate a series of reflection questions that support the creative process (Ex: what was the inspiration for your composition? What instruments did you choose? Why? Did you feel that your final product matched with the idea you were imagining?).  &lt;br&gt;• Once complete, type these up and use them for an entry ticket for the next class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation</strong></td>
<td>• Nonstandard composition affords students the opportunity to work at their own level because they do not have to worry about writing pitch and rhythm in a standard method.  &lt;br&gt;• Technology and the options GarageBand has offers students a variety of ways to create music catered to their level of learning or ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formative or Summative Assessment</strong></td>
<td>• Class discussion: Generated list of questions that you would ask about the creativity of a piece of music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home School Connection</strong></td>
<td>• You don’t have to be a musician to create an original composition. There are a variety of websites that offer free options to create music!</td>
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</table>
### Lesson and Unit Plan

**Subject Area: General Music: Grade 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Elements</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic</strong></td>
<td>Applying Creative Thinking to Construct an Original GarageBand Composition: Presentation: Unit 1: Lesson 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enduring Understandings</strong></td>
<td>• Musicians’ presentation of creative work is the culmination of a process of creation and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Questions</strong></td>
<td>• When is creative work ready to share?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Standards** | • **MU: Cr2. 1.5a** Demonstrate developed musical ideas for a composition to express intent and purpose to context.  
• **MU: Cr3. 2.5a** Present the final version of personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship and explain connection to expressive intent. |
| **Content Objectives** | • Students will present the final version of personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship and explain connection to expression intent. |
| **Language Objectives** | • Students will describe the inspiration behind their piece in writing.  
• Students will reflect on the compositional choices they make. |
| **Key Vocabulary** | • GarageBand |
| **Materials** | • iPads with access to GarageBand (one for each student)  
• Teacher computer with access to YouTube  
• SMART board |
| **Procedure: Motivation** | • Using the SMART board connected to a computer, access [www.quavermusic.com](http://www.quavermusic.com)  
• Create an account.  
• Click on the door “Kids Enter Here.”  
• Click on the art easel with the music staff.  
• This will take you to an activity called “Song Brush.” A man pops up and explains how to use this.  
• Choose students to come up to the SMART board and try the program. |
| **Presentation** | • Students will be given an entry ticket that consists of the questions generated from the previous class.  
• Students will fill out the entry ticket, answering the questions. |
| **Practice** | • Pass out the assigned iPad to each student.  
• Students will access GarageBand, opening their piece.  
• Students will run through their piece one more time, making any necessary refinements. |
| Application                                                                 | • Each student will share his or her original GarageBand composition.  
|                                                                           | • Once the performance is over, the student will be given the opportunity to choose two peers for a question and answer session.  
|                                                                           | • Students will return iPads.  |
| Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation                      | • Nonstandard composition affords students the opportunity to work at their own level because they do not have to worry about writing pitch and rhythm in a standard method.  
|                                                                           | • Technology and the options GarageBand has offers students a variety of ways to create music catered to their level of learning or ability.  |
| Formative or Summative Assessment                                          | • Entry Ticket: Students will respond to the questions generated  |
| Home School Connection                                                     | • You don’t have to be a musician to create an original composition. There are a variety of websites that offer free options to create music!  |
**Lesson and Unit Plan**

**Subject Area: General Music: Grade 5**

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| **Content Objectives** | The student will imagine and plan a nonstandard composition, demonstrating an understanding of how symbols can be used to construct music.  
| | The student will plan, make and refine a nonstandard composition demonstrating an understanding of how symbols can guide performers to playing a piece with accuracy.  
| | Students will share graphic notation compositions, demonstrating purpose, skill and creativity. |
| **Language Objectives** | The student will reflect through written documentation the process they went about to create their composition.  
| | The student will notate an explanation of his symbol system and how it would be taught to a musician so that it can be performed.  
| | Students will reflect through writing and group discussion, the contributions of group work in ensembles as well as the advantages, disadvantages or personal preference of graphic notation. |
| **Key Vocabulary** | Composition  
| | Nonstandard notation  
| | Graphic notation |
| **Materials** | Teacher lap top with internet access  
| | Blank paper  
| | Pencils  
| | Non pitched and pitched instruments |
| **Procedure: Motivation** | Students will be presented with YouTube videos in lesson one and two and will receive an entry ticket in lesson three. They will be asked to reflect upon them. The YouTube videos will show students examples of graphic notation and how pieces using graphic notation are performed.  
| | Videos to be used: “Aquarium” from Carnival of the Animals by
Camille Saint Saens, “thunderstorm, a Graphic notation composition by Alex Chorley, Age 12”,
• Entry Ticket for lesson three: Sharing the process of creating a graphic composition

