

Sample Composition Project

NOTE: This project assumes the students have developed the following competencies, which will have been taught earlier in the course.

1. Understanding of musical notation (reading treble clef notes, including sharps and flats, reading rhythm (whole, half, quarter, eighth notes)
2. Knowledge of how to use Sibelius and GarageBand music software

Objectives

1. Students will compose their own simple melody over a 12-bar blues progression using Sibelius notation software
2. Students will be able to verbally explain the 12-bar blues progression in its simplest form (See attached for chord progression to be used)

Procedures

1. Students will open a pre-created Sibelius file containing an empty 12-bar composition with one staff, and the 12-bar blues progression written above the measures.
2. Teacher will explain guidelines for composition (also listed on the file; a copy is attached)
 - a. Time Signature should be 4/4 (Common Time)
 - b. Each measure is to only use the notes assigned to it by the color system on the file
 - c. Notes should be half notes, quarter notes, or eighth notes. No rests should be in the composition
3. Students will fill their file with the notes they choose, based on the color-coding. They will choose notes for each measure from the blues scale of the chord for that measure
4. Students will export their Sibelius file into MIDI format, and import it into a pre-created GarageBand file which already contains a rhythm section playing the blues in the correct key.
5. Students will listen to their blues composition with the rhythm section, and use GarageBand to make any additional minor changes they want to their composition (self-assessment)
6. When students are satisfied with their composition, they will save the audio file, and publish the file to a class podcast. Parents will be able to access the podcast entries via the class website to listen to their students' compositions

Assessment

Teacher will assess the compositions **only** on the criteria listed above. If each note has an appropriate pitch and all measures contain half, quarter, and eighth notes to make four beats, the student will receive full credit. The purpose of this exercise is to reward creativity. Lack of melodic interest or musical meaning will not count against the student, as long as all criteria were met.