



## **Introduction to Music Unit for grades 3-5 On Variations on "Ah vous dirai-je, maman" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

### **Unit Length**

There are 3 lessons in this unit for grades 3-5. Lesson plans are designed for class periods of approximately 30-45 minutes. Teachers will need to adapt the lesson plans to fit their school resources and the individual needs of their students.

### **Lesson Use**

These 3 lessons are designed for use by general music teachers; however, portions of the lessons could be used by classroom teachers as well.

### **Standards**

#### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #1: Creating**

Anchor Standard – Imagine

Objectives:

- Lesson 1
- Lesson 2

Anchor Standard - Plan and Make

Objectives:

- Lesson 1

Anchor Standard - Evaluate and Refine

Anchor Standard - Present

Objectives:

- Lesson 2

#### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #2: Performing**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze

Objectives:

- Lesson 1
- Lesson 2
- Lesson 3

Anchor Standard – Interpret

Anchor Standard - Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine



Objectives:

- Lesson 2

Anchor Standard – Present

Objectives:

- Lesson 2

### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #3: Responding**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze

Anchor Standard – Interpret

Objectives:

- Lesson 3

Anchor Standard – Evaluate

Objectives:

- Lesson 2

### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #4: Connecting**

Anchor Standard - Connect #10

Objectives:

- Lesson 2
- Lesson 3

Anchor Standard - Connect #11

### **Multiple Intelligences**

These lessons facilitate musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence, 4 of the 7 intelligences originally identified by Howard Gardner.

### **Overview**

Music Concepts and Objectives/Outcomes are indicated on each lesson. Over the 3 lessons, all 6 of the Concept Areas of Rhythm, Melody, Form, Timbre/Tone Color, and Harmony are used (also Style, as a combination of several of these). Skills developed over the 3 lessons are Singing, Moving, Listening, Playing Instruments, Creating, and Relating music to other subject areas.



Lesson #1: [Introduction to Theme and Variations](#)

Lesson #2: [Create and Play Theme and Variations](#)

Lesson #3: [History and Mozart's Variations](#)

### **Prior Knowledge**

No prior knowledge on the part of the student is needed, although it is helpful to have had experience keeping a steady beat, using Curwen hand signs to indicate Sol-Mi-La-Re-Do, using quarter, eighth, and half notes and quarter rests in 2/4 meter, identifying different sections of a piece through listening, and playing non-pitched and pitched percussion instruments. Experience moving throughout the room to music as well as working in partners is also helpful for sections of the lessons, with established guidelines for such activities.

### **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. [The Classics for Kids CD](#) or [Website](#) is very helpful in this regard!

### **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. The plans have been "teacher-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 teacher resource materials. 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 in addition to student copies.



### **Assessment/Evaluation**

Assessment strategies are included with each lesson. For grades 3-5, simple guidelines are included from which to develop criteria and rubrics tied to the specific objective/outcome of each lesson. 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.

### **Extensions**

Each lesson includes 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!



**FORM, RHYTHM, MELODY  
LISTENING, MOVING, PLAYING, SINGING  
grades 3-5**

**Lesson Plan #1: Theme and Variations**

**Standards:**

**National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #1: Creating**

Anchor Standard – Imagine

**Objectives:**

- MU:Cr1.1.3b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms and melodies) within a given tonality and/or meter. (extension)
- MU:Cr1.1.4b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and simple accompaniment patterns) within related tonalities (such as major and minor) and meters. (extension)
- MU:Cr1.1.5b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and accompaniment patterns) within specific related tonalities, meters, and simple chord changes. (extension)

Anchor Standard - Plan and Make

**Objectives:**

- MU:Cr2.1.3b Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or recording technology to document personal rhythmic and melodic musical ideas. (extension)
- MU:Cr2.1.4b Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or recording technology to document personal rhythmic, melodic, and simple harmonic musical ideas. (extension)
- MU:Cr2.1.5b Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or recording technology to document personal rhythmic, melodic, and two-chord harmonic musical ideas. (extension)

Anchor Standard - Evaluate and Refine

Anchor Standard - Present

**National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #2: Performing**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze



#### Objectives:

- MU:Pr4.2.3a Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance.
- MU:Pr4.2.4a Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form) in music selected for performance
- MU:Pr4.2.5a Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance.
- MU:Pr4.2.3b When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic patterns and melodic phrases using iconic and standard notation.
- MU:Pr4.2.4b When analyzing selected music, read and perform using iconic and/or standard notation.
- MU:Pr4.2.5b When analyzing selected music, read and perform using standard notation.