| Presentation | • Each lesson presentation will introduce the focus and goals for the lesson.  
• Lesson One defines standard notation, nonstandard notation, and graphic notation. Lesson one also uses two YouTube videos that model examples of graphic notation: “Birds on the Wires” by Jarbas Agnelli, available on YouTube and “SYN-phon”  
• Lesson two provides explanation for how student groups will choose instruments, instrumentalists, and a conductor in order to refine the creative work.  
• Lesson three explains performance etiquette as the groups prepare for performance |

| Practice | • Lesson one models examples of graphic notation systems and explains how the symbols document the music to be played using the worksheet, “Sample Nonstandard Symbols.”  
• Lesson two elaborates on the graphic notation sample using the worksheet “Sample Nonstandard Symbols” and provides time where the teacher directs how to form the ensemble and play a piece using one of the sample notation examples.  
• Lesson three students will gather with groups and rehearse their piece, preparing for performance |

| Application | • The application portion of each lesson is where students break out and begin applying what they have learned.  
• Lesson one: students will be taken outside to find inspiration in the images around them or work to create a symbol system that works for the piece they will create.  
• Lesson two: students will work on their composition with their ensemble, choosing instruments, instrumentalists, and a conductor.  
• Lesson three: student ensembles perform their compositions  
• At the end of this time, students will be given exit tickets that document their response to the creative process. “What inspired you?” for Lesson 1 and Nonstandard Graphic Notation Composition. Exit Ticket 2 |

| Plan for Differentiation/Accommodation/Adaptation | • Nonstandard composition affords students the opportunity to work at their own level because they do not have to worry about writing pitch and rhythm in a standard method. |

| Formative or Summative Assessment | • Observation and discussion will be utilized during all lessons.  
• Lesson one: Exit Ticket “What inspired you?” |
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<td>Entry Ticket: “Graphic Notation Process”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Home School</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Connection</strong></td>
<td>You can write music using any symbol system that works for you!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look at the world around you to be inspired to create music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Lesson Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Applying Creative Thinking to Nonstandard Graphic Composition: Imagining and Planning: Unit 2: Lesson 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Enduring Understandings** | • The creative ideas, concepts and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources.  
• Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent |
| **Essential Questions** | • How do musicians generate creative ideas?  
• How do musicians make creative decisions? |
| **Standards** | • **MU:Cr2.15b** use standard and/or iconic notation to document personal rhythmic and melodic musical ideas.  
• **VASOL 5.6.2** Composing a short original melody within specific guidelines  
• **VASOL 5.17** The student will examine factors that inspire musicians to perform or compose. |
| **Content Objectives** | • The student will imagine and plan a nonstandard composition, demonstrating an understanding of composers use symbols to construct music. |
| **Language Objectives** | • The student will reflect through written documentation the process they went about to create their composition |
| **Key Vocabulary** | • Composition  
• Nonstandard notation  
• Graphic notation |
| **Materials** | • Plain paper  
• Pencils for each student  
• Teacher laptop with internet access for YouTube  
• “Sample Nonstandard Graphic Notation Symbol Systems” (see attached)  
• “Nonstandard Graphic Notation Composition. Lesson 1. Exit Ticket (see attached) |
| **Procedure: Motivation** | • Students will listen to the piece: “Aquarium” from *Carnival of the Animals* by Camille Saint-Saens.  
• Ask them to think about the image created in their mind based on what they hear. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FOSTERING CREATIVE THINKING</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Presentation**                | • Provide time to discuss what students heard and thought about or saw in their mind as they listened.  
• Explain that you can flip this and use symbols to create music.  
• Today, students will be introduced to graphic notation. After viewing examples, they will imagine and plan their own graphic notation piece.  
• They will view the two videos below and the symbols used for graphic notation.  
• Define nonstandard composition as using a different strategy to document music, for example using symbols such as shapes or numbers in addition to a creation like “Birds on a wire.” The use of symbols to document music is known as graphic notation. Regardless of the symbol system a composer chooses, it has to make the music he is writing permanent so that he remembers it the next time he comes to play it.  
• Show the first video: “Birds on the Wires” by Jarbas Agnelli, available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LoM4ZZJ2UrM  
• Explain how the composer used the image of birds on a power line to create a melody. He used the height of the birds on the line to show high and low pitch and the closeness to inspire rhythm as well as different groupings to demonstrate accents in the music.  
• Show this video, SYN-phon as another example of graphic notation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVtX_CD3jaY  
• Discuss the difference in the graphic notation of each video. |
| **Practice**                    | • Model graphic symbol systems for students (see attached sheet “Sample Nonstandard Graphic Notation Symbol Systems”). |
| **Application**                 | • Students will now begin to imagine and plan their graphic notation piece.  
• Students will divide into small groups or “ensembles” (four students or less).  
• Each group will receive pencils and several pieces of blank paper.  
• Take students outside to explore and find inspiration in nature. While outside, they can draw pictures of the images that will inspire their piece.  
• A few minutes before class ends, collect student compositions and pass out the exit ticket (See attached “Nonstandard Composition. Lesson 1. Exit Ticket).  
• Discuss the exit ticket with students and have them fill it out and return it. |
| **Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation** | • Nonstandard composition affords students the opportunity to work at their own level because they do not have to worry about writing pitch and rhythm in a standard method. |
| Formative or Summative Assessment | • Observation of students as they imagine and plan for their composition  
|                                | • Exit Ticket “What inspired you?” (see attached-Nonstandard Composition. Lesson 1. Exit Ticket). |
| Home School Connection         | • You can write music using any symbol system that works for you! Look at the world around you to be inspired to create music. |
Sample Nonstandard Graphic Notation Symbol Systems

