

# Exploring Our Roots, Expanding our Future

## Volume 1: Lesson 4

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### INSTRUCTIONAL: LESSON FOUR

#### Introduction

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Since most of the elements in this particular part of the lesson have already been introduced, most of the time will be devoted to students constructing possibilities for the final form of the piece. To aid this, prepare cards that designate the movement, the speech, the unpitched percussion compositions and the barest instrument piece. Make a copy of a card that designates some interlude time for an instrument to play the steady beat as transition between sections of the composition. Several copies of each type of card will be needed:

Wish movements	Barred instrument melody and parts	Tea flavor unpitched percussion composition	Original poem spoken	8 beats on the bass xylophone
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#### Exploration

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In three to four small groups, invite children to arrange the cards into a final form that includes all the parts created. These constructions are experiments that will be performed by the entire class. Make sure the students think about the transition times needed to perform all the parts. Everyone does not have to perform in every aspect. Yet, every child should be performing at least once during the entire piece. The numerous roles children take on should suit the comfort and musicianship of the individual child, while supporting the overall performance of the group.

Invite each group to post its form on the white board and have the class perform. Each reading of the form may need several performances. After each performance, invite the students to offer suggestions about the form and its accessibility. During these conversations, encourage all students (as opposed to each individual group) to talk about the form.

Example:

Isabella: Having two cards for 8 beats of transition, let the ensemble have time to prepare for the melody.

As opposed to:

Isabella: Jack's order was hard to play.

From these conversations, groups will have information to rearrange any problematic areas of their scores. With this second draft, performances and readings of the map should be played again.

#### Culminating Aesthetic Moment

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Invite the class to select one of the scores to perform. Have the students create a rubric before making the selection of the form. The form should be based on effective music making rather than a peer contest of popularity. A rubric will aid in this process. Again the rubric can be scaled one to five:

*Included less than two parts*  
1                      2

*Included three-four parts*  
3                      4

*Included all parts*  
5

*The form was not playable*  
1                      2

*The form was somewhat playable*  
3                      4

*The form was easily playable*  
5

When the form is selected, practice playing several times. Invite teachers and students from your school to hear the children play the piece. Videotaping is a nice way to share the performance with a larger audience. The video can also be played for the students as they assess their performances.

### **Reflection for Learning**

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In this process for learning, children have been involved in creating compositions that involve movement, rhythm, and melody. This process has allowed students to identify, construct, perform, and read many elements of music. In retrospect, engage students about their thinking during this process. This will involve the students in metacognition (students examining their thought processes). This can be done by asking questions after the final performance:

What was the easiest part of the piece to perform?

Why was that easy?

What was the most difficult part?

Why was it difficult?

What did you do as a group to solve this difficult situation?

If other students were composing a piece like this, what advice would you give them?

If the students are performing for others, encourage the audience to ask questions about the performance. This dialogue will provide for a rich and authentic experience for learning.

### **Assessment**

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At the end of large compositions, it is critical to examine what students know. This can be done fairly easily—especially if assessment and dialogue have been woven into the overall process of teaching and learning. Rolling out a very large piece of paper and assigning three guiding questions will promote myriad materials from which you can draw. Ask the following questions and have the students write their answers:

What do you know about the music of this piece?

How did composing this piece make you feel?

What questions do you have about your composition?

From these questions, you can assess students' knowledge as a group, their social development in collaboration, and their meta-thinking about the construction and fundamentals of music.

## Vocabulary

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<b>Broken Bordun:</b>	a form of drone accompaniment in which the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> tones of the scale sound separately with a repeated rhythmic ostinato. The tonic note of a bordun always sounds below the lowest note of the melody it accompanies and sounds on the metric accents.
<b>Coda:</b>	a relatively independent passage at the end of a composition, introduced to bring it to a satisfactory close.
<b>Drone Bass:</b>	a sustained single harmony, with or without rhythmic interest.
<b>Echo Imitation:</b>	a form of imitation in which one part follows another after the first part has paused or stopped.
<b>Metacognition:</b>	awareness and understanding of one's thinking and cognitive processes; thinking about thinking.
<b>Ostinati:</b>	constantly recurring melodic or rhythmic fragments.
<b>Pentatonic:</b>	a pitch set consisting of five tones, frequently with no half steps; in the Orff-Schulwerk, pentatonic scales consist of the tones do, re, mi, sol, and la with any of them functioning as the tonic.
<b>Rhythm:</b>	the pattern of regular or irregular pulses caused in music by the occurrence of strong and weak melodic and harmonic beats.
<b>Rondo:</b>	a musical composition built on alternating a principal recurring theme and contrasting episodes.
<b>Simultaneous Imitation:</b>	the first stage of learning described in Orff-Schulwerk; teacher-directed experiences in speech, song, movement, or instrument playing that are copied or duplicated by the students.
<b>Tonic:</b>	the first degree of a musical scale; the keynote.
<b>Unpitched Percussion:</b>	percussion instruments that are not tuned and serve no melodic or harmonic function.