

GRADES 4 and 5 ARTS EDUCATION MUSIC: New Rhythms

Summary of Learning Opportunity

In this activity, students explored rhythm in a music class. They were challenged to create an alternate rhythm for a song of their choice. Students had previously learned about types of notes and rests in music. The teacher also drew parallels to learning about fractions. Students recorded the notes and lyrics for the new rhythm of their chosen song, making sure that each syllable was represented by a beat, and that the beats per measure match the time signature. This activity engaged students in collaborative play and inquiry, while providing practice with rhythm and musical notation and in numerate critical thinking.

Arts Education
Grades 4 and 5

Learning Standards

- Connect knowledge and skills from other areas of learning in planning, creating, interpreting and analyzing works of art
- Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation and purposeful play
- Adapt learned skills, understandings and processes for use in new contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Rhythm
- Notation to represents sounds, ideas, elements

Numeracy Connections

Instruction and Assessment

Competencies Developed, Practiced and/or Assessed

NUMERACY: Interprets—
Understands the real-world
problem

1. Students learn about elements of musical notation such as time signature, measures and notes and rests. Students can clap/tap the rhythm while they listen to a song. The teacher highlights the connection between beats and syllables in lyrics. The teacher also highlights and connects mathematical concepts (e.g., fractions: $\frac{3}{4}$ time means 3 quarter notes per measure).

Connect knowledge and skills from other areas of learning in planning, creating, interpreting and analyzing works of art

NUMERACY: Solves—
Solves the mathematical
problem

2. Students are challenged to choose a song and create a different rhythm for the same lyrics and time signature, using a variety of rhythm combinations.

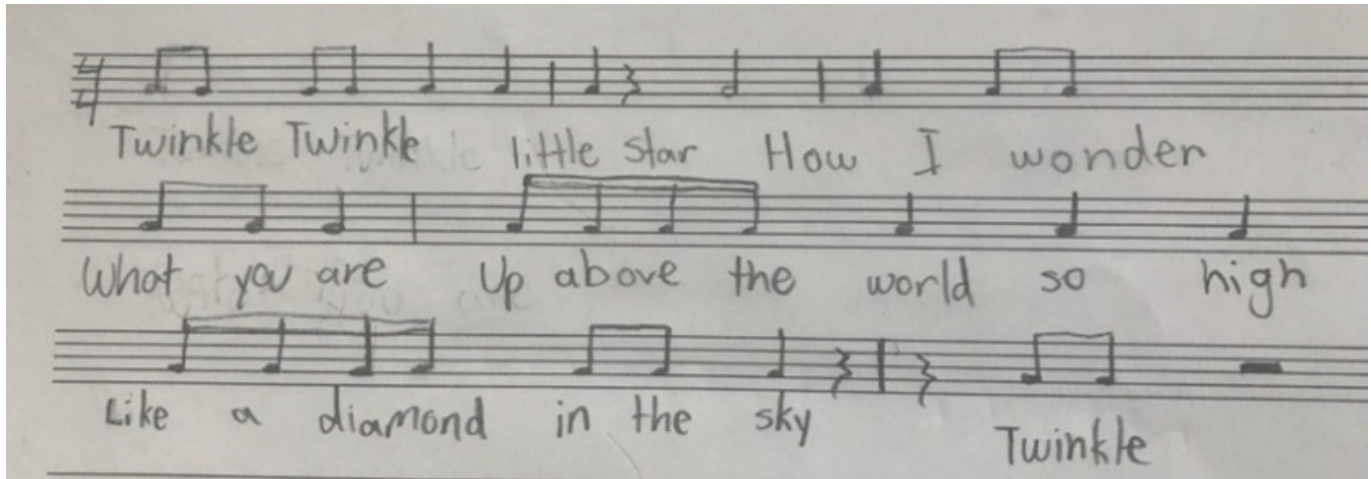
Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation and purposeful play

NUMERACY:
Communicates – Defends
decisions and assumptions

3. Students share their new rhythms with the class and explain their group's thinking process.

Adapt learned skills, understandings and processes for use in new contexts and for different purposes and audiences

Demonstration of Student Learning, Teacher Assessment and Reflection



Transcript of Students' Reflection

Teacher: How did your group create the new rhythm?

Student A: We made a list of all the different notes and syllables and put lines between to show the measures. Then we played around with speeding up and slowing down the words and clapped them out. We crossed them [the words] off the list when we used them. Then we went back and wrote $\frac{1}{2}$ [beat] for the fast clapping and 2 [beats] for the slow ones and 1 for the ones in between.

Teacher: How did you decide when your rhythm was complete?

Student B: We added up each part (measure) to make sure it added to 4 [beats] and clapped through it so we knew each word (syllable) had its own note.

Teacher: Did you make any changes along the way?

Student A: Yeah. When we heard how the other group tried to use rests, we added some to change our rhythm too!

Teacher's Assessment

PROFICIENT:

The students understood how lyrics and rhythm connect, and accurately recorded their new rhythm on the music staff paper. I observed them counting the beats to ensure that it was correct. The students reflected on their creative process and added a wider variety of musical notation (rests) after observing others' product.

Teacher's Reflection

The students were able to play around with rhythm in a fun way, create a new song and practice musical notation. I also realized that this was a great opportunity to use their math knowledge to support their understanding of music. Next year I will make this connection more intentional by using fraction strips and drawing parallels to adding fractions. I can also draw parallels to Language Arts, by using beat poetry to analyze tone and volume as well as rhythm. I'm glad I read through the descriptor for Defending Decisions and Assumptions because that helped me ask focused questions to help the kids reflect on their process. Overall, we had a lot of fun and students practiced critical, creative and collaborative thinking.