This example uses shapes and colors. The different length shape stands for different rhythms and the different color means different pitch.

2
1 1

This example uses numbers. The different numbers can mean different rhythms and the different heights might mean different pitch.

This example uses pictures to explain how the piece will be played. The first cloud stands for a quiet drum roll, the lightening bolt stands for a loud cymbal crash, the rain means the xylophones will play and the sun means a chime will play. A conductor will cue each part.
Nonstandard Graphic Notation Composition. Lesson 1. Exit Ticket

Name: ______________________
Today we began to create a composition using nonstandard notation. What was your inspiration?

We also discussed the importance of making a symbol system that one can remember and refer back to. What is your symbol system? How did you make it permanent so that you can remember it the next time you see it?

Name: ______________________
Today we began to create a composition using nonstandard notation. What was your inspiration?

We also discussed the importance of making a symbol system that one can remember and refer back to. What is your symbol system? How did you make it permanent so that you can remember it the next time you see it?
### Lesson Elements

#### Topic
Applying Creative Thinking to Nonstandard Graphic Composition: Planning, Making and Refining: Unit 2: Lesson 2

#### Enduring Understandings
- How do musicians make creative decisions?
- How do musicians improve the quality of their creative work?

#### Essential Questions
- Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent
- Musicians evaluate and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence and the application of appropriate criteria.

#### Standards
- **MU: Cr2. 1.5a** Demonstrate developed musical ideas for a composition to express intent and purpose to context.
- **MU: Cr2.15b** use standard and/or iconic notation to document personal rhythmic, melodic, and two chord harmonic musical ideas.
- **MU: Cr3.1.5a** Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal music, applying teacher provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback and explain rationale for changes.
- **VASOL 5.3.4** The students will play a variety of pitched and non-pitched instruments alone and with others including demonstrating proper playing techniques.
- **VASOL 5.6.2** Composing a short original melody within specific guidelines.

#### Content Objectives
- The student will plan, make, and refine/revise a nonstandard composition demonstrating an understanding of how symbols can guide performers to playing a piece with accuracy.

#### Language Objectives
- The student will notate an explanation of his symbol system and how it would be taught to a musician so that it can be performed.

#### Key Vocabulary
- Graphic notation
- Composition

#### Materials
- Teacher laptop with access to YouTube
- Composition papers from the previous lesson
- Pencils
- A variety of pitched and non-pitched instruments
- Exit ticket, “Nonstandard Graphic Notation Composition. Exit Ticket 2”
| Procedure: Motivation | • Show this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBawmitub64 - “thunderstorm, a Graphic notation composition by Alex Chorley, Age 12.”
• It is an example of graphic notation. Draw attention to the lack of a score and the use of shapes to perform certain parts. Suggest that if a group chooses to create a piece like this, the conductor could act like the arrow does. |
| Presentation | • Today, student groups will be working on making and refining their compositions. This time can be called a “rehearsal” to prepare for the concert in the next lesson.
• Explain that they will be working in their ensembles to choose instruments that will accompany their piece and trying them out to see how well they do or do not fit with the piece.
• While in these groups, they will be choosing a conductor and assigning individuals to parts.
• While working with their ensemble, they should be encouraged to refine their compositions as needed. |
| Practice | • Using the “Sample Nonstandard Symbol Systems” sheet, choose one example and model for students ways to add instruments (students can use pitched, non-pitched or found sounds and the instruments should match with inspiration)
• Choose students to be part of the ensemble and one to be a conductor, help guide the class in seeing how each role is important.
• Practice with the class how to work together as an ensemble (choose instruments, practice parts, choose a conductor and share the conductor’s role in the ensemble). |
| Application | • Students will receive their compositions, choose a conductor as well as choose instruments for their composition and players and refine their compositions – preparing for performance.
• A few minutes before class ends hand out “Nonstandard Graphic Notation Composition. Exit Ticket 2”(see attached) and have each student fill it out.
• Collect all papers and materials. |
| Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation | • Nonstandard composition affords students the opportunity to work at their own level because they do not have to worry about writing pitch and rhythm in a standard method. |
| Formative or Summative Assessment | • Observe students working together to add instruments.
• Discussion with students and the role of their ensemble’s members – let students share. Ask students what they did to improve the quality of their composition and what creative decisions they made as they rehearsed their piece. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exit Ticket: “Nonstandard Graphic Notation Composition. Exit Ticket 2”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home School Connection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can write music using any symbol system that works for you! Look at the world around you to be inspired to create music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nonstandard Graphic Notation Composition. Exit Ticket 2

Name: _______________

What was the inspiration for your piece?

