Music and Expression with an Easel

My curriculum is intended for 5th graders and each class session will go for one hour and fifteen minutes. Essentially this class is “elective” free course in which students and their parents had the opportunity to choose this class from a list of others. This class is held under the Music section titled, “Music with Instruments and an Easel” and overall this thematic unit seeks to expose students to different genres of music using both “lecture” and “hands-on” methods over the course of one week. In this thematic unit, students listen and learn about the different genres of music that interest students. At the end, they also get to create their own art while learning about the many facets of music and music expression. Over the course of one week and five lessons will be taught with variety of objectives involved, and students will make connections to music (old and new), learn about history of music, and then make use of the knowledge they have gain throughout the week on Friday (Day 5) while they hone into their personal artistic abilities through an “Art Easel” workshop.

This curriculum is primarily designed for 5th graders but can also be taught to 4th graders as well. Class size is approximately twenty to twenty-five students in any Hartford public school and nonetheless the course will surely obtain a few more seats if couple more students would like to join. This course is not made or certain group of students; it is open to all and does not require any previous taken classes.
**Objectives**

1) Students will learn about the history of music from different time periods and reflect on the experience over the week through reflections and discussion.

2) Students will analyze music’s importance and make connections to their lives while exposing their musical interests to students with different genre tastes.

3) Students will develop their own creative talents and appreciate the importance of art in human experiences.

4) Students will make connections between music and history.

5) Students will be able to express their feelings towards the music through art expression (painting/drawing).

**Standards**

These standards that were taken from the Connecticut State Department of Education State fit best with our curriculum and seemed to be most useful when compared to our main objectives and goals. All standards were located under the K-12 Performance Standards:

**Performance Standards: Instrumental**

“Educational experiences in grades 5-8 will ensure that students will perform music representing diverse genres and cultures, with expression appropriate for the work being performed.”

**Performance Standards: Evaluation**

“Educational experiences in grades 5-8 will ensure that students will evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and others' performances, compositions,
arrangements and improvisations by applying specific criteria appropriate for the style of the music, and offer constructive suggestions for improvement.”

K-12 Performance Standards: History and Cultures

“Educational experiences in grades 5-8 will ensure that students will classify by genre and style (and, if applicable, by historical period, composer and title) a varied body of exemplary (that is, high-quality and characteristic) musical works, and explain the characteristics that cause each work to be considered exemplary.”

K-12 Performance Standards: History and Cultures

“Educational experiences in grades 5-8 will ensure that students will describe distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures.”

**Activities**

**DAY 1 (MONDAY):** For the first 20 minutes of the class I will open the unit by asking students a few reflective questions such as: “What does music mean to you? Do you enjoy music? If so, what kind? Why?” After I begin to get them going I will then heterogeneously place students into separate groups (students of different musical interest in different groups as well as students of different races, gender, and ability level) of four or five with students of different musical interests and musical experience based on their reflection responses to expose them different music genres. Students are encouraged to think about the kinds of music they listen to on a regular basis and what implications it has on how they are socialized. Afterwards for the remaining 55 minutes, they will listen to different genres of music based on the classes’ interest to get a feel for what the other classmates are
The music will be played from my iPod hooked on to speakers loud enough so that the whole class can hear. Throughout this course I will only cover 5 popular genres and there are as follows: Rock&Roll, Jazz, Hip Hop, Classical, and Country. This is in preparation for day two where students will be given a background history on the music of their particular interests. We will prepare lesson plans that will teach the students about the different musical genres that interest their classmates for Tuesday’s lesson.

**DAY 2 (TUESDAY):** For the first 50 minutes students will participate in a class lection and sit in while learning about the history of the genres they expressed interest in the previous day’s reflection. The information I teach to the students will mostly come from: The Music History of Our Time, Music History and other informative musical online websites found in my recourses. Students will learn about the different musical genres through lecture and funny snippets of video from the PBS kids website. Then students will participate in a game where they have to “NAME THAT GENRE.” Students will listen to particular snippets of songs, name the genre and will hear a fun fact about the specific genre. Particular focuses of music history will be the time period, artists, and history of the era as well as fun facts and discussion about their initial thoughts on the history of the music and how their perceptions changed after learning about the different genres. A particular goal is for students to debunk any stereotypes that they have about the genres in hopes of becoming more open minded and receptive to different styles of music. After the discussion is over they will be given the chance to discuss what they have learned within their assigned groups for about 6 minutes. Each group is then assigned a
different type of genre and then briefly present to their classmates different aspects of that music all sorts of qualities in which makes that music unique and differ from the others and this will be for the remaining 30 minutes of the class. Overall this helps me as a teacher to know that they have retained information from the lecture and videos. For homework In groups, students will be given a specific genre and must write a 2 paragraph reflection about the specific genre they were assigned and how it differs from other genres they learned about.

**DAY 3 (WEDNESDAY):** For the whole period students will have access to the computer lab (or library). Students will be provided with their own individual CD previously burned from me with a different song from the each of the five major genres we have covered throughout class thus far. I will slowly circling around the classroom to make sure students are not going on various explicit websites such as YouTube, or MTV.com. Students will listen to the music genre that interest their group members, write down their reflections and feelings towards it and hypothetically create their own genre. Students will be asked a broad question such as “If you had a chance to make your own genre, what would it consist of? In asking this question, students are encouraged to think about the many facets that go into creating a new music genre. Who will their audience be? What sound would you try to create? Why did you choose to merge those genres together? What do you hope to achieve? By now most students have an idea of what music fellow classmates like the most but now this activity gives a chance to see how the students think and what seems to stick out to them the most. Two students may create a genre similar to one another, but both of them may grasp on to different aspects of the style and may
focus on one part more than the other, so this activity really gives the chance to be creative and unique.

