WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

This Curriculum Guide is designed to prepare, reinforce, and extend learning concepts and ideas from the MPR Class Notes Video *The Musical Round: A Roundabout Tale*.

The information and activities in this guide are intended to make music come alive and 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.

In this curriculum, you will find a number of activities both directly and indirectly related to content from *The Musical Round: A Roundabout Tale*.

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 within which to organize new ideas, to relate new content to prior knowledge, and to make connections. What you bring to a listening experience will affect what you hear and take away from that experience.

In the video, Karl and Alison set out to define a musical round—a term many of us know, but one that is surprisingly challenging to articulate clearly. The goal is that students will understand how fundamental concepts of music—such as melody, harmony, and polyphony—occur and function within a round.

1. Preview some important vocabulary and concepts, especially melody, harmony, and polyphony. It’s okay if these are new words for your students—the video will explain and define them.

2. Sing a song in unison; then sing a simple round; and finally, sing a partner song. Ask students to compare and contrast the similarities and differences among them. Use a chart or grid to structure the activity. Here’s an example of what a finished grid might look like:

   (continue to next page)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>unison</th>
<th>simple round</th>
<th>partner song</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has a melody...</td>
<td>Has an <em>overlapping</em> melody...</td>
<td>Has two different melodies, also <em>overlapping</em>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone starts and stops at the same time.</td>
<td>Players/singers begin and end at various times.</td>
<td>Everyone usually starts and stops at about the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no harmony.</td>
<td>Overlapping melodies can create harmony.</td>
<td>Overlapping melodies can create harmony.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once a comparison chart is created, you can use color coding to get a visual representation of the similarities and differences across the forms. The same color indicates the same or very similar characteristics across forms; different colors indicate a different quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unison</th>
<th>simple round</th>
<th>partner song</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has a single melody line</td>
<td>Has a single melody line that overlaps</td>
<td>Two different melodies, also overlapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone starts and stops at the same time.</td>
<td>Players/singers begin and end at various times.</td>
<td>Everyone usually starts and stops at about the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no harmony.</td>
<td>Overlapping melodies can create harmony.</td>
<td>Overlapping melodies can create harmony.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feel free to add categories to the chart. Other additions might include “three-part round” or “additional multi-voice pieces.”
REINFORCE IDEAS AND CONCEPTS FROM THE VIDEO THROUGH ACTIVE LEARNING

1. After watching *The Musical Round: A Roundabout Tale*, revisit activities #1 and #2 listed above. Discuss how your definitions and analyses change as a result of watching the video. You may try filling out your comparison chart again, this time informed by the vocabulary and ideas in the video.

2. Sing *I Love Puppies!* [Music is attached.]

3. After watching the video, ask students to define these four words: round, melody, harmony, and polyphony. If they struggle, cue up the video again and be prepared to freeze frame when those definitions come up. Go over them a few times, using classroom material from previous lessons to help illustrate and flesh out each definition if possible.

4. Try a few familiar classroom songs that you usually sing in unison and see if they work as rounds. Be sure to plan in advance and have a few that you know will work, and a few that you know won't. Students’ discovery of what will and work will help deepen their own understanding.

EXTEND LEARNING WITH PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Notate a simple round, or ask students to do it if they can read simple melodies on the staff. Even if students can’t reliably read notes on the staff, seeing the staggered entrances of each melodic line is great visual reinforcement for the idea that melodies overlap. Circle “vertical” alignment of notes that create harmony or a chord to reinforce the harmonic function of a round. This is a great place to use that *I Love Puppies* music again.

2. Play “FREEZE.” Select a round that students have mastered and sing it. Tell students that while singing, you are going to press a giant “pause” button on your invisible, magic remote control. When you do this, they are supposed to freeze with
their bodies and voices, holding onto the “freeze note.” If you do this at strategic spots, students will be “frozen” in a spot that creates harmony, allowing them to hear and experience this concept directly.

3. Obviously, rounds do not need to be sung. If you have access to Orff or classroom instruments, try an instrumental round or partner song.

4. Compose your own! Just like Karl and Alison do at the end of the video, students can create their own rounds, or at least write new lyrics to existing melodies that work well as rounds.

Here is a link to a good list of rounds:

http://bethsmusicnotes.blogspot.com/2012/12/rounds.html

And this site has a number of ideas for both vocal warm ups and rounds:


RELATED CLASS NOTES VIDEOS AND CURRICULA

Karl, the raccoon puppet featured in this video, also appears in the video What’s in a Title? found here: http://www.classicalmpr.org/story/2014/09/19/class-notes-whats-in-a-title.

Rounds — and the concepts of melody, harmony, and polyphony they help students understand — can be learned by ear or (once skills are acquired) with the help of printed music, such as the attached score. The Class Notes Video A Look Inside the Score supports students’ grasp of the latter approach by giving them some sense of how a score can be expressed as written music. The video can be played through the first time, then replayed and stopped at certain points a second or third time to explain or highlight particular concepts. A Look Inside the Score is found here:

STANDARDS

The activities in this guide address a number of standards, especially:

1. Grade K – 3 and grades 4 – 5. 1. Artistic Foundations. 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the arts area. Music. 0.1.1.3.1. Identify the elements of music including melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tone color, texture, form and their related concepts.

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classicalMPR Music for learning.