__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

On the lines below, explain your symbol system.

__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

How would you teach your piece to another musician?

__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
## Lesson and Unit Plan

**Subject Area:** General Music: Grade 5

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<tr>
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<td><strong>Topic</strong></td>
<td>Applying Creative Thinking to Nonstandard Graphic Composition: Presentation: Unit 2: Lesson 3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enduring Understandings</strong></td>
<td>• Musicians’ presentation of creative work is the culmination of a process of creation and communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Questions</strong></td>
<td>• When is creative work ready to share?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Standards**   | • **MU: Cr2. 1.5a** Demonstrate developed musical ideas for a composition to express intent and purpose to context.  
• **MU: Cr3. 2.5a** Present the final version of personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship and explain connection to expressive intent.  
• **VASOL: 5.3** The student will play a variety of pitched and non-pitched instruments alone and with others.  
• **VASOL: 5.8** The student will exhibit acceptable performance behavior as a participant and/or listener in relation to the context and style of music performed.  
• **VASOL: 5.14** The student will collaborate with others to create a musical presentation and acknowledge individual contributions as an integral part of the whole. |
| **Content Objectives** | • Students will share graphic notation compositions, demonstrating purpose, skill and creativity. |
| **Language Objectives** | • Students will reflect through writing and group discussion, the contributions of group work in ensembles as well as the advantages, disadvantages or personal preference of graphic notation. |
| **Key Vocabulary** | • Audience etiquette |
| **Materials** | • Ensemble composition papers  
• A variety of pitched and non-pitched percussion  
• Entry ticket: “Nonstandard Composition. Graphic Notation Process” – one for each student |
| **Procedure: Motivation** | • Each student will receive and complete the entry ticket: Sharing the process of creating a graphic composition (see attached “Graphic Notation Process”). |
### Presentation
- Today, students will meet with their ensembles and prepare to perform their piece for the class!
- Discuss audience performance etiquette (audience focuses attention on performer, they clap politely once the performance is complete, the performer is confident – don’t worry about making mistakes).

### Practice
- Students will be given their compositions and asked to gather with their ensembles.
- Students will be given time to acquire the necessary instruments and practice their piece.

### Application
- Ensembles will share their compositions for the entire class.
- At the end of the composition, they will explain the inspiration and share how their symbol system guided instrumentation and performance.
- To close out this series of lessons, lead a discussion on the contribution of group members to performing in an ensemble as well as student perception of graphic notation: is it easier or harder to use than Western standard notation?

### Plan for Differentiation/Accommodation/Adaptation
- Nonstandard composition affords students the opportunity to work at their own level because they do not have to worry about writing pitch and rhythm in a standard method.

### Formative or Summative Assessment
- Entry Ticket: Graphic Notation Process
- Discussion: what did you think about graphic notation? Do you feel it’s easier to document music this way or harder than standard notation?

### Home School Connection
You can write music using any symbol system that works for you! Look at the world around you to be inspired to create music.
Nonstandard Composition. Graphic Notation Process

Graphic Notation Process
How did you create your nonstandard composition? In the spaces below, label the process you followed to create your composition.