Anchor Standard – Interpret

Anchor Standard - Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine

Anchor Standard – Present

#### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #3: Responding**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze

Anchor Standard – Interpret

Anchor Standard – Evaluate

#### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #4: Connecting**

Anchor Standard - Connect #10

Anchor Standard - Connect #11

#### **Ohio Standards:**

- Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts. (Identify and demonstrate form of phrases; identify, listen and respond to music of different composers.)
- Creative Expression and Communication. (Read, write, sing, and play melodies with do-re-mi-fa-so-la on the treble staff in C-do using a system – solfege, numbers, or letters; read, write and perform melodies in treble clef.)
- Analyzing and Responding (Identify and respond to simple music forms (e.g., theme and variations); identify how elements of music communicate



ideas (e.g., meter); identify terms related to form (e.g., theme, variation, coda).

- Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection (Respond physically, emotionally and/or intellectually to a variety of age-appropriate music; discuss and evaluate individual and group music performance.)
- Connections, Relationships and Applications (Identify similarities and differences between music and other arts disciplines.)

### **Multiple Intelligences:**

Musical, Interpersonal, Bodily-Kinesthetic

### **Concept:**

The large form of a piece of music may be comprised of smaller units of form. Rhythm and meter can be altered to create variations.

### **Objective/Outcome:**

Students will listen, analyze, and respond with singing, playing instruments, discussion, and movement to a main theme's melody and variations that include changes in rhythm, meter, and tonality. Students will play a melody on pitched instruments in several tonalities.

### **Materials:**

- recording of Variations on "Ah vous dirai-je, maman" by Mozart (available on the Classics for Kids CD or the
- Classics for Kids website) [Note: The Classics for Kids CD has the theme plus 2 variations, played on piano.]
- ["Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"](#)
- ["Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" in D](#)
- ["Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" in F](#)
- ["Twinkle, Twinkle" in 3](#)
- [Curwen hand signs chart](#)
- recorders (optional), pitched instruments such as xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels, or chromatic bells (will need F# and Bb)
- tennis balls (preferably "dead" ones) or other balls



### Sequence:

1. Distribute copies of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" and display the Curwen hand signs chart. If needed, also display a C-Major Scale with the syllables labeled (or, ask students to label as a class). In small groups or individually, have students write the syllables for each note of "Twinkle" and then softly practice humming the tune while doing the hand signs. When everyone is ready, perform the song with solfege syllables and hand signs together. [If desired, learn to play "Twinkle" in C Major on the recorder or pitched mallet instruments.]
2. Next, display a transparency of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" in D. Explain that since D is now Do, the hand signs will be the same even though the note names are different [Kodály uses a movable Do system]. Point out that there will be an F# because of the key signature for D Major. In small groups or individually, have students write the note names for each note in the new key. [If desired, learn to play "Twinkle" in D Major on the recorder or pitched mallet instruments.] For a comparison to a minor key, play F instead of F# and ask students to describe the dark, mysterious quality of the piece, now in D Minor, with only this small change made; this is now a variation of the main theme or melody.
3. Next, display a transparency of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" in F. Ask students what note is the new Do (F). Point out that there will be a Bb because of the key signature for F Major. In small groups or individually, have students write the note names for each note in the new key. [If desired, learn to play "Twinkle" in F Major on the recorder or pitched mallet instruments.]
4. Play the recording of Mozart's Variations on "Ah vous dirai-je, maman," pausing at the end of the main theme (0:00-1:02 on the Classics for Kids CD). Ask students to repeat the term for the main melody (theme); ask what the term is for changing the theme (variation).
5. Continue the recording and listen to the first variation (1:06-2:00). Ask students to describe how Mozart changed the main theme (lots of sixteenth notes in the right hand, embellishing the melody).
6. To prepare for the next variation, explain that students will now get to use tennis balls to play a game of "follow" or "quick change." Review rules



regarding the use of balls in the classroom first before distributing. If space permits, each student may have a tennis ball; or, in smaller rooms, a pair of students may bounce a ball to each other; in even smaller rooms, use several students to demonstrate or make a single circle with one student in the center to bounce the ball to individual students. Give the instruction to bounce and catch the ball in a way that fits the grouping of the beats in the music.

