

# BANDED

## **BANDED Lesson 1**

### **Composing: start with an image using the E minor pentatonic scale**

This **BANDED** lesson strategy will focus on the minor pentatonic scale. The pentatonic scale is widely used in many styles of popular music, and can provide students with a simple entry into improvisation and composition. These activities will engage students in creating music through visual-auditory associations. Students will choose an image, video, or poem and create a simple minor pentatonic composition that will represent their interpretation of their chosen media. The available time in your curriculum will determine how much you incorporate from the following suggested activities and resources. While the jumping off point for this lesson strategy is the excerpt from **BANDED**, there are other resources that you can use to enhance the learning experience for your students.

#### **Overall Objective:**

Students will gain an understanding of the relationship between musical and visual expression by creating a minor pentatonic composition for a chosen piece of media.

#### **Materials and resources:**

- **BANDED** film clip
- **PULSE** pentatonic scale material
- Silent film clip
- Image: Creative Commons Image
- Text: Shel Silverstein – *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, p.70-71

#### **PULSE Connections** (Requires a **PULSE** account):

- Composition Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 with Marti Epstein
- Introduction to Melody Videos Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3

#### **Classroom/rehearsal room settings:**

- Students working alone or in pairs
- Students in small groups using classroom instruments
- Students in a variety of ensemble settings (traditional or jazz band; choral; orchestra; string ensemble; modern band – guitar, piano, bass, drums; etc.)
- Students using a DAW, such as GarageBand, GarageBand iOS, Mixcraft, Soundtrap, Soundation, etc.

#### **Core Arts Standards:**

### **CREATING**

**Common Anchor #1 – Imagine** – Generate musical ideas for various purposes and contexts

- **MU:Cr1.1.C.1a** - Describe how sounds and short musical ideas can be used to represent personal experiences, moods, visual images, and/or storylines.

**Common Anchor #2 – Plan and Make** – Select and develop musical ideas for defined purposes and contexts

- **MU:Cr2.1.C.1a** – Assemble and organize sounds or short musical ideas to create initial expressions of selected experiences, moods, images, or storylines
- **MU:Cr2.1.C.1b** – Identify and describe the development of sounds or short musical ideas in drafts of music within simple forms (such as one-part, cyclical, or binary).

**Common Anchor #3 – Evaluate and Refine** – Evaluate and refine selected musical ideas to create musical work that meets appropriate criteria

- **MU:Cr3.1.C.1a** – Identify, describe, and apply teacher-provided criteria to assess and refine the technical and expressive aspects of evolving drafts leading to final versions.

**Present** – Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality

- **MU:Cr3.2.C.1a** – Share music through the use of notation, performance, or technology, and demonstrate how the elements of music have been employed to realize expressive intent.

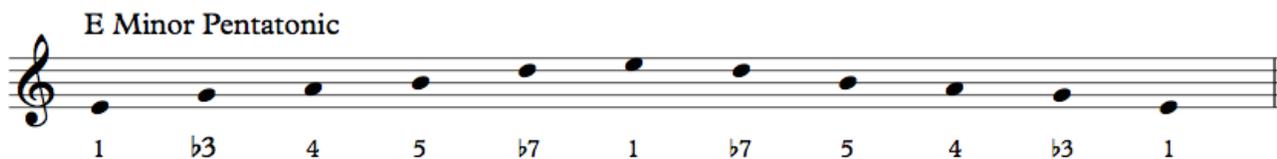
*\*Composition/Theory Strand*

<http://www.nafme.org/wp-content/files/2014/11/2014-Music-Standards-Composition-Theory-Strand.pdf>

**Instructional Activity Ideas:**

1. Begin with viewing a clip from the film that features the collaborative writing process of the Ghost Box Orchestra. The composition evolves from a simple minor pentatonic melodic idea inspired by a visual image of driving through the desert at night. In this clip, members of the GBO describe their process of experimentation and discuss and demonstrate building their composition from the collected ideas of the group. After viewing the clip, analyze and discuss the following:
  - a. What do you notice about the melody? What is the contour of the melody – stepwise motion (stepwise ascending, stepwise descending)? Leaps (skip upward, skip downward)? Repeated notes? Does it have a narrow or wide range? What instrument (voice) has the melody? Does that remain consistent throughout the song?
  - b. What instruments are used in the song? Is the texture of the song sparse or dense? Does the texture change over the course of the song?
  - c. What do you notice about the rhythm? Are there repeated patterns? What kinds of rhythms are used most prominently (whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, triplets, etc.)? What instrument(s) drive the rhythmic feel of the song?
  - d. Describe the tempo. Is the tempo steady or does it change? Do you feel it matches the visual description of driving through the desert at night?
  - e. What do you notice about the form? Are there clear sections or does the song evolve over time?
  - f. Does the group use dynamics? How do the textures in the song effect the dynamics?
2. Discuss the goals for the composition project:

