

Episode 12

Writing a Song

Noteworthy notes on composing

1 OVERVIEW

All the elements of previous episodes are integrated for students to begin applying the skills of reading and writing music. When Surfer Dude comes looking for a melody-writing kit, Quaver enthusiastically supplies the necessary notation devices. He guides Mark and Laura through the composition process of creating and refining a melody, then arranging it through the selection of tempo, style, and instrumentation. The completed composition is performed by the house band with a guest appearance by Surfer Dude.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will learn:

- To use the appropriate music symbols to write a melody.
- To modify a melody by changing the pitch.
- To choose tempo, instrumentation, and style when arranging a melody.
- To check the accuracy of all written notation to ensure it is clearly understood.

Vocabulary

Melody
Pitch
Lyrics
Accuracy
Arranging
Contour*

*concepts included in the Teacher Guide, but not in the DVD

Now
with more
pitch

Deluxe
Advanced
Kit



MUSIC STANDARDS IN LESSON

- 1: Singing alone and with others *
- 2: Playing instruments
- 4: Composing and arranging music*
- 5: Reading and notating music
- 6: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
- 7: Evaluating music and music performance
- 8: Understanding the relationship between music and the other arts

Complete details at QuaverMusic.com

Key Scenes

	What they teach	Music Standard
1	Surfer Dude requests a melody starter-kit	5, 6
2	Bernardette Chubbins and her pet goat, Ron	5, 6
3	Mark and Laura improve upon Quaver's less-than-impressive melody and supervise its arrangement	5, 6
4	The Music Checker (also known as the pencil)	5, 6
5	Song: <i>Getting It Together</i>	5, 6



2 LESSON INTRO Introducing the episode

Announce that you have created three Top Ten lists. Tell them they have 60 seconds to guess the items on each list. Choose one student to serve as a time keeper. As they call out possibilities, check off their correct answers.

Suggested categories:

Top Ten Instruments

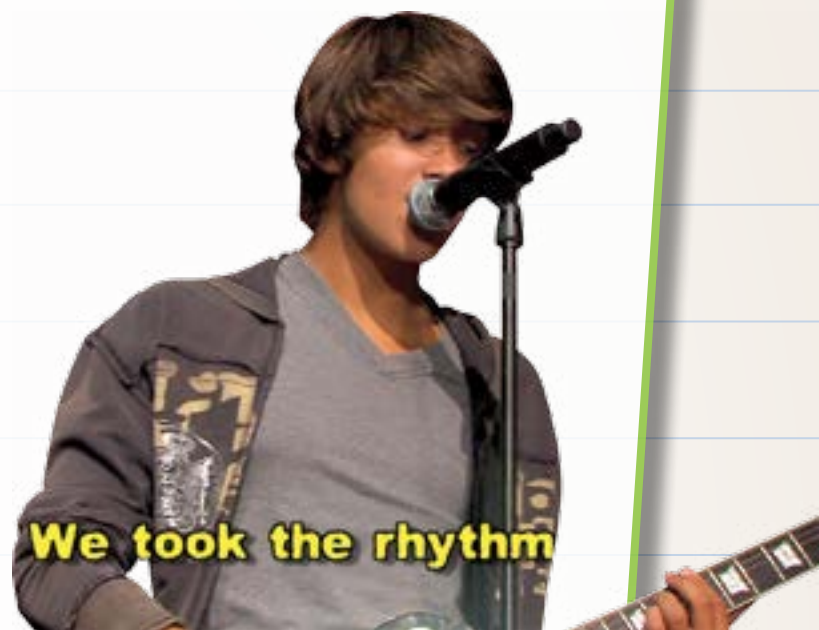
Top Ten Musical Terms

Top Ten Musical Artists

Conclude with the following list:

Top Ten Things Needed to Write a Song

1. Staff
2. Meter sign
3. Treble clef
4. Notes
5. Rests
6. Measures
7. Tempo
8. Subject/Title
9. Lyrics
10. A musical idea



Tell students that all the items on the last list is everything required to write a song. In this episode, Quaver is "putting it all together."

