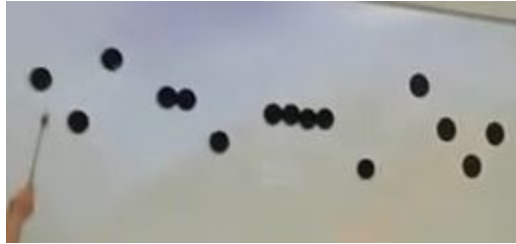


# It's All About the Dots: Literacy without the Literacy



## I Can Statement:

Students will be able to use dots to follow, create, and improvise their own musical ideas.

## Overview:

This lesson was born out of needing to find a way to ease students into the idea of creating their own songs and melodies in the classroom without it being a “create this---go!” kind of moment. Inspired by Dr. Robert Amchin and his YouTube page. For vocal exploration and beginning literacy, I would use created black dots on the board and have the students follow with their voice. I would start this with many SM and SML patterns before branching out into pentatonic land. We would then transfer this over to pitched instruments. Once given multiple opportunities to sing, move, and play the dots (body percussion and other non-pitched percussion) students were given certain parameters to use in their creations. Final projects were performed on xylophones and/or sung. (Accommodation: if someone felt uncomfortable sharing, they could show me one on one after class. I had two students who did this.)

## Pacing:

This lesson was done over 2 class periods a week (for about 5-8 minutes each) over a 5 week period.

## **Materials:**

I gave students their own blank sheet and dots for their creation period (easier to see than on my carpet.) They would, for the final project, sit down with a pitched-percussion instruments (i.e. a xylophone) and create their melodies. We would spread out around the room and discuss “finger-play” BEFORE you use your mallets.

## **Lesson:**

- 1.) Students follow with vocal “ooo” sounds to the dot patterns on the board (Vocal Exploration)
- 2.) Students begin to hear and follow SM patterns (then SML) patterns (Vocal Exploration)
- 3.) Students (a two or three; one at a time) come up and create their own SML patterns on the board for the class to follow (Vocal Exploration) Option: we created a simple melody that we turned into an ostinato. Scarves and movement opportunities were had!
- 4.) Students then sat at a xylophone and were given SM and SML notes to play on the xylophone. (Older grades could do Do Pentatonic)
- 5.) Students were then given their own dots and a white (lamentated) card page to create their own SM, SML, or Do Pentatonic vocal melodies. Students were given a friend (partner) to help create. Note: there was no staff, simply a white page with black dots (simulating my white board) for them to use and create.
- 6.) Students were asked to share (student choice) their melodies. (Not required)
- 7.) Students then would then be asked to (with a partner) create something similar to their pattern they did and transfer it to a xylophone
- 8.) Partner now taken away, if wanted (student choice) and the students would then practice their own melodies to be ready for an informance. Option: some students chose to sing their patterns as well as play!