- a. Students will choose one of the provided media files (picture, movie or poem).  
**NOTE:** Teacher may provide additional choices of media for this.
- b. Students will describe their chosen media in terms of musical expression to prepare for their composition. What does the media suggest:
  - i. Melodically?
  - ii. Timbrally?
  - iii. Texturally?
  - iv. Rhythmically?
  - v. Dynamics?
- c. Alone, in pairs, or small groups, students will compose minor pentatonic melodic patterns for their composition. This can be approached in a variety of ways. The following are some suggestions for getting the creative juices flowing!
  - i. Compose several 4 bar rhythmic patterns that combine a variety of note lengths and rests. (Some inspiration for creating rhythmic patterns can be gotten by using one of the online drum machines listed in the **Online Resources** section in **Suggested Materials**.) After composing the rhythmic patterns, add pitches from the minor pentatonic scale to the rhythmic patterns. The contour of the melodic patterns can take any shape (rising, falling, repeating).



- ii. Use the rhythmic patterns created in the previous step, but when adding pitches from the minor pentatonic scale, restrict the pitches for different patterns (i.e., some patterns will only use two different pitches, some will use three, some will use four, and some will use all five pitches.)
- iii. Compose several minor pentatonic melodic patterns of varying lengths (2-8 bars) that use a variety of note lengths and rests. Again, the contour of the melodic patterns can take any shape (rising, falling, repeating).
- d. Once the students have composed their minor pentatonic melodies, they can begin to build their composition. The goal of this composition project is to create a piece of music that evolves over time and aurally represents the chosen media. The composition will develop by layering parts, staggering entrances and exits, and will take shape by using the following parameters:
  - i. The composition should have a minimum of 4 parts, each part played by a different instrument (or sung by a different voice). The classroom setting will determine the types of instruments/voices the composition will be written for.
  - ii. A successful composition always has a plan. To illustrate how their composition will evolve over time, have them draw a visual representation. Some examples can be seen in the **Visuals of**

**Additive/Subtractive Layering of Musical Ideas** section in **Suggested Materials**. This visual representation can be used as a guide for fully developing their compositions, and can also be used later if/when the students perform their compositions.

- iii. Choose which pattern(s) each instrument will play.
- iv. Complete the composition.
- v. Practice and perform the compositions for the class. In the case of using a DAW, have students share their compositions with the class.

**Suggested Materials:**

**1. Image: Creative Commons Image**



**2. Text: Shel Silverstein – *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, p.70-71**

**SARAH CYNTHIA SYLVIA STOUT  
WOULD NOT TAKE THE GARBAGE OUT**

Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout  
Would not take the garbage out!

She'd scout the pots and scrape the pans,  
Candy the yams and spice the hams.  
And though her daddy would scream and shout,  
She simply would not take the garbage out.  
And so it piled up to the ceilings:  
Coffee grounds, potato peelings,  
Brown bananas, rotten peas,  
Chunks of sour cottage cheese.  
It filled the can, it covered the floor,  
It cracked the window and blocked the door  
With bacon rinds and chicken bones,  
Drippy ends of ice cream cones,  
Prune puts, peach puts, orange peel,  
Gloppy glumps of cold oatmeal,  
Pizza crusts and withered greens,  
Soggy beans and tangerines,  
Crusts of black burned buttered toast,  
Gristly bits of beefy roasts...  
The garbage rolled on down the hall,  
It raised the roof, it broke the wall...  
Greasy napkins, cookie crumbs,  
Globs of gooey bubble gum,  
Cellophane from green baloney,  
Rubbery blubbery macaroni,

Peanut butter, caked and dry,  
 Curdled milk and crusts of pie,  
 Moldy melons, dried-up mustard,  
 Eggshells mixed with lemon custard,  
 Cold French fries and rancid meat,  
 Yellow lumps of Cream of Wheat.  
 At last the garbage reached so high  
 That finally it touched the sky.  
 And all the neighbors moved away,  
 And none of her friends would come out to play.  
 And finally Sarah Cynthia Stout said,  
 "OK, I'll take the garbage out!"  
 But then, of course, it was too late...  
 The garbage reached across the state,  
 From New York to the Golden Gate.  
 And there, in the garbage she did hate,  
 Poor Sarah met an awful fate,  
 That I cannot right now relate  
 Because the hour is much too late.  
 But children, remember Sarah Stout  
 And always take the garbage out.

**3. Movie: Royalty Free:**

*More is Less*

**4. Online Resources (for generating beats):**

**HTML5DrumMachine**

<http://www.html5drummachine.com/>

**Beatlab**

<http://www.beatlab.com/>

**Drumbit**

<http://drumbit.pluraldev.com/>

**5. Additional Listening Resources:**

To intensify the active listening experience, show the Bobby McFerrin YouTube video (*Bobby McFerrin Demonstrates the Power of the Pentatonic Scale:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ne6tB2KiZuk>), then have the students listen to one or more of the suggested songs listed below. All of these songs also contain melodies based on the minor pentatonic scale. Use the above questions as a guide for identifying the qualities of these songs. Have students compare one of the songs from the list (or another one that is provided by the teacher) to the GBO composition.

