

Molly Collins

Professor Biczó

Principles of Music Ed

In a few sentences, summarize your lesson. Include the anchor standard(s) you used, the subject matter, your focused age of your learners, and what you wanted your learners to gain after your lesson.

I taught a lesson about the historical context of the blues, the form of the blues with I, IV, and V chords, and how to play the chord progression for the C blues on the piano. I aimed my lesson towards upper middle school / lower high school students as they would understand how to play a piano and chord progressions. I used the standards of performing / presenting / producing and responding as the foundation in my lesson plan. Following my lesson, I wanted my students to understand the historical context of the blues, be able to identify a blues form (including the two A sections and the B section) in jazz music, recognize the blues is a 12-bar pattern in 4/4 consisting of the I, IV, V chords, and perform the 12 bar C blues progression on a keyboard / piano.

Planning

Describe the elements of your lesson which you found to be successful and explain how they were successful for you as the teacher and your learner.

I found that explaining the historical context of blues and analyzing different jazz classics with blues chord progressions gave my learner a sturdy foundation on the subject. Teaching history and using analyzing skills allowed for the learner to understand why they were learning the chord progression.

Describe the elements of your designed lesson which you feel needs refinement and growth for increased opportunities of learner engagement and learning. For each moment, describe how you could improve your planning and/or instructional strategies to promote learner success

If I had more time, I would have expanded my lesson to include how to solo on the blues and implementing the blues scale plus expanding the amount of jazz classics we analyzed. In addition to improving these aspects, I wish I had been clearer about how to work on playing the chords in time. I wish I had begun by counting aloud for the students then switching to having the students perform the chord progression without me speaking like a metronome in the background.

Teaching

Describe moments of your teaching you feel were effective and positively impacted learning. For each moment, describe how you know your strategy promoted learner success.

I was extremely happy when my learner was able to correctly identify the A and B sections of the blues in “Tenor Madness” by Sonny Rollings. This signified that the student understood the difference between the two sections, that each section had four bars, and that there were two A sections. Additionally, I was excited when my student was able to independently play the 12 bar C blues chord progression independently. This meant the student could know the chord changes and stay in time while playing the blues.

Describe moments of your teaching you feel were ineffective and what you might change to ensure learner engagement?

I wish I had explained A versus B sections in the blues more thoroughly. I used sheet music (virtual examples) and singing a blues song (aural skills) to describe this form, however, in the future I would figure out a better way to explain this concept verbally.

In what ways did you challenge your learners to engage in learning? If you did not, to revise your lesson for future teaching scenarios, how could you challenge your learners?

I challenged my learner to be able to identify the A and B sections of a blues in a jazz standard (“Tenor Madness” by Sonny Rollings). Additionally, I challenged my student to play the C blues progression as I soloed on the upper octaves of the piano. This was a challenging task as they needed to play the chord progression independently and keep time.

Constructivism:

If I were to change my lesson to focus on creating a collaborative community, as Scott’s article described, I would have had students pair up to create a vocal “blues” form. The students would work together to produce one phrase for the A section, repeat it twice, and create a variation on the A section to use as a B section. After about 5-10 minutes of students creating this form, I would allow students to share their work with the class. Additionally, in the section where I initially played a solo as the student played the chord progression, I would expand my lesson to cover how to solo with the blues scale and allow groups of two to alternate playing the chord progression and then playing the solo on top of the chords. With two students working together, they would be playing their own unique piece of music and being creative.

I would encourage students' inquiry by having groups of 4-5 students study a different song that contains a blues form. I would have them work together to figure out each section of the blues, what notes in the melody contain notes from the blues scale, and I would have them

create a list of questions they have about the artist, blues history, or the blues form. This practice would allow students to ask questions and problem solve in order to find each section of the blues, the blues scale notes in the melody, etc. After the lesson, I would provide a link to a music playlist that contains music with a blues form so students who want to learn more could explore the blues. Providing these resources would provide ideas and opportunities for student inquiry.