7. Play “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” and have students bounce-catch (down-up) with the ball to fit the meter of 2 or 4. [Note: You can harmonize the melody using the C, F, and G chords.] Next, change, “Twinkle, Twinkle” in 3 and see how students adjust their bouncing to fit the music (encourage students to keep the main bounce on beat 1 of the music). Stop and discuss the possibilities, having students perform their movements for the class, allowing everyone else to try out various movements with their tennis balls. Ask if anyone in the class knows the musical term that refers to the grouping of beats, such as “in 2” or “in 3” (meter-related to the written symbol at the beginning of a piece called the time signature).

8. Next, play a game of “switch” or “quick change” where students follow what you play on the piano, whether “Twinkle” is in 2 or 3 – make it fun!

9. After the tennis balls have been put away, sit down and listen to the second variation on the recording, pausing before the ending (2:02-3:11). What did Mozart do with this variation? Guide students to describe the changes in musical terms. (This variation is in 3; it has many sixteenth notes in the left hand for all the “a” phrases, and both hands play sixteenth notes together for all the “b” phrases.)

10. Next, listen to the ending (3:11-3:22). Ask if anyone in the class knows the musical term for a special ending (coda). If time permits, listen to the entire variation (or the entire recording) one last time.

### **Closure/Questions:**

What is the term for the main melody or musical idea of a piece of music? (theme) What is the term for a version of the main theme but with changes made to it? (variation) What is the term for the special ending a composer might write? (coda) What is the term for the grouping of beats, which can be



notated with a time signature? (meter) What famous composer wrote the variations we listened to today? (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)

### **Assessment/Evaluation:**

Throughout the lesson, check for understanding and demonstration of steady beat, meter, in-tune singing, and proper hand sign and instrument technique, noting whether individual students were able to do so successfully.

### **Sample Rubric:**

All/Most of the Time | Sometimes | Not Yet

- Original idea for meter of 3
- Responded quickly to meter changes
- Described selections in musical terms
- Participated and was on task
- Demonstrated hand signs correctly
- Demonstrated in-tune singing
- Demonstrated correct instrument technique

### **Extensions:**

(1) Allow students individually or in pairs to compose their own melodies on recorder or a pitched mallet instrument using do, re, mi, fa, so, and la in the key of C or F; then, guide students to create a variation of their melody by changing the meter or rhythm.

(2) Invite any students who study the Suzuki Method to perform their "Twinkle" variations for the class.



**FORM, RHYTHM, MELODY  
LISTENING, PLAYING, CREATING  
grades 3-5**

**Lesson Plan #2: Create and Play Theme and Variations**

**Standards:**

**National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #1: Creating**

Anchor Standard – Imagine

Objectives:

- MU:Cr1.1.3b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms and melodies) within a given tonality and/or meter.
- MU:Cr1.1.4b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and simple accompaniment patterns) within related tonalities (such as major and minor) and meters.
- MU:Cr1.1.5b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and accompaniment patterns) within specific related tonalities, meters, and simple chord changes.

Anchor Standard - Plan and Make

Anchor Standard - Evaluate and Refine

Anchor Standard - Present

Objectives:

- MU:Cr3.2.3a Present the final version of personal created music to others, and describe connection to expressive intent.
- MU:Cr3.2.4a Present the final version of personal created music to others, and explain connection to expressive intent.
- MU:Cr3.2.5a Present the final version of personal created music to others that demonstrates craftsmanship, and explain connection to expressive intent.

**National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #2: Performing**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze

Objectives:

- MU:Pr4.2.3a Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance.
- MU:Pr4.2.4a Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form) in music selected for performance.
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- MU:Pr4.2.5a Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance.

Anchor Standard – Interpret

Anchor Standard - Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine

Objectives:

- MU:Pr5.1.3a - Apply teacher-provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to evaluate the accuracy of ensemble performances.
- MU:Pr5.1.4a Apply teacher-provided and collaboratively developed criteria and feedback to evaluate accuracy and expressiveness of ensemble and personal performances
- MU:Pr5.1.5a Apply teacher-provided and established criteria and feedback to evaluate the accuracy and expressiveness of ensemble and personal performances.

