



**Introduction to Music Unit for grades 3–5
on “Hoedown” from Rodeo
by Aaron Copland
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Unit Length

There are 3 lessons in this unit for grades 3–5. Lesson plans are designed for class periods of approximately 40–45 minutes. Teachers will need to adapt the lesson plans to fit their school resources, instructional time, and the individual needs of their students.

Lesson Use

The 3 lessons are designed primarily for use by general music teachers, however, portions of the lessons could be used by classroom teachers or homeschool teachers with limited music background as well.

Standards

[National Standards for Music](#) (1994) are indicated on each lesson. The 3 lessons combined address all 9 of the National Standards. [Note: New standards are currently being developed in 2012–13 by the National Association for Music Education]

[The Ohio 2012 Standards for Music](#) are indicated on each lesson also. Music teachers in other states can easily match their standards to those in this Unit. The 3 lessons combined address all 5 of the Progress Points for the new 2012 Ohio Content Standards.

Multiple Intelligences

The lessons facilitate musical, bodily–kinesthetic, verbal–linguistic, logical–mathematical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence, 6 of the 7 intelligences originally identified by Howard Gardner. Since this applies to the totality of the 3 lessons, these intelligences are not listed separately on the lesson plans.

Critical Thinking Skills

The lessons provide observable, measurable verbs from Bloom’s Taxonomy of thinking skills. It is usually left up to the teacher to assess these skills in an age–appropriate and practical way suiting the class.

Overview

Conceptual Learning and Objectives/Outcomes (that is, student learning outcomes) are indicated on each lesson. Over the 3 lessons, the Concept Areas of Rhythm, Melody, Form, and Tone Color are used. Skills developed over the 3 lessons are Singing, Moving, Listening, Playing Instruments, Creating (Composing and Improvising), Notating/Reading, Evaluating, and Relating music to other subject areas.



The lessons for “Hoedown” for grades 3–5 are:

Lesson #1: [Square Dance Time!](#)

Lesson #2: [Recorder Time!](#)

Lesson #3: [Sixteenth-Note Time!](#)

Prior Knowledge

No prior knowledge on the part of the student is needed, although it is helpful to have had these experiences: keeping a steady beat and moving to it; some basic square dance moves; knowing how to play low D, high D, F#, and/or A on the recorder; and being able to read rhythms that use a pair of eighth–notes (ti-ti), four sixteenth notes (ti-ka-ti-ka or ti-ri-ti-ri), eighth note and two sixteenths (ti–ti-ka or ti–ti-ri), and two sixteenths followed by an eighth note (ti-ka-ti or ti-ri-ti).

Materials and Equipment

Each lesson indicates the required materials and equipment. Whenever playing a recording, it is important to have a high-quality sound system and use a high-quality recording. [Classics for Kids CD](#) or [website with free Naxos audio files](#) are very helpful in this regard, but your playback equipment is equally important. It should be better than that from a typical computer’s built-in speakers. Special Note: Any indications for the recording time (minutes:seconds) may vary slightly on different playback systems.

Instructional Plans (Lesson Plans)

Each lesson plan has been designed specifically for the grade 3–5 age group, although music teachers may have to adapt portions of each plan. All of the plans have been “teacher-tested” (or are currently being tested) and are easy-to-follow, set up in a format similar to many music series textbooks. Step-by-step guidelines are given under the “Sequence” portion of each lesson.

Supplementary Materials

Some lessons include a listening map or other teacher resources. By clicking on the highlighted, underlined link at that point of the lesson plan, you can read the handout with Adobe Acrobat Reader and print it out for use in your classroom. You may wish to make an overhead transparency, PowerPoint or SmartBoard slide, in addition to student copies. There are additional activities and information corresponding to this piece on the [Classics for Kids website](#) under the “[Past Shows](#)” tab.



Assessment/Evaluation

Assessment strategies are included with each lesson. Simple rubrics tied to the specific objective/outcome of each lesson are included. Teachers may find it helpful to collect assessment on individual students over longer periods of time, assessing perhaps 8 students during each class, or whatever is practical to maximize instructional time for children to be actively involved. Teachers may also further develop the assessment strategies given to include more specific rubrics that fit their district music curricula or other guidelines.

Extensions

Each lesson includes optional strategies for extending the lesson either that same day or on a separate day. Teachers may devise their own lesson extensions as they take advantage of the “teachable moments” that occur in their classrooms!



RHYTHM (Steady Beat); FORM (Phrase)
MOVING; LISTENING
Grades 3-5

Lesson #1: Square Dance Time!

National Standard #6: • Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

National Standard #7: • Evaluating music and music performances

National Standard #8: • Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

National Standard #9: • Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Ohio 2012 Standards:

(Progress Points)• Listen to and perform a wide variety of music from multiple cultures focusing on the historical and cultural significance of the works.

