

The Long Game: Growing from Play

Teachers often fall into the pitfall of learning new pieces at each grade level to teach new concepts. Taking a familiar piece and spiraling it from primary to advanced levels gives students a foundation to build upon. Below is how we took one piece and used it to meet multiple objectives in the primary, intermediate, and advanced levels. All activities are built as independent lessons within each level. It is not our intent for anyone to use all components listed below, but to give suggestions on how one piece can be used multiple ways.

Halloween Night

Christopher Giles

5

5

I. Primary Level- Exploration Through Play

A. Melody Through Movement

1. Move students into a scattered formation.
2. Play an eight beat pulse on a hand drum with a mallet while the students travel through space. Play an additional eight beat pulse on the rim of the drum with a mallet while the students travel back to their original spot

3. Combine both phrases with students traveling through space. Practice a few repetitions.
4. Brainstorm ideas for a Halloween Costume and write them on a board. Ask students to pick one and show what they would look like if they were wearing their costume.
5. Practice walking the phrase lengths in costume as if they were walking away from their “home” and returning while playing any melodic instrument. Encourage the students to try on different costumes.
6. Repeat this process while singing the melody.
7. Have the students sing along with you.

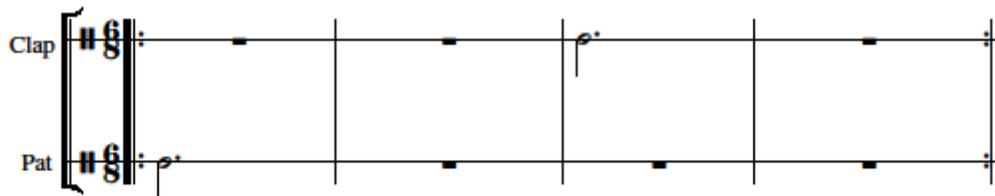
TEACHER TIP: Have the students tell you which words they remember and have them be responsible for singing that much of the song while you are in charge of singing the rest. This gives the class a challenge and instills ownership in the song.

B. Guessing Game

1. Move students into a circle formation and practice singing the song while walking the phrase length around the circle. Remember to turn around and come back to your “home” by the end of the song. Ask the students to freeze in their character’s shape on the word “night”.
2. Choose one student who is walking in character and freezes at the end to come into the middle of the circle. The class gets two chances to guess what costume they are wearing. The chosen student gets to select the next person to be in the center.

C. Chase Game

1. Have class imitate you performing the following body percussion while singing the song.



2. Transfer the pattern to two metallic untuned percussion with the lowest sound occurring on the pat and the highest sound on the clap.
3. Have the class sit in a circle with the two instrument players in the middle.
4. Choose a student to travel around the circle in their costume while the class sings. On the word “night”, the student taps the person sitting in front of them who chases them around the circle one time. After each round the two runners move to the middle of the circle and take over the instrument parts.

II. Intermediate Level- Part Work

A. Speech Component

1. Review or teach the song. Continue to use the traveling.
2. Speak the bass xylophone text while the class sings the song. When students are successful, divide them into two groups and have half perform the song while the other half speaks the BX text. Switch so they are able to perform both parts.

The image shows a musical score for the song "Trick or Treat" in 6/8 time, key of G major. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system has a Voice staff and a Bass Xylophone staff. The second system has a Voice staff and a BX staff. The lyrics are: "Walk-ing down the dark - ened street ring - ing door bells, 'trick - or treat.' There's I want can - dy now, please put it in my bag! sca - ry crea - tures oh what a sight, on this chil - ly Hal - lo - ween night! I want can dy now, please put it in my bag!"

TEACHER TIP: You do not need to tell the students everything you are doing when preparing parts. Begin speaking the text and see if they can hold the song on their own. If they make mistakes you can have the conversation about what you were doing and how they can be better prepared to succeed. Make everything a challenge.

3. Have the half that is responsible for the BX part take a trick-or-treat bag and scatter throughout the room where they can perform their text while stationary. Have the other half be in charge of traveling in costume while singing the song.
4. Perform both parts together. Traveling singers will pair up with a bag holder by the end of the song and trade jobs. While trading jobs, repeat the following text four times as an interlude.

The image shows a musical score for an interlude in 6/8 time, key of G major. It consists of a single staff labeled "Voice". The lyrics are: "Let's trick or treat, It's Hal - lo - ween!"