Anchor Standard – Present

Objectives:

- MU:Pr6.1.3b Demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context and venue.
- MU:Pr6.1.4b Demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context, venue, and genre.
- MU:Pr6.1.5b Demonstrate performance decorum and audience etiquette appropriate for the context, venue, genre, and style.

### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #3: Responding**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze

Anchor Standard – Interpret

Anchor Standard – Evaluate

Objectives:

- MU:Re9.1.3a Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and describe appropriateness to the context.
- MU:Re9.1.4a Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context.
- MU:Re9.1.5a Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context, citing evidence from the elements of music.



## **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #4: Connecting**

### **Anchor Standard - Connect #10**

#### **Objectives:**

- MU:Cn10.0.3a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.
- MU:Cn10.0.4a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.
- MU:Cn10.0.5a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

### **Anchor Standard - Connect #11**

#### **Ohio Standards:**

- Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts. (Identify, listen and respond to music of different composers; identify and demonstrate basic music forms.)
- Creative Expression and Communication. (Improvise and compose simple rhythmic and melodic phrases and ostinati; read, write and perform using quarter notes, half notes and quarter rests in 4/4 meter; read, write and perform melodies in treble clef; play a variety of instruments independently and with other contrasting parts; identify key signatures.)
- Analyzing and Responding (Identify and respond to simple music forms (e.g., theme and variations); discuss and evaluate group music performance; identify and demonstrate elements of music using developmentally appropriate vocabulary and music terms.)
- Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection (Discuss and evaluate individual and group music performance; develop criteria for reflecting on their performances and the performances of others.)
- Connections, Relationships and Applications (Explain ways that the basic principles and subject matter of music are interrelated with disciplines outside the arts; describe how knowledge of music connects to learning in other subject areas.)

**Multiple Intelligences:**

Musical, Interpersonal, Bodily-Kinesthetic

**Concept:**

A song's text can be altered to create a new "piggyback" song that can be the melody for an arrangement. Improvisation creates variations.

**Objective/Outcome:**

- Students will create a "piggyback" song using a famous melody with different words.
- Students will play an Orff arrangement on mallet instruments. Students will improvise rhythmically while playing pitched instruments.
- Students will evaluate their performances.

**Materials:**

- recording of Variations on "Ah vous dirai-je, maman" by Mozart (available on the [Classics for Kids CD](#) or the [Classics for Kids website](#)) [Note: The Classics for Kids CD has the theme plus 2 variations, played on piano.]
- [Orff arrangement to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"](#)
- [Twinkle, Twinkle](#) (words only)
- recorders (optional), pitched instruments such as xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels (will need F#); one non-pitched percussion instrument such as triangle, finger cymbals, or wind chimes
- blank notebook paper and pencils (one per small group)

**Sequence:**

1. Tell students that today we'll be using an "easy" song that they learned years ago, but doing some creative and challenging things with it. [If desired, learn to play "Twinkle" in D Major on the recorder or pitched mallet instruments. Note: For proper mallet technique, the repeated notes of the melody require alternating mallets.]
2. Next, explain "piggybacking" new words onto a well-known melody. What other songs use the same melody as "Twinkle"? ("The Alphabet Song," "Baa, Baa Black Sheep.") Look for patterns in the words of Twinkle, Twinkle and describe. (The first 2 lines rhyme and are the same as the last 2 lines. The two middle lines rhyme and are shorter.)
3. Collect "data" ahead of time and organize students into small groups based on their favorite hobby, sport, or food. Have them write new lyrics to



“Twinkle, Twinkle” on a sheet of notebook paper, and give the song a new title. Have them practice singing their new lyrics. Follow the format of the old lyrics, in 6 lines, with the first 2 lines the same as the last 2 lines; also, note that each 2 lines rhyme. (Teacher could have the whole class create one piggyback song altogether instead of in small groups.) This will likely take 5-12 minutes in groups. Circulate among the groups to provide assistance and to make sure all students are contributing ideas. Explain that you can adapt the melody to fit multiple syllables of various words they may want to use.

4. Next, display a transparency of Orff Arrangement of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.” Look for repeated sections that make learning it easy. Practice on paper xylophones or using body percussion. Learn the parts. Play the arrangement. Explain that we will use this arrangement to accompany all the new variations we’ve created. [Note: This lesson could continue without steps 4 and 5, with groups accompanied by the teacher at the piano, or singing without accompaniment.]