- Relate historical information from the study of music to other art forms and disciplines outside the arts.
- Develop criteria to evaluate solo and group performances of music.

Critical Thinking Skills (measurable verbs):

relate/tell; describe/restate; demonstrate/practice; compare; combine; assess/rate/evaluate

Conceptual Learning:

Music can depict a dance in the American West. We can perform square dance movements to the beat and form of the music.

Objectives/Outcomes:

Students will listen and describe music. Students will perform square dance movements to the steady beat and form of the music. Students will evaluate their group performance.

Materials:

- [Recording of "Hoedown" from Rodeo](#), by Aaron Copland
- Large space for movement

Sequence:

1. Ask students to keep the beat of the music with one finger in the palm of the other hand as you play a brief excerpt of the recording beginning at 0:37. See if students are demonstrating the steady beat accurately, at about M.M.=112. Stop the recording.

2. Ask the class what they think the music is depicting. "What do you think the music is about?" Allow students to share answers. If one of them mentions country music, the Old West, or square dancing, probe further to ask how the student arrived at that



answer (sounded like fiddle music, etc.). “Does the music sound ‘American,’ or do you think it is from or about another country?”

3. Tell the class that, indeed, the music was written by an American composer and is about a hoedown in the American West (“Does anyone know what a hoedown is?”), and that the hoedown was part of a larger event called a rodeo. Share that a hoedown is a barn dance and a rodeo is a competition (that includes bull riding, among other things). Ask the class for a show of hands, “Who has ever square danced before? Who has ever seen square dancing before?” Tell them that today we’ll get to learn some basic square dance ‘moves.’ It is helpful to review any classroom rules and expectations regarding movement activities.

4. After demonstrating the following dance movements with a partner in front of the class, have students practice the movements. Although standard square dance formation is with 8 people per “square” (4 couples or pairs arranged like the points in a plus sign, +), the following movements could be done in one large circle if preferred. Standard practice is with boy-girl partners; see if you can ‘sell’ this to the students as a grown-up, authentic way of doing the dance. If desired, show a clip of square dancing from YouTube beforehand, pointing out the various movements.

(a) “join hands and circle right” – students all join hands and, facing right, walk or skip for 8 beats.

(b) “join hands and circle left” – repeat the above process, walking or skipping while facing left for 8 beats.

(c) “swing your Partner” – after dropping hands, students stand facing their partner, join right elbows and swing gently, walking or skipping to the beat for 8 beats total.

(d) “swing your Corner” – after determining that their Corner is the other person they are standing next to, on the other side, students join right elbows and swing gently, walking or skipping to the 8 beats.

(e) “do-si-do your Partner” – facing their partner with arms folded on top of each other at shoulder height, partners pass one another walking or skipping forward (passing right shoulders), step to the right, and walk or skip backwards (passing left shoulders) to their original places. Use 8 beats total.

(f) “do-si-do your Corner” – students repeat the process with their Corners for 8 beats.

(g) “gents to the center in a right-hand star” – all the boys (or, every odd-numbered person) moves to the center of the circle, holding their right hands up to form a “star,” and walking around the inside circle for 8 beats.

(h) “gents to the center in a left-hand star” – repeat above process using left hands.

(i) “ladies to the center in a right-hand star” – all the girls (or, every even-numbered person) moves to the center of the circle, holding their right hands up to form a “star,” and walking around the inside circle for 8 beats.

(j) “ladies to the center in a left-hand star” – repeat above process using left hands.



5. After practicing, begin the recording; using the music from 0:37–1:54, “call” the square dance movements for every 8 or 16 beats as desired, fitting the form of the music in terms of phrases. Older students can do all of the movements whereas you may want to limit the different movements for younger students or less experienced classes. If needed, you can always add “clap in place” as a ‘break’ from the square dance movements.

6. Video record the dance and play back the video for the class. Ask them to evaluate their performance in terms of specific criteria such as the fluency of movements to the beat, or other criteria they identify.

Closure/Questions:

1. “What was this music about?” (a hoedown, a barn dance, which was part of a rodeo competition set in the American West)
2. Share that the music was written by a famous American composer named Aaron Copland, and that it is ballet music about a rodeo, but that in this case the name of the ballet is called “ro-DAY-o” instead of “RO-dee-o.” This movement is entitled “Hoedown.”
3. “What kind of dancing would typically be done at a hoedown?” (square dancing)
4. “What were some of the square dance movements we learned today?” (various answers)
5. “No matter which dance movements we were doing, what part of music were we following all the time?” (the beat) “The beats were organized in groups of what number, with the movements we performed?” (8 – or 16 if the teacher chose that instead)

Assessment:

Watch for participation, physical coordination, and ability to keep the steady beat...

