Beginning Activity: Tolerance Composition

In order to start our work on compositions, we first need to do a deep dive into Music, Society, Tolerance, and Injustice. Part 2 of this project will be the composition.

Concert and Symphonic Band (Grades 9-12)

Overarching Essential Question: How do composers advocate for specific injustices and how do composers evoke emotional responses from an audience?

Directions:

1. Go to "File"→**MAKE A COPY**→ENTER NEW DOCUMENT NAME: "_____ BEGINNING COMPOSITION ACTIVITY" (name)
2. Share the link with Ms. Mitchell
3. This way, you can type your notes directly onto the document under each question. DO NOT USE THIS DOCUMENT!!!!
4. All Questions should be answered in complete sentences! You are high school students now, not kindergarteners!

Questions:

If you wanted something to change (at your school, in your community or in society as a whole):

1. How might you go about changing it?

2. How could music help in this way?

3. What role do you think music can play in inciting change?

Read/Questions

1. The Other Education by David Brooks (New York Times Nov. 26, 2009)

2. What does Brooks mean by his "second education"? Or his "emotional curriculum"?

3. Who was the "professor" to which he refers? In what way(s) did Bruce Springsteen teach him?

4. What do you know (without looking it up online) about Springsteen's music?

5. Do you agree that music can provide an education as important as formal schooling? Do you agree that society pays "too much attention to the first education and not enough to the second"?

6. What songs, if any, have inspired or taught you something and how? Include a link to the song if possible.

7. If music has such an effect on us personally, what effect can it have on society?

Quote Consideration:

“While rockers don’t have a whole lot of influence, they can create a vision of the world as it should be.”--Bruce Springsteen

1. How musicians create this vision?

2. Do you think musicians can bring about change through their music? Can they help to shape history?

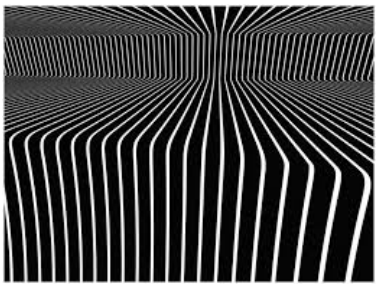
3. Do you think that songwriters or singers should use their platform to create a better world?

4. What other singers, groups or songwriters use their music to teach or create positive change?

5. Are there musicians who use their platform to bring about a negative view to events, people, places, etc? Provide examples.

Art and Music:

For each of the images, write the first thing that comes to mind (the type of music you hear, the instruments, genre, a specific artists, etc)

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

Listening Part 1:

1. Listen to Waiting on the World to Change by John Mayer. Read the lyrics here.
2. What is the message of the song?

3. Some people think that Mayer is saying it's OK to wait while others think that he is trying to incite his generation to act. Which statement do you agree with, and why?

4. What do you think Mayer means when he says, "When they own the information, oh they can bend it all they want"? Who are "they"?

5. In what way(s) does he express hope for the future?

6. Which lines in the song do you most relate to?

7. Do you feel that your generation is misunderstood? Do you think your generation will wait for change or act to make change happen?

8. If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be and why?

Listening Part 2:

Listen to one song from each of the three categories (see questions below).

Category 1

1. "We Shall Overcome," by Joan Baez
2. "The Times They Are a-Changin'," by Bob Dylan
3. "Imagine," by John Lennon
4. "What's Going On?" by Marvin Gaye

Category 2

5. "The Rising," by Bruce Springsteen
6. "Where is the Love?" by The Black Eyed Peas

Category 3

7. Olivier Messiaen's: Quartet for the End of Time (partially composed while the composer was imprisoned in a concentration camp,
8. A Movement for Rosa (composed by Mark Camphouse about Rosa Parks)
9. Benjamin Britten's War Requiem (composed during WWI)
10. George Crumb's Black Angels (composed in reaction to the Vietnam War)
11. Steven Reich's WTC 9/11 (composed in reaction to the events of 9/11)

Questions:

For each of the three songs (you can answer your questions below each song you listened to):

1. What do you think the song is about (obviously dig deeper for the classical selections that I gave you an idea about what the piece was written for)?

2. What emotional response does the song evoke?

3. Write a few sentences that describe the message, viewpoint or lesson the songwriter was trying to convey. Share examples from the song in your explanation.

4. Research the actual message of the song. There are several online sites you could use such as www.wikipedia.org, www.songfacts.com, and www.lyricinterpretations.com. Summarize what you learn.

5. Do you believe the message of the song is relevant today? If so, is it relevant in your school, your community, the nation, the world, or all of them? If not, why not?

6. What words, lines or phrases in the song do you personally relate to?

7. What might be an alternate title for the song?

Reflection:

1. What conclusions can you draw about the power of music in creating change or teaching society about important issues?

2. What does tolerance mean to you?

3. What does tolerance mean to and within the Pewaukee community? Waukesha County? Wisconsin? The United States? The World?

4. Why is tolerance important?

5. Are different ideas important...why?

Watch Emmanuel Jai: The Music of a War Child

Give a brief summary of the video:

"Tolerance is a virtue and a quality, but above all, tolerance is an act – the act of reaching out to others and seeing differences not as barriers, but as invitations for dialogue and understanding." --Ban Ki-moon

Choose a Topic:

Your goal is to demonstrate how the aesthetics of compositions are largely influenced by belief systems. The challenge is that people are not always tolerant of other religions, skin colors, languages etc. Wouldn't it be great if, "we could all just get along"? The song you produce should help tackle the injustices around us, and help motivate others as part of the "International Day of Tolerance". Your solo composition performance will serve to inspire the world and will be assessed on criteria which include developing technical (theory) skills, creative thinking, and the critique and evaluation of other compositions.