1. First we

2. Then we

3. Our greatest success was

4. Our greatest challenge was

5. We knew we were ready to perform when
### Lesson Elements

**Subject Area:** General Music: Grade 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Applying Creative Thinking to Western Standard Composition: Unit 3</th>
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| **Enduring Understandings** | • Standard notation is the Western way of reading, writing, and playing music.  
  • Creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources.  
  • Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context and expressive intent.  
  • Musicians evaluate and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence and the application of appropriate criteria. |
| **Essential Questions** | • How does using standard notation affect the ability of another musician to read music?  
  • How do musicians generate creative ideas using technology?  
  • How do musicians make creative decisions?  
  • How do musicians improve the quality of their creative work?  
  • When is creative work ready to share? |
| **Standards** | • **MU:Cr1.1.5a** Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas and explain connection to specific purpose and context.  
  • **MU:Cr1.1.5b** Generate musical ideas (rhythms, melodies and accompaniment patterns) within specific related meters.  
  • **MU:Cr2.1.5a** Demonstrate selected and developed musical ideas for improvisations, arrangements, or compositions to express intent, and explain connection to purpose and context.  
  • **MU:Cr2.15b** use standard and/or iconic notation to document personal rhythmic, melodic, and two chord harmonic musical ideas.  
  • **MU:Cr3.1.5a** Evaluate, refine, and document revisions to personal music, applying teacher provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback and explain rationale for changes.  
  • **MU:Cr3.2.5a** Present the final version of a personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship, and explain connection to expressive intent.  
  • **VASOL 5.1.3** Student will read and notate music including using traditional notation to write melodies containing skips and leaps.  
  • **VASOL 5.1.4** Reading and notating rhythmic patterns of increasing complexity.  
  • **VASOL 5.3.4** The student will play a variety of pitched and non-pitched instruments alone and with others including, demonstrating proper playing technique.  
  • **VASOL 5.6.2** The student will create music by composing a short
original composition within specified guidelines.

| **Content Objectives** | • Imagine and plan a recorder composition using specified rhythms, pitch, and meter.  
• Plan and refine a recorder composition using specified rhythms, pitch, and meter.  
• Present an original recorder composition, written using accurate Western standard notation. |
|---|---|
| **Language Objectives** | • Students will analyze and share their opinion of creative characteristics of a performance.  
• Reflect upon and describe creative choices or inspiration for the composition through writing.  
• Reflect upon and describe creative choices or inspiration for the composition, documenting responses on an exit ticket.  
• Share, through discussion the inspiration for the recorder composition. |
| **Key Vocabulary** | • Compose  
• Composer  
• Western standard notation  
• Audience etiquette |
| **Materials** | • Teacher computer with internet access for YouTube  
• Recorders, one for each student  
• Standard Composition worksheet” from the previous lesson  
• Pencils and something for students to write on (if you don’t have desks  
• Exit Ticket. “Imagining and Planning a Recorder Composition”  
• Grading rubric with enough copies to grade each student: “Standard Composition Rubric”  
• Exit ticket, “Refining a Recorder Composition” |
| **Procedure:**  
**Motivation** | • The motivation section of each lesson will engage students in thinking about standard composition.  
• Lesson one: students will watch a video, “PD’s Own Recorder Composition. Age 7.” by Prelude Music School and discuss their view on whether or not the composition is creative.  
• Lesson two: students will warm up with improvisation in question and answer form on recorder to cultivate ideas for composition.  
• Lesson three: students will watch a YouTube video, “Kids Composing Music” by Tina Davidson. It shows two girls performing and students will watch it and analyze audience and performer etiquette. |
| **Presentation** | • The presentation section of each lesson will prepare students for the expectations of the lesson.  
• Lesson one will introduce students to the idea of composition using western standard notation. Students will define western standard notation and review basic compositional skills (rhythms fitting to time signature, writing pitch).  
• Lesson two: students will review exit tickets from the previous class. The grading rubric will also be explained. |
| Practice | • Lesson three: students will discuss how they know when a composition is ready to be performed.  
• During the practice section, students will discuss and identify what imagining, planning and presenting a composition will look like.  
• Lesson one: students will receive the “standard notation worksheet” and discuss the guidelines. They will also discuss what imagining and planning for a composition would look like.  
• Lesson two: students receive their composition. They will define “refining” and generate a list of possible ways to refine a recorder composition.  
• Lesson three: students will receive their composition, review the grading checklist, and take time to practice their composition.  |

| Application | • During the application section, students will actively work on their composition and complete exit tickets.  
• Lesson one: students will formulate phrases, rhythms, pitches, and ideas to begin construction of the composition.  
• Lesson two: students will work on refining their composition, using the list generated and grading rubric as a guideline.  
• Lesson three: students will present their work through recorder performance and will answer questions from the audience.  |

| Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation | • Modifications will be based on IEP or 504 and are tailored to student need.  
• The lack of formal structure specifics of the assignment allows students to write music at their ability level.  |

| Formative or Summative Assessment | • Lesson one: “Exit Ticket. Imagining and Planning a Recorder Composition.” Students will reflect on the inspiration for the composition and their plan for the next class.  
• Lesson two: Exit ticket, “Refining a Recorder Composition.”  
• Lesson three: Composition performance rubric (teacher will grade each student on composition writing and composition performance).  |

| Home School Connection | • Western standard notation enables you with the ability to document and share your work in a language that other musicians will understand, and for recreation.  
• Musicians refine music in similar ways as writers.  
• The use of Western standard music notation allows a person to recreate an original writing so that it can be performed with accuracy.  |
### Lesson Elements

