

The Orchestra's Secret Formula

For 1st-4th grades



Lesson 4 — *The Musical Canon*

Objective

Students will learn how music can be juxtaposed to create a canon. They will demonstrate their understanding of music concepts through singing. Students will create their own lyrics for a provided melody and perform in groups.

Suggested Materials

- “Make New Friends” excerpts (provided)
- Whiteboard/smart board or other classroom tool for recording observations

New York State Arts Standards

MU:Cr3.1.1a-4a

MU:Pr4.2.1a-4a

MU:Pr6.1.1a-4a

New York State English Language Arts & Literacy Standards

Speaking & Listening, Standards 1, 2 & 6

Language, Standards 1, 3, 5 & 6

Procedure

- 1) Juxtaposition is the act of placing contrasting elements next to each other to emphasize their similarities and differences. In music, composers juxtapose melodies and rhythms to create a canon.
- 2) A canon is a piece of music where a melody is played and then repeated by another voice or instrument. The initial melody acts as the “leader,” while the copied melody is the “follower.” The imitation may be an exact copy of the original melody, or it may be altered in some way. “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” is an example of a canon because one voice leads in singing, and the others follow.
- 3) The simplest form of a canon is the round. In a round, the imitations (or followers) are identical to the original voice (leader), so the same melody is being sung by multiple voices, only starting at different times.
- 4) Introduce the “Make New Friends” melody to students by singing or playing on the piano. Then, have students join in singing the melody together. You may use solfege or neutral syllables when singing the melody.
- 5) Once students are comfortable with the melody, divide students into two groups. Have one group be the “leader” and begin singing the melody, while the second group follows with the same melody after the leader group begins. Students can be further divided into three groups as they become more familiar with the concept.
- 6) Discuss with students what emotions they may experience or images that come to mind when they listen to the melody. What might the melody be trying to express? Record words and ideas on a whiteboard or smart board as you discuss with students.
- 7) Adding words, or lyrics, to a melody gives greater meaning to a piece of music and helps tell a story. Introduce the lyrics to “Make New Friends.” Have the class practice singing the lyrics with the melody together as a group. As students become more comfortable, you can divide the class into two or three groups and perform the melody and lyrics as a round.

Lesson 4 — The Musical Canon (continued)

WITHOUT LYRICS

Make New Friends

Voice

Traditional
arr. Cameron Moten

Musical notation for the song 'Make New Friends' without lyrics. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written on a treble clef. The first staff contains the main melody, and the second staff, starting with a '5' below the staff, contains a variation of the melody. The piece ends with a double bar line.

WITH LYRICS

Make New Friends

Voice

Traditional
arr. Cameron Moten

Musical notation for the song 'Make New Friends' with lyrics. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written on a treble clef. The first staff contains the main melody with the lyrics: "Make new friends, but keep the old. ___ One is sil-ver, and the o-ther is gold. A". The second staff, starting with a '5' below the staff, contains a variation of the melody with the lyrics: "cir-cle is round, it has no end. ___ That's how long I want to be your friend." The piece ends with a double bar line.