3 PLAY EPISODE

Discussion Points

- A note carries two pieces of information. What are they?
duration and pitch
- Quaver's melody repeated which note?
Middle C
- Why is it important to check your music?
it must be accurate for others to play
- What does it mean to arrange a piece of music?
deciding what instruments, voices, style, and tempo will be used in a song



4 CLASS ACTIVITIES

Materials Needed

- Masking tape
- White paper

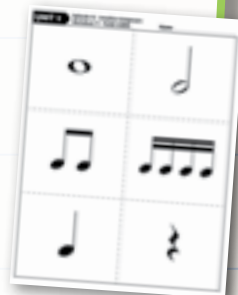


Creative Composers

Worksheet # 1

Purpose: How to create a melody from rhythms

Prior to the session create a large staff on the floor using masking tape, making sure to include a meter sign and treble clef. Give students a mixture of notes and rests cut out from the flashcards. Choose students one by one to come and place notes or rests on the staff to create a melody. With the group, check that the number of beats in each measure is consistent with the meter sign. Play the melody every time a new note is added. With imaginary laser pointers like Mark and Laura, move notes up and down to change the melody until everyone is satisfied. Have students play or sing their finished melody.



Melody Blocks

Purpose: How to start writing melodies

Using Orff instruments or keyboards have students experiment with writing melodies. First ask students to play 4 notes that seem to fit together starting from middle C. Have students play their 4 notes to the class. Write down one of the 4 note melody blocks on a white board. Have students repeat the exercise with another 4 notes. Choose a new melody block to add to your white board to give you two measures. Repeat this exercise until you have an eight measure melody. Decide if you want all of the measures different or if you would like one or two to be repeated. Add lyrics to the melody created.

Crazy Contours



Tracks 1, 2 & 3



Purpose: Music appreciation and movement

Introduce students to the term contour, which can be simply defined as how pitches move in a melody. Play each of the tracks twice -- once for them to become familiar with it and again to respond to it. Have younger students move their bodies high and low in response to a recognizable melody such as **Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star (Track 1)**. For older students, listen to portions of classical works such as **Beethoven's Für Elise (Track 2)** or **Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 2nd Movement (Track 3)**. Instruct them to use short and long vertical dashes to represent the notes of the melody. Have students join up the dashes to show the contour of the melody. Play a number of different melodies and discuss which they like best, and why. Look at the example on the IWB.



Try playing a simple arrangement of your students' melodies on Orff instruments, keyboards, tuned bells, guitar, or piano

Melodies and Phrases

Purpose: Great melodies often have a phrase structure

Ask students to call out their favorite songs, and list their answers on the board. Sing them together, then deconstruct the melodies of each. For example, **Happy Birthday** is four phrases – the first three get steadily higher like climbing a mountain, before the last phrase finishes it all off. In contrast, **The Star Spangled Banner** begins with two music phrases that function as a call and response. Sing the tune using the syllable “la” and notice how the first two phrases seem to answer each other. Call: O, say can you see. Response: By the dawn’s early light.

Movie Scores Tracks 4, 5 & 6

Purpose: How composing and arranging are used in movies

Composers train for a long time to “put it all together.” Movie music is some of the most skillful music in the world because a composer must create a melody and an arrangement that goes with the action on the screen. Listen to these examples of movie style music - **Summer Games (Track 4)**, **Adrenaline (Track 5)** and **Gershwin’s An American in Paris (Track 6)**. Get students to close their eyes and imagine what scene the music accompanies. Ask students to describe the arrangement and the instruments used in the piece. Then have the class act out a scene that fits the music.

Bring in sound tracks to familiar movies and see if students recall the scene simply by listening to the music. Discuss how the composer uses melody, tempo, duration, and arrangement to enhance the scene.

VIDEO REPLAY Track 7

Getting It Together

Purpose: How to create a melody from rhythms

Have students watch and listen to the song **Getting It Together** from the episode. Then have them join in with **Getting It Together (Track 7)**. This song encapsulates the essential elements of writing a song.



5 WEB ACTIVITIES



QGrooves

Using QComposer & QLyrics, QGrooves, QBackBeat, and QStrum, students can create backing tracks for the songs they compose online.



QComposer

Find QLyrics, which is a feature of QComposer– this gives students the ability to write lyrics to add to their QComposer melodies.



Play activities on your
INTERACTIVE White Board



6 HOMEWORK



Lyric Writer Worksheet # 2

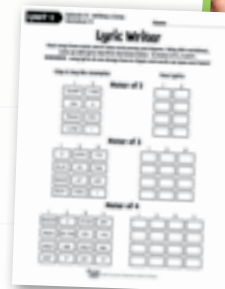
Purpose: The importance of meter in writing lyrics

Most songs have a meter as do most poems and rhymes. Using the worksheet, have students come up with lyrics that fit in the boxes in meters of 2, 3, and 4. Emphasize that song lyrics do not always have to rhyme. Ask them to come up with a melody to fit their lyrics and be ready to perform their songs at the next session.