....All of the Time

....Most of the Time

....Only some of the Time

....Not yet

Use students’ assessment of themselves as a class.

Extensions:

- Have student “callers” of the square dance movements; they can ‘mix it up.’
- Learn a Play-Party dance such as the Virginia Reel.
- Listen to other music by Aaron Copland that depicts the American West, such as The Red Pony or Billy the Kid.



MELODY; HARMONY
CREATING; LISTENING; SINGING; PLAYING
Grades 3-5

Lesson #2: Recorder Time!

National Standard #1: • Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

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

National Standard #3: • Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

National Standard #4: • Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

National Standard #5: • Reading and notating music

National Standard #6: • Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

Ohio 2012 Standards: (Progress Points):

- Sing and play instruments, focusing on how musical elements...create meaning
- Listen to and perform a wide variety of music from multiple cultures focusing on the historical and cultural significance of the works.
- Develop criteria to evaluate solo and group performances of music.

Critical Thinking Skills (measurable verbs):

relate/tell; describe/restate; demonstrate/practice; compare; combine; assess/rate/evaluate

Conceptual Learning:

Music can have harmony based on one or more chords. We can create a recorder part based on the notes of just one chord.

Objectives/Outcomes:

Students will listen, analyze, and describe music. Students will first improvise, then compose an ostinato part for the recorder using the notes of the D Major chord (d-f#-a).

Materials:

- [Recording of "Hoedown" from Rodeo](#), by Aaron Copland
- [Recorder fingering chart for low D, F#, A, and high D](#)
- [Staff paper for Recorder Part to "Hoedown"](#)

Sequence:

1. Ask students to listen to the recording as you play along with in on piano or an Orff mallet instrument. Whenever they think what you are playing absolutely does not "go with" the recording – when what you are playing clashes too much and doesn't sound good – to raise their hand. If what you are playing sounds OK and "goes with" the recording, then they should keep their hand down.

2. Begin the recording at 0:36 and play the D Major chord on a piano along with the



recording. If desired, play individual notes of the chord (d-f#-a) instead of all three tones simultaneously. [Note to teacher: The entire A Section is in D Major. When you get to the B Section, at 1:33 on the recording, the D Major chord will no longer “fit” because the chord changes to G Major.] Guide students to discover that the notes of the D Major chord “fit” with the music from 0:37–1:33, the entire duration of Section A.

3. Explain that a chord is a group of notes that are played together, and that chords provide the harmony of the music, where more than one note is sounding at the same time. Have the class sing each note of the chord separately, then divide the class into groups that each sing different chord tones together in harmony. Tell the class that they will get to first improvise, then compose a recorder part to accompany or harmonize with the A Section of this piece, called “Hoedown,” by American composer Aaron Copland.

4. Review or learn the fingerings for the notes of the D Major chord using the [Recorder fingering chart for low D, F#, A, and high D](#). The teacher may choose one, two, three, or all four of these notes to teach the class as appropriate and desired.

5. After practicing the individual notes, allow students to improvise rhythmically or melodically (or both), using two, three, or all four of these notes as you play a steady beat on a hand drum, or using the D Major chord on the piano. If it is helpful, you can point to a note name/fingering or an easy rhythm to use. Point out the difference between composing (writing down the choices, so that the music can be performed the same way each time) and improvising (not writing down the choices, so that the music is performed somewhat differently each time).

6. Display the [Staff paper for Recorder Part to “Hoedown”](#) as a visual for the entire class to see (you may wish to project the page from your computer). The teacher can choose for the class to use the following rhythms as appropriate from the Rhythm Bank, written on the lower part of the visual: two half notes; four quarter notes; a half note and two quarter notes; two quarter notes and a half note; two quarter notes, a quarter rest, and a quarter note, etc. Encourage repetition and staying on the same note for one or more measures to ensure success and ease of playing.

7. Call on individual students to choose note names and rhythm (one student each) for each measure and write on the visual.

8. Practice singing and then playing the class-composed Recorder Part. Make changes or adjustments as needed for ease of playing.

9. Have the class play the Recorder Part softly while listening to the recording. (If their playing is too loud, have smaller groups play each line, taking turns.) Record their



playing and play it back, allowing the class to make revisions, identify specific criteria such as accuracy or tone quality, and to evaluate their performance.

Closure/Questions:

1. “What note names did we learn today?”
2. “How do you finger the note ___?” (use Assessment below to record responses)
3. “Why did all of these notes ‘go with’ the music? Why didn’t they ‘clash’ with it?” (because that section of the music was based upon the D Major chord)
4. “What is a chord?” (a group of notes played together) “What is ‘harmony’ of music?” (more than one note happening at the same time)
5. “What is the difference between improvising and composing?” (the first is not written down; the second is)

Assessment:

- Assess the playing skill of each student over time, during this lesson and other recorder-based lessons, using the following rubric:

Accurate 85–100% Accurate 70–85% Accurate <70%

Fingering
Tone
Rhythm
Tonguing

- Use students’ assessment of their class’ performance, or a self-assessment of their own playing based upon these criteria or others they identify.
- Note students’ willingness to contribute ideas and to try out multiple ideas.