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Applying Creative Thinking to Western Standard Composition: Imagining, Planning and Making a Recorder Composition: Unit 3: Lesson 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Enduring Understandings** | • The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources.  
• Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context and expressive intent. |
| **Essential Questions** | • How do musicians generate creative ideas?  
• How do musicians make creative decisions? |
| **Standards** | • **MU:Cr.1.1.5b** Generate musical ideas within specific tonalities and meters.  
• **MU:Cr.2.1.5b** Use standard notation to document personal rhythmic and melodic ideas.  
• **VASOL 5.1.3** Student will read and notate music including using traditional notation to write melodies containing skips and leaps  
• **VASOL 5.1.4** Reading and notating rhythmic patterns of increasing complexity  
• **VASOL 5.3.4** The student will play a variety of pitched instruments alone and with others including, demonstrating proper playing technique.  
• **VASOL 5.6.2** The student will create music by composing a short original composition within specified guidelines |
| **Content Objectives** | • Imagine and plan a recorder composition using specified rhythms, pitch and meter. |
| **Language Objectives** | • Students will analyze and share their opinion of creative characteristics of a performance.  
• Reflect upon and describe creative choices or inspiration for the composition through writing. |
| **Key Vocabulary** | • Compose  
• Western standard notation |
| **Materials** | • Teacher computer with internet access for YouTube  
• Student recorders  
• “Standard composition worksheet” (see attached) – one for each student  
• Pencils and something for students to write on (if you don’t have desks)  
• “Exit Ticket. Imagining and Planning a Recorder Composition” (see attached) – one for each student. |
| Procedure: Motivation | • Ask students, who can be a composer?  
  • Lead them to discover, anyone who creates music in some form is a composer.  
  • Present the You Tube video, “PD’s Own Recorder Composition. Age 7.” by Prelude Music School. The video shows a boy playing an original composition for recorder. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mfqQWTpEG8  
  • Once complete, lead a discussion about initial thoughts of the boy’s composition performance and whether or not students felt it was creative. |
| --- | --- |
| Presentation | • Ask students, what is western standard notation?  
  • Review the basic staff set up as well as how a composer using standard notation writes a melody (each note has a home on the staff, you can choose any rhythm as long as it matches with the time signature)  
  • Explain to students that they will be composing their own recorder composition and that the goal today is to imagine and plan their melody. |
| Practice | • Hand out the “Standard Composition Worksheet” (attached to this document).  
  • Read through the directions and answer any questions students may have - Discuss with students what imagining and planning would look like: writing a list of favorite rhythms and assigning note names to them or vice versa, playing around on the recorder to find phrases, etc.). |
| Application | • Students will receive their recorders, pencils and something to write on.  
  • Provide students with ample time to work on their composition.  
  • While students work, the teacher should move about the room- observing students creating and assisting them as needed. For example, if they are stuck on where to begin ask them what their favorite note is or to suggest they begin by choosing and by writing in the chord starting note and ending note then filling in the rest from there.  
  • Before class ends, collect student compositions and all materials used  
  • Hand out “Exit Ticket. Imagining and Planning a Recorder Composition” (see attached) to each student.  
  • Students will complete the ticket, encourage them to consider the creative decisions they made in class today. |
| Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation | • Modifications will be based on IEP or 504 and are tailored to student need  
  • The lack of formal structure specifics of the assignment allows students to write music at their ability level. |
| Formative or Summative Assessment | • Observation of student composing style as students work  
  • “Exit Ticket. Imagining and Planning a Recorder Composition” (see attached) where they will reflect on the inspiration for the composition and their plan for the next class. |
| Home School Connection | • Western standard notation enables you with the ability to document and |
share your work in a language that other musicians will understand, fostering recreation.
Standard Composition Worksheet

Name: __________

Today you will begin to compose a piece for recorder in 4/4 time.

Your composition can be as long or short as you would like, remember - each measure can only hold 4 beats of rhythm!

You can use any of the recorder notes you have learned: B,A,G,E or D

You can use any rhythm we have learned: \(\text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}}\) \(\text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}}\)

It might be helpful to use scrap paper or the staff below to write down your initial ideas

Title: ________________

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\text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}} & \text{\textit{\textbf{\texttt{}}}} \\
\end{align*}\]

Exit Ticket. Imagining and Planning a Recorder Composition

Name: __________

What was the inspiration for your composition?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

After reflecting on what you worked on today, what is your plan of action for the next time we meet?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
### Lesson Elements