5. Everyone accompanies the group who is singing their created lyrics. All groups perform through accompanying other groups and by singing their own creation. Discuss how each group communicates the text of their song through music; were different lyrics expressed in different ways?

6. Evaluate: Everyone participates in verbalizing strengths and suggestions to each group after they have performed after identifying the criteria together as a class.

7. Once the accompaniment parts are very solid, you may encourage the players to rhythmically improvise on each note using a combination of quarter, eighth, or sixteenth notes and rests. They must, however, change to the next note in time.

8. If time permits, play the recording of Mozart’s Variations on “Ah vous dirai-je, maman,” pausing at the end of the main theme (0:00-1:02 on the Classics for Kids CD). Ask students to repeat the term for the main melody (theme); ask what the term is for changing the theme (variation).

9. Continue the recording and listen to the first variation (1:06-2:00). Ask students to describe how Mozart changed the main theme (lots of sixteenth notes in the right hand, embellishing the melody).



10. Listen to the second variation on the recording, pausing before the ending (2:02-3:11). What did Mozart do with this variation? Guide students to describe the changes in musical terms. (This variation is in 3; it has many sixteenth notes in the left hand for all the “a” phrases, and both hands play sixteenth notes together for all the “b” phrases.)

11. Next, listen to the ending (3:11-3:22). Ask if anyone in the class knows the musical term for a special ending (coda). If time permits, listen to the entire variation (or the entire recording) one last time.

### **Closure/Questions:**

1. What technique did we use to create new songs? (“piggybacking” new words onto an existing tune)
2. What is improvisation (making up a new part on the spot)
3. How did we improvise? (by changing the rhythm)
4. What is the term for the main melody or musical idea of a piece of music? (theme)
5. What is the term for a version of the main theme but with changes made to it? (variation)
6. What famous composer wrote the variations we listened to today? (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)

### **Assessment/Evaluation:**

Throughout the lesson, check for understanding and demonstration of steady beat, meter, in-tune singing, and proper hand sign and instrument technique, noting whether individual students were able to do so successfully.

### **Sample Rubric:**

All/Most of the Time | Sometimes | Not Yet

- Worked well in group
- Contributed musical ideas
- Described selections in musical terms
- Demonstrated in-tune singing
- Demonstrated correct instrument technique
- Played correct pitches and rhythms
- Demonstrated understanding of repeated patterns



**Extensions:**

(1) Have the class perform for a younger grade class, accompanying them singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

(2) Allow students individually or in pairs to compose their own melodies on recorder or a pitched mallet instrument using do, re, mi, fa, so, and la in the key of D Major; then, guide students to create a variation of their melody by changing the meter or rhythm.

(3) Invite any students who study the Suzuki Method to perform their "Twinkle" variations for the class.

(4) Change the F# bars back to F natural and play the Orff arrangement, noting the change to a minor tonality.



**TONE COLOR, RHYTHM, MELODY, [STYLE]  
LISTENING, SINGING  
grades 3-5**

**Lesson Plan #3: History and Mozart's Variations**

**Standards:**

**National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #1: Creating**

Anchor Standard – Imagine

Anchor Standard - Plan and Make

Anchor Standard - Evaluate and Refine

Anchor Standard - Present

**National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #2: Performing**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze

**Objectives:**

- MU:Pr4.2.3c Describe how context (such as personal and social) can inform a performance.
- MU:Pr4.2.4c Explain how context (such as social and cultural) informs a performance.
- MU:Pr4.2.5c Explain how context (such as social, cultural, and historical) informs performances.

Anchor Standard – Interpret

Anchor Standard - Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine

Anchor Standard – Present

**National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #3: Responding**

Anchor Standard – Select

Anchor Standard – Analyze

Anchor Standard – Interpret

**Objectives:**

- MU:Re8.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how the expressive qualities (such as dynamics, tempo, and timbre) are used in performers' and personal interpretations to reflect expressive intent.
- MU:Re8.1.5a Demonstrate and explain how the expressive qualities (such as dynamics, tempo, timbre, and articulation) are used in performers' and personal interpretations to reflect.



