CSO Docent Presentation
Be A Composer
Grade 6
Sarah Good, Zoe Quan
Feb 2004

Concepts:
Review Elements of Music: Meter, Rhythm, Tempo, Theme and Variation,
Dynamics, Timbre
Composers: what do they do, why do they do it, how do they do it

Materials:
Docent Name Plate
Music Element Definitions
Choose a story that the class has read and is familiar with (ask the teacher)

1. Augusta Read Thomas –
   • LISTEN First
   • As the students their impression of the music.
   • Why do they think the composer wrote the music?
   • Discuss who she is and what she does
   • Review Elements of Music
     • How did the composer use the elements of music?

1. Duke Ellington – “Ko-Ko” - 1940
   1. Show Music Score – blueprint that conductors & musicians use
   2. Discuss 4/4 meter sign
   3. Listen for instruments used and elements of music used. Discuss.
     • Discuss why he wrote the music – dedicated to African Congo Square Drum
       Ceremony.
     • Also wrote his music for specific musicians (note on score the name of
       musicians by each instrument). Would often change an arrangement if a
       musician changed.
     • Descriptive word: Frenzied

4. Aaron Copland – “Fanfare for the Common Man” -- 1942
   4. Show Music Score – composer’s instruction to the conductor &
      musicians. This is how it should be played.
   5. Listen for instruments used and elements of music used. Discuss.
     • Discuss why he wrote the music. – commissioned work to honor WWII
       soldiers.
     • Descriptive word: Fanfare – discuss it’s meaning.

6. Let’s Be Composers
   • Commission a Piece of Work Based on the Story….
   • Hand out the “Be A Composer” Manuscript Paper
   • Discuss the following as a class – have the kids write on the back of the paper
     • Characters – who? Description? What are they doing in the story?
     • Scenery - where? Season? Weather?
     • Mood/Feeling of the story?
   • Ask the kids to list each character on the manuscript paper
     • Pick an instrument to represent each character
     • Pick a Tempo & a Dynamic for each character
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- Pick an instrument or instruments to represent the Scenery
- Pick a Tempo & Dynamic for the scenery
- Pick an instrument or instruments to represent the general mood/feeling of the story
- Pick a Tempo & Dynamic for the general mood/feeling of the story
- Ask some of the kids to share the instruments, etc. they chose and why.

6. Conclusion of “Be A Composer”
- All music is composed for different reasons.
  1. Commissioned
  2. Based on Story or Poem
  3. Sake of Music itself

4. Wrap-Up
  1. Use Poster for review of 4 sessions
    a. Jazz
    b. Instrument Families
    c. Elements of Music/Music Tells A Story
    d. Be A Composer
  5. Hand-out Web sites
  6. THANK YOU!!!!