

Lesson 2 - Improvisation and Lyrical Impact

Objectives & Assessments:

Behavioral: At the end of the day, students in the 8th grade general music class will be able to get comfortable improvising through the use of improv games and circles songs with a success rate of 70%.

Formative Assessment: After the activities are over, the teacher will ask the students if they felt really good about improvising after the lesson (thumbs up), if they need some help (thumbs middle), and if they are very lost and need a lot of help (thumbs down)

Cognitive: At the end of the day, students will apply their understanding of lyrical impact to a song of their choice, writing a paragraph of two on what they think about the song chosen.

Formative Assessment: The teacher will collect each of the students' papers that has their song of choice with their paragraph on it. If it shows understanding of what the song means, how the text can be used to tell the story, and purpose for existing, that is a passing grade.

Experiential: Students will watch a scene from the movie *Pitch Perfect* where they will be introduced to the concept of riff offs, which will segway into the idea of improvisation and lyrical importance.

Constructivist: By the end of the day, students will read lyrics to popular pop songs that are covered by a cappella. Students will be asked to share with a partner what they think the song is about, the reason why the song was made, etc.

Doorway In:

<https://youtu.be/jI6jGlQhTU4?t=25>

Students will begin the lesson by watching and listening *Pitch Perfect's* riff off. A riff off is where groups of singers improvise songs on the spot that fit within a certain category. During the video, the teacher will ask the students to listen through the first time and just enjoy. The second viewing will be focused on listening for the way that they improvise on the backup vocals. Understanding that it's not actually improvised, I want to make the point that the backup vocals and the song choice are that of improv.

Procedure:

1	The students will stand in a circle with the teacher in the middle. The teacher will explain the concept of the first improv game that they will play. The teacher will explain the 4 main parts of all of these improv games. The Motor , which is a repeating musical pattern that leaves space and drives the song forward. The Interlock , which is its own independent melody, filling the space left by the Motor. The Contrast , which is a repeating melodic phrase that is typically longer than the Motor and Interlock, and it can't start on Do, Mi, or Sol. Fourth, other harmonic lines that add to the texture. When in the circle, the teacher will put the students in three groups. Each group will be assigned a part of the	5 mins - 8 mins
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	texture. They will each be giving a piece of paper that has a measure of their part. They will first sing that as their part, to get into the groove of what improv games sound like. Students will be encouraged to listen to how the parts interact with each other.	
Notes:		
2	After they have successfully sung a part given to them, the group will still sing the part assigned to them, but they will not be given a specific melody to sing. In other words, they will have to create their own melody. This gives them the opportunity to grow their independence and their musicality.	5 mins - 8 mins
Notes: <i>The teacher must remind them of the roles of each part, and make sure they stay on track on that aspect. Other than that, be very flexible, allow them to be the creator of what the texture sounds like.</i>		
3	After the group has had a good amount of work, the teacher will ask if any individual students want to come up and demonstrate their part. All other students will sit and the interested students will stand, improvising for their classmates.	3 mins - 5 mins
Notes:		
4	We'll switch gears to lyrical impact. The teacher will invite the students back to their seats where they will listen to two examples of the same song. The students will listen to <i>She Used To Be Mine</i> , originally by Sara Bareilles, and recorded a cappella version by Upper Structure. The students will be given a piece of paper before the pieces begin to list qualities of each performance. After both of the recordings, the students will list things that they heard as being ubiquitous in both recordings. After that, they will have time to talk to the people next to them and compare and contrast their lists.	6 mins - 8 mins
Notes:		