**DAY 4 (THURSDAY):** We will take the students to The Museum of Fife & Drum. Since the students have learned through books, lectures, and group activities, they will have the chance to visually see the importance of this music and its roots. The museum is located in Ivoryton, which is located approximately 45 minutes away from Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy. After now seeing the importance of music students will be assigned to keep in mind of how they saw music being represented for Friday's activity. Students are encouraged to pay attention to the history of the instruments they see. There are not too many musical museums located around the New England area. This place was the closest to Hartford and has more than enough history and visual pieces to help create a vision of music. The music at this museum comes from instruments and songs that were used in the Revolutionary War almost to present. And overall the general description this place categorized their music is under Marching band/Parade music music. The endless pieces that are found and on display within the museum are drums, fifes and much more. Students now get the chance to visualize the importance of this music as well as the characteristics that then make up this music. Towards the end of the trip, they will have a chance to participate in a workshop where they will be able to use various instruments. At first, the thought of having chaperones came to mind but after reading upon the website it was proven that they have more than enough guides to look over a group of 25 when crowds come in for tours. This whole trip will be going on during school hours so therefore the hour of
block they miss for lunch as well as their half hour recess period will make up for there and back, while we spend our normal class time period their going on tour. There will be packed lunches for the students before we go and they are to eat on the way back. For **homework**, students are to write a reflection (2 paragraphs) on what they learned on the trip. They will also be told to keep in mind what they’ve learned all week so that they will be able to put it into their very own art piece through the art easel workshop the next day.

**DAY 5 (FRIDAY):** Students will have the chance to show their artistic sides. After being taught the different genres, the history, and having had the chance to express their reflections and feelings towards music, they will be given the opportunity to express those feelings through art within the Art Easel workshop. This is NOT a free-art session where students will draw anything that comes to mind. It must be relevant to the theme and reflect some of what they learned all week. Students will not be judged on the basis of their artistic side, but their overall goal should be for them prove to myself and the rest of the class that they have a good understanding of that music and have been paying attention all week to the certain attributes that are within that genre. Students will participate in a fun game where they will listen to the top 5 most popular genres in the class and have 10 minutes to draw something that encapsulates the specific genre. At the end, the students will recap by sharing with the class in groups how they have connected with the music and what they have learned. A good piece of expressing art would be by showing the time period, state origin, audience, use of color, appearance, lyrics, instruments mostly used in that music and much more, once I see this, I will be
content with my teachings and see that what I have brought to these students they can now take with them and have the chance to teach others and now look at music from a more knowledgeable perspective.

**Evaluation**

Class participation plays huge role in how students are graded. Students will be evaluated based on their overall participation and engagement in class activities. Students’ final activity during the art easel workshop will also aid teachers in grading the students. Students do not have to be experienced artists. However, they must express an understanding of the material presented to them over the course of the week through the workshop. As a result, this will show teachers how engaged students were over the course of the week. Furthermore, students will show teachers that they gained new knowledge through their participation in the various activities throughout the week. Students should also keep in mind that the homework is a must and if it is not complete it will result in their grade. The following grid shows how I plan to grade the students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>A 4</th>
<th>B 3</th>
<th>C 2</th>
<th>D 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Management</td>
<td>Provide leadership in class activities through sustained effort and attention.</td>
<td>Gives consistent attention and effort to class activities and instruction.</td>
<td>Give inconsistent attention or limited effort to class activities and instruction.</td>
<td>Frequently inattentive to class instruction. Gives little effort to class activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>Change activities or tasks silently and efficiently.</td>
<td>Usually changes activities or tasks quietly and efficiently.</td>
<td>Sometimes change activities or tasks quietly and efficiently.</td>
<td>Often talkative or noisy when changing activities or tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Changes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Respectful and supportive of others who are singing or speaking.</td>
<td>Respectful of others who are singing or speaking.</td>
<td>Need reminders to be respectful of others who are singing or speaking.</td>
<td>Disrespectful or disruptive when others are singing or speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lastly, but most importantly, this whole class, the objectives, the activities and the overall purpose all comes different backgrounds of teachings. My main style of teaching relates to the style of John Locke. Locke believed that something has to be present for the child to be able to learn\(^1\), and so do I. His way of teaching was best described as the Lockean Atomistic Model and it really is that all people are born with a blank slate and the way to gain knowledge is through experience. In his own words he says ‘Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper void of all characters, without any ideas. How comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store which the busy boundless fancy of man has painted on it with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE. In that all our knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives itself’.\(^2\) I think students having this chance to have hands-on experience with the varieties of music will then help build their knowledge. I have also been intrigued by Bloom’s Taxonomy when it comes to the process of me evaluating the students. This system is best described as a classification of learning objectives within education. Bloom identified six levels within the cognitive domain, from the simple recall or recognition of facts, as the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels, to the high order which is classified as evaluation.\(^3\) From my perspective his taxonomy simulates the range of recall, to making judgments and within this course I am more focused on the high side of chart. To round it all off and to give my class a better

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\(^1\) Locke, John. “Perspectives on Learning” P. 13 \textit{ED 200 Course Reader}. 1956

\(^2\) Locke, John. “Perspectives on Learning” P. 14 \textit{ED 200 Course Reader}. 1956

\(^3\) Bloom, Benjamin. "Summary of Bloom’s Taxonomy." \textit{ED 200 Course Reader}. 1956
meaning I use Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences system to help get a better understanding on the possible knowledge they can possibly receive throughout this course. The intelligences that I would like to focus on the students developing are Musical Intelligence, Intra-personal Intelligence, and Inter-personal Intelligence.