

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

This Curriculum Guide is designed to prepare, reinforce, and extend learning concepts and ideas from the MPR Class Notes video *Rests: Sometimes Music is Silence*.

The information and activities in the guide are intended to make music come alive, as well as to align with Minnesota Standards in Music Education. We hope you will personalize, modify, or adjust content to meet the needs of your unique classroom.

Rests: Sometimes Music is Silence is packed full of musical concepts and ideas. This curriculum does not fully explore every element included in the video, but rather focuses on a few key areas.

PREPARING TO WATCH THE VIDEO

Just as literacy teachers use pre-reading strategies, music teachers can use pre-listening/pre-watching strategies. This helps students create a mental framework to organize new ideas, relate new content to prior knowledge, and make connections. What you bring to a listening experience will affect what you hear and take away from that experience.

1. Listen to a wide variety of music. Preface your listening with a few remarks about how all music has a combination of sounds and silence. Together with students, observe and comment on that combination of sounds/silence. Here are a few good examples to use for this purpose:

- a. The first four minutes or so of *Symphony No. 38 in D Major, K. 504*, Wolfgang Mozart Amadeus Mozart.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ot3g41rHFqU>

If you watch the YouTube video listed above, you will see the score as you listen to the music which will help students see the rest symbols while they *hear* the silences in the music.

- b. Select movements from *Musical Toys*, Sofia Gubaidulina. Again, this YouTube clip shows the score so students make the connection between *seeing* rest symbols and *hearing* them.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64H6RRZ1hBg>

- c. The first few minutes of *Waltz Fantasy*, Mikhail Glinka. If you are projecting so students can see the score, start to ask questions while listening. For example, follow along with notation as the music plays and ask which kind of rest is happening now, or if students know clefs, ask them to identify the clef where they see a rest.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6g3xwhh99-c>

2. Preview concepts, symbols, and vocabulary contained in the video.

- a. Score
- b. Notes
- c. Time signature (4/4)
- d. Terms and symbols for note/rest values
 - i. Whole note/whole rest
 - ii. Half note/half rest
 - iii. Quarter note/quarter rest
 - iv. Eighth note/eighth rest

REINFORCE IDEAS AND CONCEPTS FROM THE VIDEO THROUGH ACTIVE LEARNING

The following experiential activities are designed to support student comprehension of ideas presented in the *Rests* video. Some activities are geared for younger students, others are geared for older students or those who have a more sophisticated understanding of music literacy. Select and modify activities according to the needs of your students.

1. Sing *Bingo*. Clearly, this activity is most appropriate for the younger set, and early elementary students might even consider this song to be “too young” for them. However, adding claps in the place of previously sung words gives students a strong sense of the “space” a rest occupies in a song or piece of music.

Adding a visual accompaniment with quarter rest symbols is especially effective and helps make the activity more age-appropriate.

There was a farmer who had a dog and Bingo was his name-o,

B – I – N – G – O

 **I – N – G – O**

 **N – G – O**

And so on. Point along with the students' singing so that their eyes are tracking with what they are singing and they are in effect "reading" the rests.

Extend this by substituting quarter and eighth notes one at a time for the letter names in *Bingo*.



2. Identify symbols and terms through visual matching.

MATCH EACH NOTE WITH ITS EQUIVALENT REST.

The exercise consists of two columns of musical staves. The left column contains four notes: a whole note on the second line, a quarter note on the second line, a quarter note on the second space, and an eighth note on the second space. The right column contains four rests: a whole rest on the second line, a quarter rest on the second line, a quarter rest on the second space, and an eighth rest on the second space.

3. Play "Circle the Rest." Find an excerpt of a score or any notated music and ask students to circle every rest they see. Color code to make sure students can accurately identify each kind of rest.

Here's a short excerpt from *Symphony No.5*,
Ludwig van Beethoven.