B. Movement Component

1. Review or teach the song without the traveling.
2. Speak the bass xylophone text while the class sings the song. When students are successful, divide them into two groups and have half perform the song while the other half speaks the BX text. Switch so they are able to perform both parts.
3. Split into small groups of three or four students and choreograph a four beat phrase using movements from Halloween characters. Have the students practice this a few times while you accompany the pulse on a hand drum.
4. Students choreograph an additional four beats of contrasting material. Label this as an [a b] structure on the board and practice putting all eight beats together.
5. As a class, listen to the placement of the low and high sound cues. Ask each group to incorporate some type of body facing change on the low cue and a level change on the high cue.
6. Extend the structure to [a b a b] and practice as a group.
7. Have each group share their choreography while the other groups sing the song. Accompany each group on the BX to support their movement. Use the transitional text in between each performance so groups have time to stand up and get ready.

B. Instrumental Component

1. Review or teach the song without the traveling.
2. Speak the bass xylophone text while the class sings the song. When students are successful, divide them into two groups and have half perform the song while the other half speaks the BX text. Switch so they are able to perform both parts.
3. Use a visual to isolate the melodic sequence of the BX part. Play the black boxes on E1 and E2 while speaking the remaining text. Add the orange boxes on B1. Isolate the change in every fourth measure and change the box color to yellow. Play through the entire BX part with the changed E1 ending.

Bass Xylophone

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Bass Xylophone. The top staff has four measures with lyrics: "I want", "can - dy now, please", "put it", and "in my bag!". The bottom staff has the same lyrics. Colored boxes highlight specific measures: black boxes around the first and third measures of both staves; orange boxes around the second and fourth measures of both staves; and a yellow box around the fourth measure of the bottom staff.

4. Half the class sings while half the class plays. Switch and repeat.
5. Review the sound cues on untuned percussion. Choose a few students to play these parts.
6. Play the interlude on an alto xylophone while students change instruments and switch parts.

III. Advanced Level- Composing Over an Elemental Structure

A. Composing with Cards

1. Review the song.
2. Divide the class into groups of three to five students and give each group a packet of candy cards and a compositional grid sheet.
3. Each group chooses two cards for both the [a] and [b] phrases and places them on the compositional grid. Repeat the assigned cards to create an overall [a b a b] form.
4. Practice speaking the composition with a repeat. When successful, notate the rhythm from the cards on to the compositional grid sheet.
5. Perform a grand rondo with the [A] section being the song and the group compositions as contrasting sections.

TEACHER TIP: Provide a challenge to groups that require it by offering more choice. Groups can create their own elemental structure that does not follow the [a b a b] of the song. Groups that finish early could also add body percussion or movement choreography to their composition.

EXTENSION POSSIBILITIES: Using La based G-pentatonic (DE GAB) assign one pitch per block and transfer your melody to either a barred instrument or a recorder.

Additional challenge can be added, when needed, by using more than one pitch in a block

B. Recorder Improvisation

1. Review the song to prepare the following activity.
2. Circle up and have each person say their favorite candy out loud. See if they can naturally speak their candy one time as you bounce and catch a playground ball at the speed of the pulse.
3. Students choose a second candy and alternate between the two while the teacher bounces the playground ball.

Musical notation for two triangles. Triangle 1 has a melody: quarter note (red), eighth note (li), eighth note (co), quarter note (rice), quarter note (gum), quarter note (gum). Triangle 2 has a simple accompaniment: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note.

4. Pair up students with a partner and have them share their two candies. Combine them into an eight beat phrase. Practice speaking them together while the teacher bounces the ball. Add a repeat to the end to create an overall [a b a b] form.
5. Review known notes found in La based G-Pentatonic (DE GAB). Have the students practice playing their pattern on each individual pitch from the scale. (all on letter B... all on letter A... all on letter G etc.)

TEACHER TIP: You do not have to use all pitches from the scale in improvisation lessons. Use whatever pitches you have already covered in class.

6. Pick two known notes. Improvise a melody on the set rhythms using these two notes. Repeat with various combinations of pitches.
7. Pick three known notes and repeat the process.
8. Use all known notes. Encourage repetition and simplicity. Improvisations should be predictable enough for someone to be able to sing back the melody they hear.
9. Share individual group improvisations.

We hope you have gained insight on how to take one piece and stretch it to meet the needs of your students. You do not always have to find new material for each grade level, but build upon the foundation of something familiar you have already established.