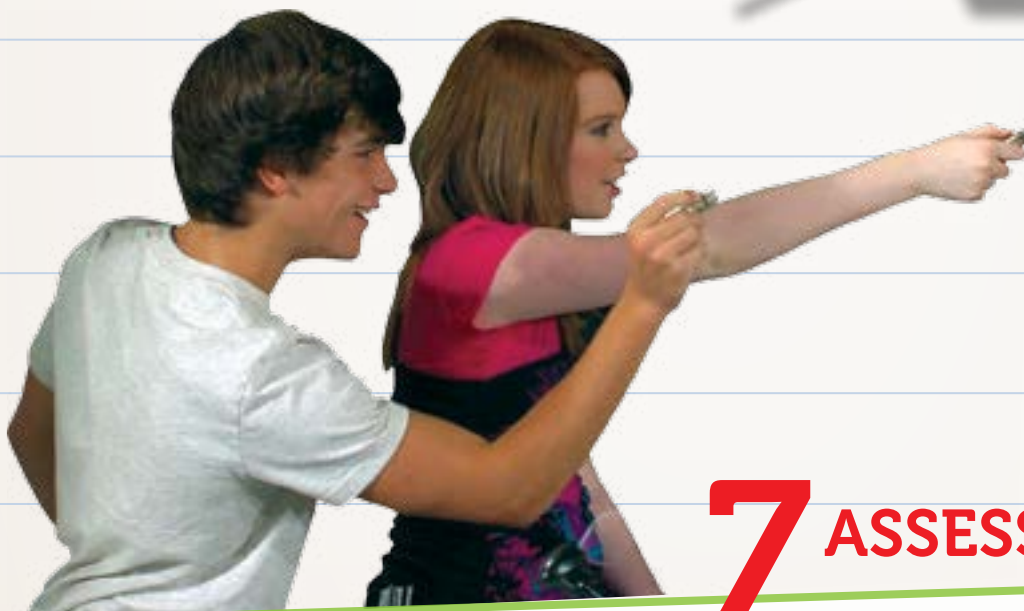
Favorite songs

Purpose: Listening and analyzing music

Ask students to choose a favorite song from their own collection. What do they like so much about the song? Can they describe the contours of the melody and the way instruments are used in the song (the arrangement), which part is the verse and which is the chorus? Have students bring their song to the next session and talk to the class about their findings.



▶ Additional session activities



7 ASSESSMENT ▶



Melody Checker Worksheet # 3

Assign students to complete the worksheet which presents three exercises. During the next session, be sure to talk through the correct answers with them.



8 CROSS-CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES ▶

History



Track 8

Play **Smetana's Moldau River (Track 8)**. Smetana traveled around his homeland, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), collecting Moravian and Slavic folk tunes. Using these melodies as inspiration, he incorporated the tunes in his orchestral pieces. In turn, his creations inspired the people of Czechoslovakia in their quest for an independent state. Thus, Smetana was considered a Nationalist composer and a great patriot. Ask students why he would be honored in this way.

Art

Once students have written a song or even a chorus, ask them to name the piece. Once named, students can create a CD cover for their song. The arrangement (rock, reggae, classical) for the song should guide their design. Discuss how different styles of music may warrant different designs. You may even ask students to bring in their favorite CDs for ideas. How do ideas about color, line, shape, balance, and variety affect their decisions?

Materials Needed

- Art materials for the CD cover



9 DIGGING DEEPER ▶

Arranging Choices



Tracks 9, 10 & 11



Purpose: Listening with intelligence and critiquing music

Arranging means deciding how instruments will combine to play and accompany the melody. Play all three versions of **Amazing Grace 1 (Track 9)**, **Amazing Grace 2 (Track 10)**, and **Amazing Grace 3 (Track 11)** and have students discuss the differences. Take a vote to determine which arrangement is the favorite.



I'll Be Surfer Dude

Worksheet # 4

Purpose: The stages of writing a melody

Tell students to imagine each has received a melody writing box. Using the instructions found on the worksheet, ask each student to follow the eight stages in writing a melody.



TEACHER NOTES

Featured Instruments



Keyboard



Electric Guitar



Acoustic Guitar



Bass Guitar



Orff Instruments



Tuned Bells



Voice