

Collaborative Composition in 6/8

For upper level – grades 4-6

Objective: Students will be able to apply their knowledge of simple rhythms in 6/8 meter by creating their own compositions

Materials needed

For each pair of students in your class they will need:

- one dice
- A set of laminated visuals: 6 different prepared measures – (one for each side of a dice). Each one should be labeled with a 1-6 to correspond with a number on the dice.

Extended melodic activity for each pair:

- Recorders or Mallet Instruments
- A dry erase marker

Procedure

Before you start the game

1. Before class, you need to create 6 different measures in 6/8 time using simple rhythms students are familiar with. You can use flash cards if you already have them, or you can create new ones. Come up with a theme in order to say them using words (fruits, colors, etc).
2. Say and clap each rhythm as a class so you have reviewed students are familiar with the rhythms.
3. Then you have prepared your students to play the game and create their rhythmic compositions.

Instructions for the game

1. You will pair students up for this composition activity.

2. A roll of the dice corresponds to a matching measure. Each measure has a different rhythmic notation in 6/8.
3. Each pair of students will have a stack of the 6 prepared measures corresponding to each side of the dice.
4. Students will ultimately create a rhythmic composition of 4 measures (more or less, depending on their ability level and how long you want the game to go on)
5. Student A rolls the dice first. If they roll a 2, for example, their first measure will be the prepared measure that corresponds to #2. Then student B will roll for measure 2, and so forth until they have 4 measures (or however many you want them to do). They should line up their rhythm cards next to each other.
6. Once they have all of their measures, they will practice clapping and saying the rhythms all together using the themed words. You can have them use rhythmic syllables if you are to that point.
7. Ultimately each group needs to be prepared to present their rhythms to the class by clapping and saying either the words or rhythmic syllables.
8. *If you want to come back to this activity on a different day so that they can create melodies with their compositions, you' ll need to record the order of numbers for each pair so they can quickly get their rhythms in that order the next day.

If time (or for another day)

9. Students can use either recorders or mallet instruments to choose their own pitches based on D pentatonic scale. As they find pitches they like, have them write them in on the laminated cards using a dry erase marker
10. They can then practice them in pairs.
11. Then they will each present them to the class by playing their composition together as a pair.

12.If extra time, you can incorporate a bordun on a mallet instrument into one or some of the compositions and present them to the class.