

Reflections/Notes:

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Form/Structure/Organization • Relationships •  
Same/Different • Phonemic Awareness • Timbre



Use music to inspire creative writing!

## My Sound is the Best!

Using music as an impetus for stating and supporting opinions, students will develop skills and understandings in language arts and music. Creative thinking, vocabulary development, and structural understanding are necessary to explore the timbre of musical instruments and to share defending opinions in an appropriate genre. The students will compose an opinion poster based on a narrative about a train using percussion instruments. This will involve group work which can lead the students to write individual pieces in which they support their opinions using descriptive words.

**Essential Question:** How can experiencing differing timbres in music inspire students to state and support opinions?

### Process

- Share a train poem or song with the class: (See example below, there are many to choose from.)  
*Engine, engine number nine,  
Going down Chicago line,  
If the train jumps off the track  
Do you want your money back?*
- Take the children through a series of rhythmic train sounds.
  - Choo, choo, choo, choo, choo, choo, choo, choo, choo
  - Woo-Woo
  - Chug Chug Chug Chug
  - All aboard!
- Use body percussion, and then rhythm instruments to illustrate each sound.
- Rub hands together for “choo, choo”, suggested instrument, shakers
- Snap fingers slowly up high for “Woo-Woo”, suggested instrument, triangle
- Slide palms on thighs for “chug, chug”, suggested instrument, tone blocks or guiros
- Clap for “All aboard!”, suggested instrument, finger cymbals
  - (The instruments listed are only suggestions. “Found sounds”, or other percussion instruments, could be used.)
  - (Be sure to rotate the instruments so that all of the children can explore each instrument.)
- Present a scenario by telling a story in which two train conductors are having a disagreement with each other about which train sounds are the best. Tell the children that they are going to have to assist the train conductors in the story by pretending to be the passengers who make their arguments for the “best train sounds”.
- Divide the students (passengers) into four groups and give each one instrument to defend.
- Give each group a set of “describing word” cards and an “opinion poster” to put together. Circulate and assist the groups as they assemble their posters.
- Have each group stand and take turns sharing their posters with the class.
- Finish the story by the two conductors agreeing that the opinions and descriptions were so convincing that it takes all sounds together to make the best train!

### Assessment

- The students will create posters using appropriate describing words for their instruments and will use them to state their opinions to the class.

### Materials

- Chart paper or poster board
- Packets of describing words for each group
- Percussion instruments or materials for “found sounds”
- Train chants or songs

### Vocabulary

#### Body percussion

Sounds produced by striking or scraping parts of the body; typically includes snapping, clapping, patting, and stamping

#### Timbre

Quality of sounds that causes different instruments and/or voices to sound different from each other

#### Unpitched percussion

Percussion instrument whose sound is typically produced by shaking, striking, or scraping and does not produce a specific pitch; includes shakers (maracas), drums (bongos, hand drums, congas), woods (claves, rhythm sticks, woodblocks, etc.), and metals (triangle, cowbell, finger cymbals)

#### Tempo

The speed at which a music piece is performed

#### Dynamics

Volume of sound (loudness, quietness)

#### Pitch

Relative high or low quality of a tone in relation to other tones

#### Staccato

Short, detached sounds

#### Legato

Smooth, connected sounds

#### Found sound

Sounds produced by non-traditional sound sources in the environment (e.g., scraping a ruler along a binder spine, tapping a pencil on a desk)

### Classroom Tips

As mentioned above, there are many train chants and songs to choose from to engage the children. Try including the students in the story by selecting two students to play the part of the conductors. This activity can also lead to science connections involving forces that cause changes in motion, speed and direction, and push and pull. The use of describing word packets has been suggested, but it is also interesting to have the children fill out their own cards to be applied to the poster.

## Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

#### GRADE K

**ELACCKSL1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

**ELACCKSL3:** Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.

**ELACCKSL4:** Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.

**ELACCKSL5:** Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.

**ELACCKSL6:** Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

**ELACCKL1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

#### GRADE 1

**ELACC1SL1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

**ELACC1SL3:** Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

**ELACC1SL4:** Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.

**ELACC1SL5:** Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

**ELACC1L1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

#### GRADE 2

**ELACC2SL1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

**ELACC2SL3:** Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

**ELACC2SL4:** Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

**ELACC2SL6:** Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

**ELACC2L1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

## Georgia Performance Standards

### MUSIC

#### GRADE K

**MKGM.5:** Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

**MKGM.6:** Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

**MKGM.10:** Moving, alone and with others, to a varied repertoire of music

#### GRADE 1

**M1GM.5:** Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

**M1GM.6:** Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

**M1GM.10:** Moving, alone and with others, to a varied repertoire of music

**M2GM.10:** Moving, alone and with others, to a varied repertoire of music

#### GRADE 2

**M2GM.5:** Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

**M2GM.6:** Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

## National Standards

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

**NL-ENG.K-12.4:** Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

**NL-ENG.K-12.5:** Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with

different audiences for a variety of purposes.

**NL-ENG.K-12.12:** Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

### MUSIC

**Standard 2:** Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

**Standard 4:** Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

**Standard 6:** Listening to, analyzing, and describing music