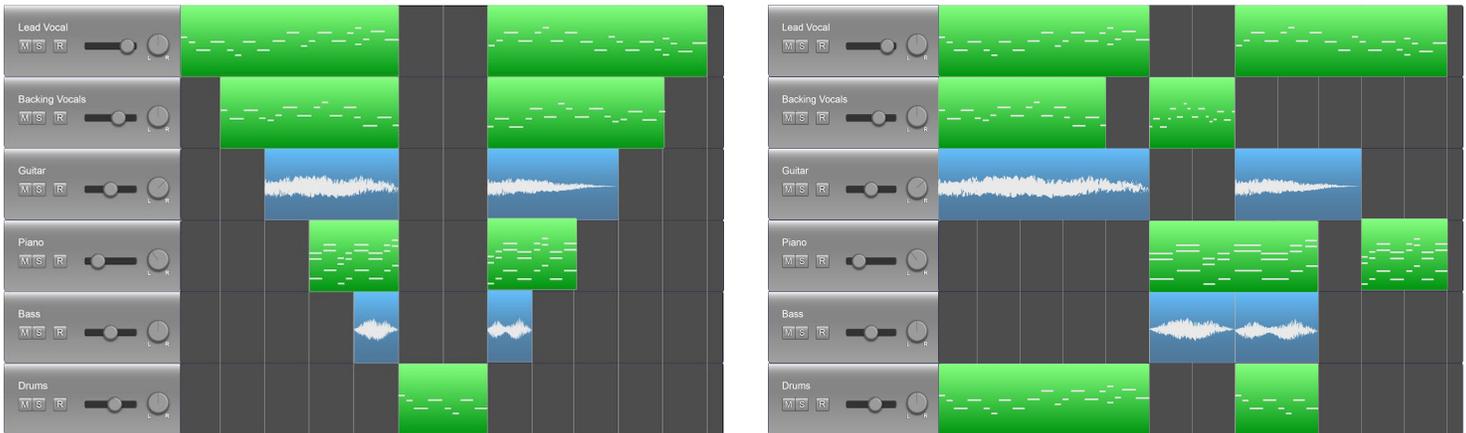
**Songs for listening – these songs use minor pentatonics:**

- Superstition–Stevie Wonder  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCFuCYNx-1g>)
- Purple Haze – Jimi Hendrix  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjwWjx7Cw8I>)
- Money Make Her Smile–Bruno Mars  
([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_czUZiTbwyo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_czUZiTbwyo))

- I Shot the Sheriff – Bob Marley  
([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCAHC\\_BYMfM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCAHC_BYMfM))
- Oye Como Va – Tito Puente  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFPcALtVUcE>)  
Santana – (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NsJ84YV1oA>)

**6. Visuals of Additive/Subtractive Layering of Musical Ideas:**

These two examples represent the concept of layering in an additive and subtractive way.



*\*Rubric for composition project on page 7*

**BANDED Minor Pentatonic Performance Rubric**
**Objective:**

Create a musical composition that evolves over time and aurally represents the chosen media format of your choice. The composition should be performed with the following parameters:

- Include at least 4 parts, each part played by a different instrument
- Composition focused on the use of the minor pentatonic scale
- Composition should develop by layering parts, staggering entrances and exits
- Ideas for composition can be clearly stated, relating chosen media format to music composition

Group: \_\_\_\_\_

	<u>Excellent</u> 4	<u>Good</u> 3	<u>Average</u> 2	<u>Needs Improvement</u> 1	<u>Score</u>
<b>Performance</b>	Performs composition in a logical, interesting sequence which the audience can follow	Performs composition in a logical sequence which the audience can follow	Performs composition in a somewhat illogical sequence which the audience has difficulty following	Audience is unable to follow the composition because there is no logical sequence of material	
<b>Preparation</b>	Indicates a high level of preparation through well thought out compositional ideas, focuses on minor pentatonic scale, inclusion of all instruments, and thorough explanation of media format inspiration	Indicates a moderate level of preparation through most of the indicators and explanation of media format inspiration	Indicates an adequate level of preparation through some of the indicators and explanation of media format inspiration unclear	Shows little or no preparation and is missing most or all of the indicators and no explanation of media format inspiration	
<b>Content</b>	Composition/performance includes all of the required elements	Composition/performance includes most of the required elements	Composition/performance includes some of the required elements	Composition/performance includes few or none of the required elements	
<b>Creativity</b>	Composition/performance demonstrates a high level of creativity and an interesting or innovative perspective	Composition/performance demonstrates a moderate level of creativity and an interesting or innovative perspective	Composition/performance demonstrates some creativity but lacks an indication of an interesting or innovative perspective	Composition/performance demonstrates little or no creativity and lacks indication of an interesting or innovative perspective	
<b>Group Interaction</b>	Displayed a willingness to work together in a mature manner and group was open to every student's idea and participation in the performance.	Displayed a willingness to work together in a mature manner, but performance did not include everyone equally	Displayed a willingness to work together in a mature manner, but minimal arguments and authoritative issues ensued.	Did not display a willingness to work together and the performance was dominated by an individual	
<b>Comments</b>					<b>Total:</b>  /20