

Steady Beat and Form with Bluegrass and Fiddle Tunes

By Ron Korbitz; Brookdale Elementary School; Naperville, Ill.

Grade level: K-1

Subject area focus: Music

Brief Summary:

This lesson plan will use bluegrass and traditional fiddle tunes to focus student attention on steady beat and simple AB (verse and refrain) song forms. Some of the songs will be used as originally composed, and some will use altered lyrics to make them more helpful for learning at this level. Students will utilize listening skills, singing, movement and rhythm instruments in various combinations to reinforce lesson concepts.

Goals and Objectives:

Students will develop the ability to identify steady beat and AB patterns found in a variety of traditional bluegrass songs and fiddle tunes.

Summary of Lesson:

Students will listen to "Eight More Miles to Louisville" and tap a steady beat along with the teacher. Teacher will tap the Steady Beat (S.B.) on knees during the verses and tap the S.B. on head during the refrain. At song's conclusion, teacher will question the movement of the S.B. from knees to head and guide students to AB form answer, and then explain that all of the day's music will use this form. Students will then be directed to sing the refrain (altered) of "Old Joe Clark." (see attachment #1) Students will follow song's directions during the verse and march a steady beat while singing the refrain. Teacher will then sing "Sourwood Mountain" (see attachment #2) teaching the children to sing along with the line "hey ho diddle um day." Teacher will then guide students through the dance for "Sourwood Mountain" (see attachment #3) reinforcing the AB form. Distribute rhythm sticks to half of the class and hand drums to the other half of the class (any rhythm instruments and/or clapping and tapping pattern may be substituted). Play "I Wonder How the Old Folks Are at Home" and guide the students with rhythm sticks to play on the verses and the students with drums to play on the refrain.

Evaluation & Assessment: See attachment #4

Follow-up Activities:

Similar lessons finding steady beat and identifying form could be used throughout the school year. Bluegrass songs and fiddle tunes could be used as well as other music styles. Brief statements about the origins of the music should be included as the year progresses.

Additional info, including national and/or state requirements or standards addressed:

This lesson meets the following National Standards for Music and Dance:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instrument, along and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Listening to, analyzing and describing music.
4. Understanding the relationship between music and other arts (dance).
5. Identifying and demonstrating movement elements and skills in performing dance.
6. Making connections between dance and other disciplines (music).

Resources used:

Audio Resources

"Eight More Miles to Louisville," recorded by Grandpa Jones, written by L.M. Jones/Fort Knox Music Co./Trio Music Co., Inc., BMI, from *The Definitive Bluegrass Collection*, CMH CD-1797

"I Wonder How the Old Folks Are at Home," recorded by Mac Wiseman, arranged by M.Christian/Silver Hill Music BMI, from *The Definitive Bluegrass Collection*, CMH CD-1797.

Song Resources

"Clap Your Hands," Traditional, Public Domain, adapted by Ron Korbitz

"Sourwood Mountain," Traditional, Public Domain

Other Resources

Dance for "Sourwood Mountain," created by Ron Korbitz

Lesson Plan Outline: Steady Beat and Form with Bluegrass and Fiddle Tunes

Objectives: Students will identify the steady beat and AB form found in bluegrass and traditional fiddle tunes.

Materials used: CD - *Definitive Bluegrass Collection*, music for "Clap Your Hands" and "Sourwood Mountain," dance directions for "Sourwood Mountain," sticks and drums

Prior Knowledge and Experiences/Curriculum Content: Not necessary. This lesson is designed for introductory skill development. Curriculum focus: steady beat, AB form, bluegrass, fiddle tunes.

Procedure:

1. Play "Eight More Miles to Louisville," CD track 8. Students should follow teacher in tapping steady beat on knees during verses and clapping during Refrains. Teacher should briefly discuss AB Form.
2. Sing and Play "Clap your Hands" (see attachment #1) with students following song actions during verse and marching a steady beat while singing refrain.
3. Teach dance for "Sourwood Mountain" (see attachment #3). Sing though "Sourwood

Mountain” with students.

4. Sing “Sourwood Mountain” while students perform dance. Encourage them to join in singing as well.

5. Distribute rhythm sticks and drums. Play “I Wonder How the Old Folks Are Tonight,” CD track #2. Instruct students with sticks to tap steady beat during verse and students with drums to tap steady beat during refrain.

Indicators of success:

- Students are observably able to keep a steady beat.
- Students are able to identify verse and refrain or AB form.

Supplementary information:

Songs may be accompanied by guitar, banjo or mandolin or may be sung unaccompanied. It would be very important to tell students that the style of the music is bluegrass!

Attachments:

- #1. “Clap Your Hands” (“Old Joe Clark”) music
- #2. “Sourwood Mountain” music
- #3. Dance directions for “Sourwood Mountain”
- #4. Sample observation checklist for assessment

Attachment #1

Clap Your Hands
(Old Joe Clark)

Traditional

1. Clap clap
2. Tap tap

clap your hands,
tap your knees,

Clap your hands to-

geth-er
geth-er

Clap clap
Tap tap

clap your hands,
tap your knees,

Clap your hands to-

geth-er.
geth-er.

La la la la la la la La la la la la la

La la la la la la la La la la la la la

3. Wiggle wiggle wiggle your fingers...
4. Shake shake shake your hips...
5. Tap tap tap your head...
6. Sit sit sit back down....

Feel free to add or remove verses as you choose.

Students should stand still and do the described action during the verse and march a steady beat while singing the refrain.

Attachment #2

Sourwood Mountain

My true love lives up the hol - lar Hey ho a did - die um day
My true love lives a blue - eyed dai - sy
My true love lives and the little ones bite you
My true love lives up the riv - er

1 D G D G D A D

She won't come and I can't fol - ler Hey ho a did - die um day
All don't get her and I'll go cra - zy
A few girls more jumps and the little ones be sight with her

5 D G D G D A D

Dick - ens crown on sour - wood moun - tain Hey ho a id - die um day

9 D G D D A (D)

So many pretty girls I can't count em Hey ho a did - die um day

13 D G D G D A D

Dance for Sourwood Mountain

1. Students join hands in a circle. Circle should be composed in a boy/girl/boy/girl pattern.
2. Students march four steps counterclockwise during first half of verse.
3. Students stop and clap the rhythm of "hey ho diddle um day."
4. Students march another four steps counterclockwise during second half of verse.
5. Students stop and clap the rhythm of "hey ho diddle um day."
6. Boys take two steps into the circle pivot and take two steps back out during the first part of the refrain. All stop and clap the rhythm of "hey ho diddle um day."
7. Girls take two steps into the circle pivot and take two steps back out during the second part of the refrain. All stop and clap the rhythm of "hey ho diddle um day."
8. Dance repeats for each of the four verses.