Quarter Rests- blue

Half Rests- red

Presto
Violins

362

fp

Bass instruments

4. Play “Listen and Signal.”

“The Cuckoo in the Depth of the Woods”, from Camille Saint-Saëns’s *Carnival of the Animals*, is a great piece for cultivating active listening skills. We hear the “cuckoo” (played by the clarinet) in a semi-regular pattern, but occasionally, that cuckoo will rest longer than we think. Listen together with students and ask them to raise their hand each time they hear the cuckoo.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jUsX9JwoI0>

5. Play “Poison.”

Sing a familiar classroom song. After singing it completely, choose a word to be “Poison,” meaning that singers must be silent on that particular word. Add “poison” words and see how far you can get. This develops impulse control and the inner listening skills required to successfully play rests. Here’s an example with a very simple song. Use your own classroom songs that students know well. The more “automatic” the singing is for students, the harder the game.

*Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb.
Mary had a little lamb, whose fleece was white as snow.*

First “poison” word: lamb.

*Mary had a little -----, little -----, little -----.
Mary had a little -----, whose fleece was white as snow.*

Second poison word: “had”

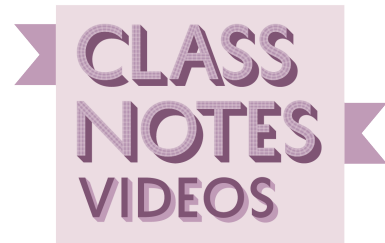
*Mary ---- a little -----, little -----, little -----.
Mary ---- a little -----, whose fleece was white as snow.*

And so on.

EXTEND LEARNING WITH PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Designed for older or more advanced students, this activity integrates all concepts from the *Rests* video.

1. Ask students to compose a short melody for an instrument they play or for the voice. Set parameters about what must be included in the composition. Vary the parameters according to the students’ level of proficiency. A few ideas to help set parameters and/or meet specific standards.
 - a. Require students to utilize all four kinds of rests discussed the *Rests* video.
 - b. Make a rule about the frequency of rests. For example, require students to use at least one rest per measure, or perhaps ask them to use only one rest in the entire composition.
 - c. If you are studying key signatures, require students to write in a particular key, or specify Major or minor modes.
 - d. Give specific guidelines for time signature, perhaps specifying mixed meter, 5/4, or other complex meters.
 - e. If you are studying or playing a piece by a certain composer, ask that students write in that style.
 - f. Require students to use technology to notate their finished product.



COMPANION VIDEOS AND OTHER CLASS NOTES VIDEOS

A number of other Class Notes videos address musical notation and related musical content.

A Look Inside the Score reviews musical symbols related to rests, such as notes, clefs, staves, dynamic markings, and instrumentation.

<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2014/09/23/class-notes-whats-in-a-score>

Rhythm: How Notes and Beats Go Together explains how the various lengths and values of notes interact with beats to create rhythm. Teachers may compare the note values it covers with those of rests in *Sometimes Music Is Silence*.

<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2014/08/26/class-notes-how-notes-and-beats-go-together->

To view all the other available Class Notes videos with related curricula, [go here](#).

STANDARDS

The activities in this Teachers Guide directly and indirectly include Minnesota Standards in Music Education.

The activities in “Preparing to watch the video” and “extend Learning with Projects and Activities” most directly cover the following standards:

1. K – 3. 1. Artistic Foundations. 2. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable. Music. 0.1.2.3.1. Read and notate music using a system of notation such as solfege, numbers or symbols.
2. Grades 4 – 5. 1. Artistic Foundations. 2. Demonstrate knowledge and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable. Music. 4.1.2.3.1. Read and notate music using standard notation such as quarter, half and eighth notes and rests, the lines and spaces of the treble clef, and time signatures.

Depending on the specific parameters a teacher selects for the composition project, that project may cover any of the benchmarks of the 9-12 music standards.



This project is made possible
in part by the Minnesota
Legacy Amendment's Arts and
Cultural Heritage Fund.