Anchor Standard – Evaluate

### **National Core Music Standard – Artistic Process #4: Connecting**

Anchor Standard - Connect #10

Objectives:

- MU:Cn10.0.3a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music
- MU:Cn10.0.4a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.
- MU:Cn10.0.5a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

Anchor Standard - Connect #11

### **Ohio Standards:**

- Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts. (Identify and respond to music of historical and cultural origins; recognize the interaction of people in music; compare and contrast styles and forms of music from various historical periods; identify composers and classify them according to chronological historical periods.)
- Analyzing and Responding (Identify the sounds of a variety of instruments including orchestra, band and classroom instruments; apply appropriate criteria to support personal preferences for music choice and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of a music performance).
- Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection (Demonstrate how music communicates meaning of text, feelings, moods or images, and influences personal preferences; reflect on why others may have different music preferences; justify one's personal preference of music choice using music vocabulary.)
- Connections, Relationships and Applications (Explain ways that music interrelates with other arts disciplines and with various disciplines outside the arts; demonstrate ways that subject matter of other disciplines is interrelated with that of music.)

### **Multiple Intelligences:**

Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal

**Concept:**

There were other keyboard instruments before the piano as we know it today, and other keyboard instruments were used in various musical settings. Folk songs have various origins; different texts can be used for the same folk song and a folk song can be played in different musical styles. History, poetry, and music are interrelated.

**Objective/Outcome:**

Students will see, hear, and describe the differences in keyboard instruments. Students will read about and sing different versions of a French folk song. Students will describe different musical elements in relation to different styles of music.

**Materials:**

- recording of Variations on “Ah vous dirai-je, maman” by Mozart (available on the [Classics for Kids CD](#) or the [Classics for Kids website](#)) [Note: The Classics for Kids CD has the theme plus 2 variations, played on piano.]
- [French text and translation](#) for “Ah vous dirai-je, maman”
- [“Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”](#) - 5 verses
- listening examples of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” in various musical styles
- [pictures of keyboard instruments](#) such as organ, harpsichord, clavichord, spinet, cembalo, and fortepiano.

**Sequence:**

1. Tell students that today we’ll be using an “easy” song that they learned years ago, but will be digging much deeper into its past and present.
2. Play the recording of Mozart’s Variations on “Ah vous dirai-je, maman,” the section featuring the first variation (1:06-2:00 on the Classics for Kids CD). Review the meaning of the term variation and identify the famous tune on which it is based. Tell students that Mozart (1756-1791) composed during the Classical Period and wrote this piece in 1785, it is believed.
3. Display an overhead transparency of the French text and translation for “Ah vous dirai-je, maman”. If by chance there is a student who speaks French in your class allow, him/her to read the text (lyrics). Go over the English translation of the text: “Ah! I shall tell you, mama, what causes my torment.



Papa wants me to reason like a grown-up. Me, I say that candy is worth more than reason." Discuss possible meanings of the words and how the simple, childlike melody fits the idea conveyed. Explain that this melody originated in 1761 in France. Next, play a sample from iTunes on a laptop or iPod: type in "Ah! vous dirai-je, maman" and scroll down to The Swingle Singers, from their recording entitled *Anyone for Mozart, Bach, Handel, Vivaldi?* Have students describe the style (vocal jazz/classical) in musical elements (rhythms, instruments, etc.).

4. Next, ask how many versions of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" students have heard before – in what styles of music? A jazz version? an American Indian pow-wow version? a "new age" version? a big band? Play samples of these versions for them:

- [New Orleans Jazz:](#)
- [Pow Wow:](#)  
Sung by the Black Lodge Singers, from their CD *Kids' Pow-wow Songs* (also found on iTunes under "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star").
- [New Age:](#)
- [In French:](#)

Various style examples (30-second free clips) found on iTunes can be accessed. Some of these are the same as those listed above:

- Type in "Twinkle, Twinkle" and scroll down to B. Aishwarya, a version from the album entitled *CD Nursery Rhymes Vol. 2*.
- Type in "Twinkle, Twinkle" and scroll down to "Kirakira Boshi", played by Aiko Shimada and Elizabeth Falconer off the CD *Oyasumi – Goodnight*.
- Type in "Twinkle, Twinkle" and scroll down to Black Lodge Singers from their CD *Kids' Pow-wow Songs*.
- Type in "Twinkle, Twinkle" and scroll down to Ed Vezinho & Jim Ward Big Band from their CD *Blue-Haired Mama*.

Discuss which was each student's favorite and why (in musical terms). Allow time to reflect on this and to reflect on other people's reasons for liking different favorite versions than your own favorite.

