Young People's Chorus of New York City™
-Presents-

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PRE-BROADCAST LISTENING GUIDE

"Crosstown M42"
by Robert Kapilow and Fred Newman

Background:

This listening guide introduces "sound," "musical sound" and "organized sound" as the defining elements of music and challenges students to consider **what music really is** as they learn about what happens when sounds are combined. This listening guide also introduces and defines the phrase "vocal extreme" as a foundation for teaching students the specific vocal extreme of "imitation" (using the voice to replicate the sounds we hear).

Lesson Plan for Teachers:

Aim:

For use as a pre-broadcast lesson to prepare students to listen to the piece "**Crosstown M42**." To introduce and differentiate "sound" from "organized sound" and to show how the voice can replicate everyday sounds. To help students understand certain musical terms.

Objective:

Students will be able to:

1. Describe "music," replicate certain sounds using their voice and body, and define the following terms: sound, music, canon, layer, groove, harmony,
mouth sound (artist), extreme.

2. Understand that sounds can be combined and organized in different ways (as defined with the terms above) which make up the foundation of musical sound.

3. Understand that music, as defined by composer Robert Kapilow, is "sound organized by a composer that is intended to be heard" and that sounds, in and of themselves (when not organized) do not constitute music.

4. Understand that the human voice has the capacity to imitate (or replicate) the sounds we hear.

The Lesson and In-Class Activities

Engaging your class :

Open a class discussion with the following:

1. Drop a ruler on the desk. Ask your students "Is this music?"

2. Ask your students how they would describe sound, and how they would describe music. "What is sound? What is music to you? How would you describe both?"

3. According to composer Robert Kapilow, music is "sound that is organized that is intended to be heard." Ask students "What do you think the composer meant by his statement?"

4. Explain that this lesson will explore what **sound** is, what **organized sound** is, and how the human voice can replicate the sounds we hear. In addition, this lesson will explore how **music** is sound that has been organized in specific ways.

The Lesson:

1. Divide the class into 5 groups. Each group will represent a different timbre.

2. Choose 5 from the following group of "sound maker" instrument suggestions: Slide whistle, wood block, claves, rhythm sticks, shakers, triangle, kazoo, paper cups, rulers, pencils. (Alternatively, feel free to come up with some "sound makers" of your own.)

3. Give each group one minute to play their instruments and explore the different sound possibilities all together. Ask the question, ***"Is this music? Why or why not?"*** Reinforce that what your students just played was **sound disorganized**, that is, ***not*** **organized** in a particular way.

4. Introduce students to the **rhythm bank** located at the end of the lesson.

The Activities:

Rhythm Bank Exercise #1 (with instruments):

1. Read Line 1 with your voice out loud.

2. Have your students play Line 1 on the rhythm bank all together with all instruments. If any students do not have an instrument have them patsch the rhythm. Have them practice this line. Emphasize that they have just **"organized their sounds to a rhythm."**

3. Repeat the question, ***"Is this music?" Why or why not?"***

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Rhythm Bank Exercise #2 (with instruments):

1. Have students define **canon**.

   Canon (a single line that is repeated through strict imitation at fixed or variable intervals of pitch and time)

2. Now model playing in **canon.** Clap one measure ahead of your students and then have your students join in. Then have students play their instruments (in canon) with each group joining in sequentially by measure, to layer and overlap sounds. Explain that these sounds have been **organized** to a **rhythm** and in overlapping layers **(in canon).** Reinforce that **this is music,** as these sounds are organized in distinct ways.

3. Explain that sounds may also be organized into **harmonies** and **grooves**. Have students define, and model both for them.

   Harmony (The combining of notes simultaneously, to produce chords)

   Groove (A section within a piece that represents a certain theme or idea)

Mouth Sounds Exercise #1 (with voices):

1. Have your students replicate the sound of their "sound maker" instruments with their voices. Give them a minute to try it out themselves then ask for volunteers to demonstrate their imitation for the class. Explain that this is what a **mouth sounds artist** does.

Mouth Sounds Exercise #2 (with voices):

2. Now have your students replicate their sounds to the phrases from the rhythm bank. Remind students that sounds organized into a rhythm form the structure of a song.

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Summary and Wrap-up:

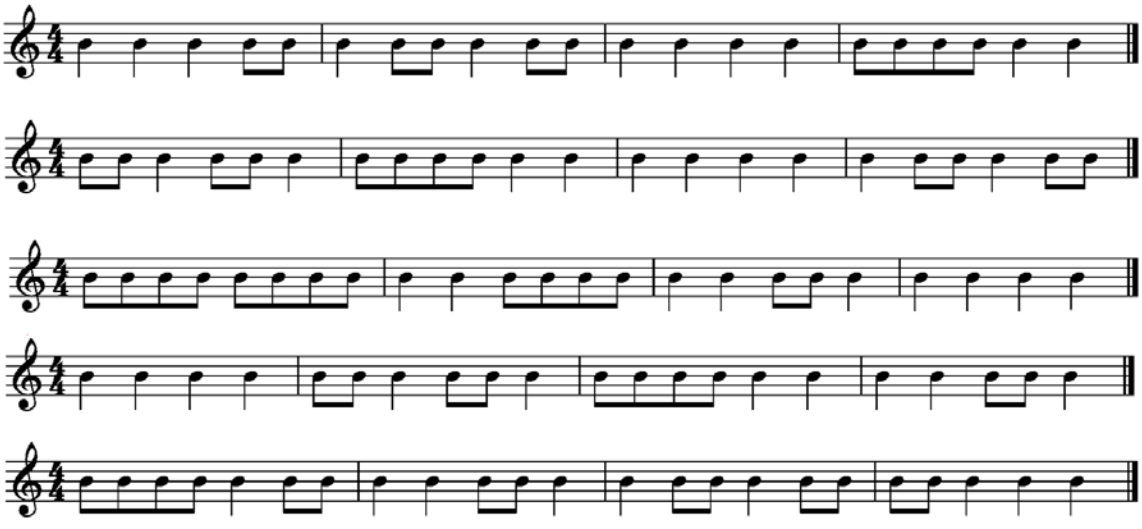
- According to composer Robert Kapilow, all sounds, no matter what they are, can become music if they are organized for someone to hear them.
- Sounds may be organized in different ways – into rhythms, harmonies, and grooves to create music.
- The voice (as an extreme) can replicate a wide range of sounds and organize them to create music.
- Write the following terms on the board: Sound, music, canon, layer, groove, harmony, mouth sounds artist, extreme
- Go around the room and ask students to repeat what they've learned by defining (in their own words) the terms and their meanings.

Post-Lesson Activities:

1. Have students compose their own phrase or piece using materials from the rhythm bank, or a note bank. Perform these for the class.
2. Take the class on a field trip and take a trip on local public transportation: a bus, the subway, train, or even a school bus. Have students write down the different sounds they hear.

National Standards

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHORUS of NEW YORK CITY

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
3. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
4. Reading and notating music.

Rhythm Bank