

# BAROQUE, OR NOT BAROQUE?

## LESSON/ACTIVITY PLAN

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will correctly identify world events that happened during the Baroque era.
2. Students will recognize key features of Baroque music through listening.
3. Students will use correct vocabulary to identify key features of Baroque music, especially “polyphony”, “ornaments”, and instruments such as the harpsichord.

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Remind students that the Baroque era occurred between the years 1600 and 1750. Introduce or review some key features, such as: *polyphony*, *ornaments*, and *unique instruments*. Give aural examples of each feature to get the sound in students’ ears.

Here are a few links to good examples that illustrate each concept:

The Class Notes video [Freeing Music: Improvisation](#) includes great examples of ornamentation performed on authentic Baroque instruments.

Polyphony: A [tutorial](#) with two very short listening examples that compare homophonic and polyphonic textures.

The Class Notes video [The Musical Round: A Roundabout Tale](#) explains how sung rounds create polyphony.

Ornaments: Listen to this [clip](#) and identify ornamentation in the melodic line.

Both of the ornamentation examples above are also good examples of Baroque instrumentation. For additional examples, try this [video](#) of some Bach *Cello Suites* played on the Baroque cello. The performer gives a few interesting comments beforehand. If you skip around, you will also hear her talk a little about the differences between the Baroque cello and modern cello.

Here is some [Scarlatti](#) played on the harpsichord.



2. Once students' ears acclimate to the sounds of the Baroque period, choose two contestants to come forward, game show-style.
3. Play a short clip of music and contestants must ring a buzzer (or a bell, or play some finger cymbals, or a triangle) and guess either "Baroque" if they think it comes from that time period, or "not Baroque" if they think it comes from any other time period. In order to reinforce concepts, start with some easy, obvious examples, working toward more subtle (and difficult) examples.
4. Reinforce knowledge or world events and historical context by repeating the same game using trivia and facts. For example, a few questions might be:
  - a. World War I broke out in Europe. (Answer: not Baroque.)
  - b. The adding machine was invented. (Answer: Baroque.)



**STANDARDS:**

These activities incorporate several aspects of the Minnesota Standards the Arts, especially:

for

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

1. Grades 4-5. Artistic Foundations.
  1. Demonstrate

- knowledge of the foundations of the arts area. Music. 4.1.1.3.1. Describe the elements of music including melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tone color, texture, for and their related concepts. 4.1.1.3.3. Identify the characteristics of a variety of genres and musical styles such as march, taiko, mariachi and classical.
2. Grades 4 – 5. Artistic Foundations.
    3. Demonstrate understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts that influence the arts area. Music. 4.1.3.3.1. Describe the cultural and historical traditions of music including the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.