5. Next, ask how many verses they think the famous song "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" has (probably only one). Inform them that there are, surprisingly, five verses to the song. If you wish, display an overhead transparency of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"–5 verses [Source: Wikipedia] and have several



different students read a verse; or, read several yourself aloud to the class. (Third graders might enjoy singing all five verses.) Explain that this poem, originally called “The Star,” was written by Jane Taylor in England and first published in 1806. The repetition of the first two lines at the end is not in the original poem, but was added for the words to fit the French folk song melody

Emphasize that folk songs are often adapted and used in different ways by different people and for different situations. Using a laptop or an iPod, type in “Four Variations on ‘Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star’” and scroll down to Various Artists and the L.A. Guitar Ensemble from their recording The Mozart Variations. Discuss the example in musical terms. It may also be helpful to hear examples of other classical pieces that have used the “Twinkle” melody, such as these, some of which may be found on iTunes:

- Camille Saint-Saëns, Carnival of the Animals, 12th movement (Fossils) quotes the tune
- Ernő Dohnányi, Variations on a Nursery Tune
- John Corigliano, The Mannheim Rocket
- Xavier Montsalvatge, “Spanish Serenade” from Sonatine pour Yvette (recorded by Alica de Larrocha)

During the bridge of the Indigo Girls song, “World Falls,” Emily Saliers picks the first seven notes of the melody on her guitar as Amy Ray sings “I’m laughing, I’m under a starry sky.” [Source: Wikipedia]

6. Play the second variation on the Classics for Kids CD (2:02-3:11). Ask students what they know about the history of the piano and other keyboards; ask if anyone can name other keyboard instruments related to the piano. Go over some of these by using pictures of keyboard instruments such as organ, harpsichord, clavichord, spinet, cembalo, and fortepiano. [Source: clipart.com] and discuss the similarities and differences in their looks. Then, using a laptop or iPod, listen to examples of each instrument as found on iTunes. If possible, play the brief, free samples of various recordings.

#### **Suggested examples:**

- Type in “fortepiano”... and scroll down to hear an example played by Richard Fuller.
- Type in “cembalo”... and hear an example played by Turini.
- Type in “harpsichord”... and hear an example played by John Metz.



- Type in “clavichord”... and hear an example played by René Clemencic.
- For a synthesized clavichord, hear an example played by Red Camp on their recording “The New Clavichord.”

Discuss the similarities and differences in the sounds or tone colors of each type of keyboard. Talk about the students’ preferences and reasons. Tell them that the first piano was invented in Italy in the early 1600s. Today we have different kinds of pianos such as the grand piano and the upright piano.

Discuss students’ preferences and reasons in musical terms.

7. Finally, listen to the ending of this piece on the Classics for Kids CD (3:11-3:22) as students are putting things away and lining up. Ask if anyone in the class knows the musical term for a special ending (coda).

#### **Closure/Questions:**

1. What is the term for the main melody or musical idea of a piece of music? (theme)
2. What is the term for a version of the main theme but with changes made to it? (variation)
3. What famous composer wrote the variations we listened to today? (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)
4. What period of music history did he live in and write in? (the Classical Period)
5. Did he write “Twinkle”? (no—just the variations)
6. What is the song “Twinkle” based upon? (a French folk song with a similar tune)
7. Where did the words to “Twinkle” come from? (an English female poet)
8. What different styles of music did we hear today? (classical, jazz, pow-wow, “new age,” big band)
9. Why do folk songs often change? (different people play or sing them, and add or change different things)

#### **Assessment/Evaluation:**

Throughout the lesson, check for understanding and demonstration of finding connections between history, poetry, and music, noting whether individual students were able to express this successfully. A similar assessment could be done on whether students can recognize or name some of the early keyboard instruments.



**Sample Rubric:**

All/Most of the Time | Sometimes | Not Yet  
Described selections in musical terms  
Participated and was on task  
Contributed to class discussion  
Understood similarities and differences  
Can name 2 early keyboard instruments  
Respected the opinions of others

**Extensions:**

(1) Teach the class another song about stars, this one about a constellation called the Big Dipper called "Follow the Drinking Gourd." Explain that the drinking gourd was the Big Dipper and the North Star pointed the way to freedom for escaping slaves during the Civil War. (Classics for Kids has a program about the Songs of Freedom that includes Follow the Drinking Gourd.)

(2) Invite any students who study the Suzuki Method to perform their "Twinkle" variations for the class.