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Applying Creative Thinking to Western Standard Composition: Imagining, Planning, Making, and Refining a Recorder Composition: Unit 3: Lesson 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Enduring Understandings | • The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources.  
• Musicians’ creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent. |
| Essential Questions | • How do musicians generate creative ideas?  
• How do musicians make creative decisions? |
| Standards | • **MU:Cr.1.1.5b** Generate musical ideas within specific tonalities and meters.  
• **MU:Cr2.1.5a** Demonstrate developed musical ideas for compositions to express intent and the connection to purpose and context  
• **MU:Cr.2.1.5b** Use standard notation to document personal rhythmic and melodic ideas.  
• **MU:Cr.3.1.5a** Evaluate, refine and document revisions to personal music applying teacher or peer feedback and explain rationale for changes  
• **VASOL 5.1.3** Student will read and notate music including using traditional notation to write melodies containing skips and leaps  
• **VASOL 5.1.4** Reading and notating rhythmic patterns of increasing complexity  
• **VASOL 5.3.4** The student will play a variety of pitched and non-pitched instruments alone and with others including, demonstrating proper playing technique.  
• **VASOL 5.6.2** The student will create music by composing a short original composition within specified guidelines |
| Content Objectives | • Plan and refine a recorder composition using specified rhythms, pitch, and meter. |
| Language Objectives | • Reflect upon and describe creative choices or inspiration for the composition, documenting responses on an exit ticket |
| Key Vocabulary | • Compose  
• Refine  
• Western standard notation |
| Materials | • Recorders  
• “Standard Composition worksheet” from the previous lesson  
• Pencils and something for students to write on (if you don’t have desks)  
• Exit ticket, “Refining a Recorder Composition” |
| Procedure | • To prepare students for refining and completing their composition and |
| Motivation | to warm up for creative thinking, hand out recorders and improvise in question and answer using the notes B, A, G, E, D.  
  • The teacher will perform a 4 beat improvised question on the recorder  
  • A student volunteer will perform a 4 beat improvised answer on their recorder. |
| --- | --- |
| Presentation | • Hand back the exit tickets from the previous class so that students can review their next plan of action.  
  • Hand back compositions, pencils and something to write on  
  • Explain that today students will continue to plan and will also begin to refine their compositions so that they are ready to perform it for the class.  
  • Go over the “Grading Checklist” (attached to this lesson) to make sure the class is aware of what they need to do to succeed. This can be written on the board, copied for students or placed on the SMART board. It should be available to make students aware of expectations. |
| Practice | • With the class, identify what refining means and generate a list of ways to creatively refine a composition (suggestions may include: practice different sections of the piece, figure out what it is exactly you like and don’t like about the piece-rhythm/pitch and try different solutions, share your piece with a peer and get their respectful feedback. Making music decisions is just like problem solving!) |
| Application | • Students will work to refine their compositions and prepare for performance. At this time the teacher should be observing student composers and providing any needed feedback on structure of the piece or to discuss inspiration for the composition with students.  
  • A few minutes before class ends, collect the compositions and recorders  
  • Pass out the exit ticket, “Refining a Recorder Composition” and have students respond, encourage them to really think about the creative decisions they made about their composition today. |
| Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation | • Modifications will be based on IEP or 504 and are tailored to student need  
  • The lack of formal structure specifics of the assignment allows students to write music at their ability level. |
| Formative or Summative Assessment | • Observation of student composing  
  • Exit ticket, “Refining a Recorder Composition” (see attached). These will be collected and reviewed to examine what creative decisions students made on their compositions. |
| Home School Connection | • Western standard notation enables you with the ability to document and share your work in a language that other musicians will understand, fostering recreation.  
  • Musicians refine music in similar ways as writers |
Grading Rubric Checklist

_____ Neat, accurate notation
_____ Notes are written accurately
_____ Performance matches notation
_____ Performing with a steady beat

Refining a Recorder Composition

Name: __________

Today you worked on refining your composition. Did you make any changes to your composition? If so, why?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Name: __________

Today you worked on refining your composition. Did you make any changes to your composition? If so, why?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
### Lesson Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Applying Creative Thinking to Western Standard Composition: Presenting a Recorder Composition: Unit 3: Lesson 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enduring Understandings</strong></td>
<td>• Musician’s presentation of creative work is the culmination of a process of creation and communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essential Questions</strong></td>
<td>• When is creative work ready to share?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standards</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>MU:Cr.3.2.5a</strong> Present the final version of personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship and explain connection to expressive intent.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>VASOL 5.1.3</strong> Student will read and notate music including using traditional notation to write melodies containing skips and leaps</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <strong>VASOL: 5.8</strong> The student will exhibit acceptable performance behavior as a participant and/or listener in relation to the context and style of music performed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Content Objectives                       | Present an original recorder composition, written using accurate Western standard notation. |
| Language Objectives                     | Share, through discussion the inspiration for the recorder composition |
| Key Vocabulary                          | • Compose  
|                                           | • Audience etiquette |
| Materials                                | • Teacher computer with internet access for YouTube  
|                                           | • Recorders, one for each student  
|                                           | • Student composition worksheet  
|                                           | • Grading rubric with enough copies to grade each student |