Race and Racial Discrimination
Global Poverty
World Hunger
Women's Rights
Child Labor
HIV/AIDS
Climate Change
Religious Freedom
Water and Sanitation
Displacement
Education
Maternal Health
Child Survival
Peace Building
Migration
Indigenous People

You could also focus on a particular country: Think global and problems within that area.

Your Idea (needs approval from Ms. Mitchell)

Research:

Within this Google Doc, describe the issue and country you are going to focus on. Include all relevant information: population, poverty levels, why it (your topic) is happening, who it is affecting, etc. Research the event/topic:

- The impact on the people (local, national, world)
- Impact on the economy (local, national world)
- Impact of the infrastructure
- Different viewpoints/how does the rest of the world view the event/topic
- Music associated with the particular area
- Emotions associated with the event

- Choose an image/article/quote/phrase to become the basis of the composition

Listening:

Find music from that area and/or music that represents your topic in general. Give a brief description of the music and how you feel it represents your topic. Does it convey the message appropriately? Include links to the music you describe.

Ideas and Questions:

1. What message do you want to convey in your composition?

2. What emotions do you want to evoke through your music?

3. If you had no limits to your compositional skills, what compositional techniques would you use (full symphony orchestra, pop song, classical piano work, world music, different combinations of instruments, etc) and why?

4. Your first step is going to be to compose an 8 measure melody.

It's Time to COMPOSE!

Essential Question: How can a composer represent a topic and evoke an emotional response from an audience?

Explorative Set:

1. Find the letter in your name that are also in the musical alphabet: A, B, C, E, D, F, G (you can also use two of the old style German spellings S which translates to Eb and H which translates to Bb.) If you don't have three or four letters from the musical alphabet, add your middle name, last name, birth month until you have three to four letters.

Example: K<u>a</u><u>t</u><u>e</u> Mit<u>ch</u>ell--My motif would be a e c bb

****Make sure to include the clef (treble or bass) at the beginning of each staff****

2. Give your notes a rhythm to create a short musical idea (melody). You may consider doubling up on one of the notes to have repeated pitches. Write the "melody" twice, and you now have a motif.

3. Sequence: Write your motif up one step, then up one more step. You now have a sequence.

4. Diminution: Write the rhythm of the motif at half its rhythmic value (if it was quarter notes, make it eighth notes, etc)

5. Augmentation: Double the rhythm of the original motif (each note will be twice its length).

6. Inversion: If your original motif when went up a 3rd, move it down a 3rd. Each interval goes the opposite way it did in your original motif.

7. Retrograde: Put your motif in reverse order (the last note becomes the first note):

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Retrograde Inversion: Using your retrograde motif, invert the pitches like you did in #6.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Continuation: Do the same process with the topic of your choice

Topic: _____ Letters: _____

1. Give your notes a rhythm to create a short musical idea (melody). You may consider doubling up on one of the notes to have repeated pitches. Write the “melody” twice, and you now have a motif.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Sequence: Write your motif up one step, then up one more step. You now have a sequence.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Diminution: Write the rhythm of the motif at half its rhythmic value (if it was quarter notes, make it eighth notes, etc)

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4. Augmentation: Double the rhythm of the original motif (each note will be twice its length).

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5. Inversion: If your original motif when went up a 3rd, move it down a 3rd. Each interval goes the opposite way it did in your original motif.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6. Retrograde: Put your motif in reverse order (the last note becomes the first note):

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Retrograde Inversion: Using your retrograde motif, invert the pitches like you did in #6.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

You now have enough fragments to create different phrases to be used as variations!

Melody:
Compose an 8 measure melody using either your name fragments or the topic fragments. This will serve as the basis for your composition. You will use the other fragments within the composition.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Chords:
Determine the Tonic (I), Subdominant (IV), and Dominant (V) Chords for your pitches.

Example: a e c bb: I= FAC (first inversion) IV=BbDF V=CEG

Determine other chords: iv=dfa ii=gBbd

Knowing common chord progressions, add some chords to your melody above.
I-V-vi-IV I-V-vi-iii vi-V-IV-V I-vi-IV-V I-IV-vi-V I-V-IV-V

Check out this site for other progressions (with popular music examples)

Message to Convey: What message about your topic are you trying to convey to the audience? Map out (using the examples you listen to above) some of the options you have and would like to include into your composition.

Other Elements:

1. Form: Decide on the form of your piece.
    a. ABA (using the melody of your name as the A section and the melody of the topic for the B section).

    b. Rondo (ABACADA)
    c. Theme (melody) and Variations
    d. Verse/Chorus
    e. Through Composed
2. Additional elements: what other elements can you include.
    a. A verbalized quote or poem
    b. A nature sound
    c. An electronic sound
    d. Found sounds
3. Using Audacity, manipulate your additional elements to fit your piece.
4. Using Garageband, noteflight, MuseScore, NotateMe, Logic Pro, Audacity or another notation software program, start to structure your composition (melodies, fragments, chords, and additional elements) to create a complete work.

Proficiency Scale for Ensembles (look specifically at Reportable Standards 2, 3, and 4) for this assignment.

Student Assessment: Include a written composer's statement for your work using musical terminology and your thought process within your composition?

1. Describe the connection you made to your social justice/current event topic including what elements from your initial research "struck a note" with you?
2. What makes this piece successful with regards to your original social justice/current event topic?
    a. Did you "do justice" to the topic?
    b. What makes it work so well?
3. How did you create unity in your piece?
4. What musical ideas hold your piece together?
5. How did you create variety, tension/release, interest in your piece?
6. What musical ideas did you change to keep your piece interesting?
7. What is your favorite part of this piece?
8. Given more time (or a greater skill set), what elements would you have like to include in your piece?
9. Describe your ideas to initiate change or educate others about your topic (think big, but think specific--even you think you could never actually do it).