Extension:

Have small groups of 3–5 students compose their own Recorder Part using the same notes and Rhythm Bank, or, have students each write their own individual Recorder Part.



RHYTHM (Sixteenths); TONE COLOR
PLAYING; LISTENING
Grades 3-5

Lesson #3: Sixteenth-Note Time!

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

National Standard #5: • Reading and notating music

National Standard #6: • Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

National Standard #7: • Evaluating music and music performances

Ohio 2012 Standards (Progress Points):

- [Sing and] play instruments, focusing on how musical elements...create meaning.
- Listen to and perform a wide variety of music from multiple cultures focusing on the historical and cultural significance of the works.
- Identify and classify [voices], musical instruments, [roles and careers of musicians].
- Develop criteria to evaluate solo and group performances of music.

Critical Thinking Skills (measurable verbs):

relate/tell; describe/identify/restate; demonstrate/practice; compare; combine; assess/ rate/evaluate

Conceptual Learning:

Music can use rhythm patterns involving sixteenth notes, which can move quite fast depending on the tempo (speed) of the music.

Objectives/Outcomes:

Students will count, clap, read, and play sixteenth-note patterns from the A Section of “Hoedown” by Aaron Copland. Students will evaluate their class performance.

Materials:

- [Recording of “Hoedown” from Rodeo](#), by Aaron Copland
- [Rhythm of “Hoedown”](#) (beginning of Section A) visual
- Temple blocks and/or hand drums (or any other drums)

Sequence:

1. Have student “echo clap” and/or “echo walk” various rhythm patterns that you clap for them which involve sixteenth notes (you can choose one-beat patterns directly from the [Rhythm of “Hoedown”](#) (beginning of Section A) visual
2. Display the visual, [Rhythm of “Hoedown”](#)
3. Ask students to read and silently practice the rhythm with one finger in the opposite palm.
4. Review (or teach) how to count the sixteenth note rhythms. You may wish to start



with a group of 4 sixteenth-notes (ti-ka-ti-ka or ti-ri-ti-ri); have students problem solve how to count the pattern of an eighth with 2 sixteenths (ti, ti-ka or ti, ti-ri) and the pattern of 2 sixteenths and one eighth (ti-ka, ti or ti-ri, ti), first covering the 'answers'.

5. Have students practice saying and clapping the entire rhythm slowly, with a steady beat that you provide on a drum. Next, have students practice saying and patting (patsching) the rhythm on their legs, alternating their hands whenever possible.

6. Transfer the pattern to temple blocks or hand drums, alternating the hands as students practiced. (Note: If using hand drums, it is helpful to have students hold the drum between their knees while sitting. Bongo, conga, or tubano drums are easier to use in this regard.) Have students take turns playing. Gradually work up to a faster tempo, around M.M.=112.

7. Next, ask students to listen to the recording of "Hoedown" from Rodeo, by Aaron Copland (written in 1942) and to raise their hands when they hear the rhythm they have learned to play. [Note to teacher: The rhythm is first heard at 0:37.] "What instrument or group of instruments is prominently playing the rhythm pattern?" (mainly the violins or strings)

8. Students can pat the rhythm softly when it occurs while listening to the music.

9. If students are able to pat the rhythm at the tempo of the recording, then allow a small group to play the instruments quietly along with the recording.

10. Record the students' performance with or without the recording and then play it back, asking the class to identify criteria such as rhythmic accuracy or fluency, and to evaluate their performance.

Closure/Questions:

1. "What rhythm patterns did we learn today?"
2. "How do you count this rhythm (selected)?" (see Assessment below)
3. "What instrumental tone colors did we use today?" (drums, temple blocks – and listened to an orchestra with the strings being a prominent part of the section we used)

Assessment:

Assess the rhythmic skill of each student over time, (counting and/or playing) during this lesson and other rhythm-based lessons, using the following rubric:

Accurate all or most of the time some of the time seldom/not yet
selected rhythm pattern)



Extensions:

- Allow students to compose their own rhythm patterns by re-arranging the various combinations used in this lesson. Perform on temple blocks or hand drums.
- Listen to another version of “Hoedown” as performed by the 70s rock group Emerson, Lake and Palmer (available on iTunes). Compare the two versions using a Venn diagram if desired. “How does the speed or tempo of the two versions compare?” (the rock version is faster) “Instead of an orchestra, what instruments are used?” (a synthesizer keyboard, drums, bass guitar)