**Procedure:**

**Motivation**

- Present the YouTube video, “Kids Composing Music” by Tina Davidson. It shows two girls performing an original composition [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NhYLyZlyhA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NhYLyZlyhA)
- Once complete, lead a discussion about initial thoughts of the composition.
- Discuss the audience’s role (they were quiet and applauded respectfully).
- Discuss the performers appearance (calm and confident).
| **Presentation** | • Explain that today is a special day where all of the hard work will be shown through the performance of an original recorder composition.  
• Ask students, how do you know when your composition is ready to be performed?  
• Discuss audience performance etiquette (audience focuses attention on performer, they clap politely once the performance is complete, the performer is confident – don’t worry about making mistakes). |
| **Practice** | • Hand out the compositions to each student.  
• Post and review the “Grading Checklist” (see attached) to make sure the class is aware of what they need to do to succeed.  
• Provide students with some time to rehearse their piece. |
| **Application** | • Each student will perform his piece for the class, sharing the inspiration for the composition.  
• Each student composition and performance will be graded using the “Standard Composition Rubric” (see attached). |
| **Plan for Differentiation/ Accommodation / Adaptation** | • Modifications will be based on IEP or 504 and are tailored to student need  
• The lack of formal structure specifics of the assignment allows students to write and perform music at their ability level. |
| **Formative or Summative Assessment** | • Composition performance rubric (teacher will grade each student on the composition writing and the composition performance) |
| **Home School Connection** | • You can compose a song about anything! Look at the world around you and use that as inspiration.  
• The use of Western standard music notation allows a person to recreate an original writing so that it can be performed with accuracy. |
Standard Composition Performance Rubric

Name: ____________

Grading Rubric Checklist

___ Neat, accurate notation
___ Notes are written accurately
___ Performance matches notation
___ Performing with a steady beat

4 checks = Outstanding; 3=Skilled; 2=Progressing; 1=Beginning

Name: ____________

Grading Rubric Checklist

___ Neat, accurate notation
___ Notes are written accurately
___ Performance matches notation
___ Performing with a steady beat

4 checks = Outstanding; 3=Skilled; 2=Progressing; 1=Beginning
References


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Appendix:

Personal and Final Thoughts
I was inspired to undertake this capstone project as a result of a few instances that occurred during my time in the University of Florida’s Master of Music Education program, and in my current teaching position. Prior to this stage in my life, I was a music education major at a Connecticut university and my primary instrument was clarinet. I found connection to many of the articles that discuss comfort level of music teachers on the topic of creative thinking. My undergraduate experience was based on reading notes off of a page, learning to “control” groups of peers and children through conducting and lesson plans and composing or arranging music in standard notation. I left believing that the saying *music is a universal experience* meant that any musician could sit down and *read* the same music. Well, that statement is not what I thought it meant at all. Music is a universal experience that is engaged in by every culture. For example, one does not need to speak the same language as another in order to get up and dance to music. Music is an experience that is listened to, performed and created. To me, this is what general music should be, the right of each and every student to experience the feeling of being a musician regardless of their past experience.

While taking *Creative Thinking in Music*, a course through the University of Florida under the instruction of Dr. Peter Webster, I learned about different types of notation to compose. This became a wonderful door that relieved the pressure of only teaching standard composition, and opened up the notion of differentiation strategies and the ability for me to assess students based on their performance of the measured skills or concepts. I use the word “differentiation” because some students are capable of playing complex rhythms while feeling a sense of beat but do not understand how to notate what they hear.

I have always held the desire of sending my students out of elementary school with the gift of a lifelong love of music. While in my class, I notice students sketching on the back of
their papers when work is complete and it always makes me wonder why music cannot be the same. What I have gained from the graduate degree courses at the University of Florida have enabled me with resources to set students up with that tool kit for lifetime learning. I believe making music needs to be accessible to students of any level. For instance, teaching nonstandard composition is a wonderful creative thinking activity that makes composition accessible to those who do not know how to write music in Western standard notation. Creative activities seem like the perfect fit for building that tool kit because they teach students how to independently construct music.

My situation in Arlington is unique in some ways and common in others. As a county, we do not have a “curriculum” that we follow. We are provided with a pacing guide that suggests activities for each marking period and two resource book series: *Spotlight on Music* (2011) and *Game Plan* (2006). Our unit template is unique to Arlington and uses elements of Understanding by Design. In Virginia, we do not subscribe to Common Core and rely most heavily on our state learning standards the Virginia Standards of Learning. The socioeconomics of the school I teach at are middle to upper class, it is a neighborhood school where one parent is usually a homemaker. The PTA is thriving and has a large budget to support technological endeavors including easy access to iPads, laptops and SMART Boards. While I am fortunate to have a thriving community around the school, I feel we are at a loss for guidance at times with a lack of curriculum and this is another goal for this capstone project: to begin establishing a Kindergarten through fifth grade curriculum.