Surprise! Fun with Food! A Lesson in Dynamics and Adjectives

Grade Level:
3-5

Integrated Subjects
Language Arts

Lesson Overview
Students will learn the dynamic levels in musical terms and learn about adjectives in Language Arts, specifically adjectives that describe what kind. Students will listen to Haydn's Symphony No. 94 in G Major, often referred to as the Surprise Symphony. Students will gather instruments found around the classroom, and sample quiet and noisy foods.

Student Learning Overview
Students will be able to demonstrate the following: knowledge of the dynamic levels, names of the levels, symbols for each level, and how each level can be described. Students will be able to make connections between dynamic levels (as they see them organized on paper) and the music they hear, and dynamic levels and adjectives that describe what kind.

Learning Sequence
1. Listen to Haydn's Surprise Symphony, Symphony No. 94 in G Major. 2. Discuss observations about the music 3. Identify and discuss term dynamic levels. 4. As a class, identify and organize the dynamic levels, symbols for levels, and level of sound volume associated with each level. 5. Students create charts of dynamic levels. 6. Teams gather and share "found" instruments from around the room to demonstrate each of the dynamic levels. 7. Listen to Haydn’s Surprise Symphony again while students have dynamic level charts in front of them. Students move their fingers on the chart to identify the changes in the dynamic levels as they listen to the music. 8. Discuss and review what adjectives are, and connect to this knowledge to words used to describe dynamic levels. 9. Students create charts that display adjectives that describe "what kind" with each dynamic level, using dictionaries and thesauruses for reference. 10. Class brainstorms foods that would represent each dynamic level (possible foods that, when eaten, may create a sounds that display dynamics from pianissimo to fortissimo: marshmallows, Skittles, hard cookies, carrots, and Funyuns). 11. Class samples foods and matches each to what they think is the appropriate dynamic level while listening to Haydn’s composition again. 12. Students write sentences using "what kind" adjectives, applying what they have learned about the dynamic levels. 13. Students share sentences with partners, discussing adjectives and what dynamic level best relate to each one. 14. Review dynamic levels and associated adjectives.

© 2010 Valerie Danels; created for the San Francisco Symphony’s Keeping Score® Education program and Oklahoma A+ Schools®
Assessment

Students were assessed on the accuracy of their dynamic levels chart (correct location of each level, symbol, and associated descriptor). Students were also assessed on their use of dynamic levels chart through informal observation on accuracy of identifying changes in dynamic levels while listening to the musical selection. Students were assessed informally as groups presented their reasoning as to why particular foods related to each dynamic level. Students were assessed on the correctness of sentences using adjectives related to descriptions of dynamic levels.

Classical Music Used In This Lesson

*Symphony No. 94 in G Major* by Joseph Haydn

Materials & Equipment

Smartboard (for teacher's presentation); CD player, recording of *Symphony No. 94 in G Major* by Joseph Haydn; whiteboard and markers; sentences strip (three/student); pencils; variety of classroom materials to serve as "found" instruments; six foods to loosely represent the dynamic levels (enough for each student to listen to and eat); plates (one/student), notebook paper; dictionaries and thesauruses

Time Required

Four 45 minute lessons

National Music Standards

Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

State Standards

Oklahoma: Language Arts, Grade 4, Standard 3.1.h; Music, Grade 4, Standard 1.1.h.

Connections to Pathways to Integration

GREEN: Music content merged with other content areas

Inclusion/English Language Learner

Students work in teams to allow students with special needs or ELL students to have the support of partners and teammates to reinforce concepts. Team discussion provides modeling of verbal expectations for ELL in particular. Concepts that are orally presented are also on the whiteboard or Smartboard so ELL students can make connections between spoken and written words. Lesson includes auditory, kinesthetic, and sensory (taste) elements that allow for inclusion of special needs students.

Teacher to Teacher

The lesson took four class periods instead of the three that I had anticipated, but the learning proved the time was well spent. We incorporate the vocabulary of dynamics into every day activities ever since the lesson was taught. I would teach this lesson at the beginning of the year to set expectations for volume levels during various activities.

© 2010 Valerie Danels; created for the San Francisco Symphony's Keeping Score® Education program and *Oklahoma A+ Schools®*
Portfolio Images

Dynamic Levels:

Listen and Identify Level:

Found Instruments:

Dynamic Foods:

© 2010 Valerie Danels; created for the San Francisco Symphony’s Keeping Score® Education program and Oklahoma A+ Schools®
Sample and Listen:  

Food Placement: