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Scenario: Tying it All Together: "Literacy Learning from Repertoire Starts with Warm-Ups" - Lesson

Source: [Music \(Choir\) IV, Varsity Treble](#)

TEKS: Music (Choir) IV

1 (B), 1 (C), 1 (H), 1 (I), 2 (A), 2 (B), 3 (A), 3 (B), 3 (C), 3 (D), 3 (F), 4 (A), 4 (B), 4 (D), 4(E), 4 (G), 5 (A), 6 (B), 6 (C)

Scenario Background

Margaret Lapham's approach to warm-ups is very straightforward. Her Choir IV students warm up before all performances and performance preparation. She does not try to fit any other goals into the time allocated for warm-up exercises. Some of her favorite, simple warm-ups are listed below:

- Loose lips buzz on 5 tone descending scale (so fa mi re do) and tongue trills (as forward on the tongue as possible) using the same descending 5 tones. An alternative to this exercise is doing ascending and descending 5-tone scales using 8th note rhythms.
- Octave drops on oo-ee (with the oo on high 'do' as a grace note to the ee on low 'do' on beat one), then continuing the ee vowel on quarter notes (as the beat) on re, mi, re (up and back down), then do, mi, so, do, ti, so, fa, re, do (16th note rhythms). So, the count is uh 1234 1e&a 2e&a 3 rest (change keys). Repeat.
- u I—ea ea a (IPA).
- u I—eo eo e.

AFTER Discussion and work with the teacher, the following scenario is observed on later visits to the Varsity Treble Choir Rehearsal.

Ms. Lapham's begins a choir rehearsal by having students do some melodic dictation. She sings various melodic patterns on a neutral syllable and students notate on their staff paper. She sings in major, minor and modes. Inversions and harmonic structure are explained on the board with notation. Questioning of inversions takes place.

Students then warm up using solfege, moving from major to minor to modes depending on what the teacher calls out. After the warm up teacher sings a pattern and students respond individually by creating a pattern. (Safe environment for risk-taking) Warm-ups then continue in parts.

Students then take out repertoire – "The Seal Lullaby" by Eric Whitacre. Students identify melodic patterns/sections studied in the warm-up. Lastly, students are questioned on what areas continue to need work and what areas of improvement are needed.

Performance Level: Developing/Proficient

Observed Evidence by Domain:

- The lesson contains points where students are expected to take initiative for their own learning:
 - Students engage in melodic dictation and this is a high-level thinking task.
 - Rehearsal warm-ups are connected to their repertoire been studied and are relevant.
 - Students are asked to create a melodic response to their teacher's melodic question individually. This allows time for individual assessments and creativity.
 - Connections for learning are made from the start of the lesson as students' transition from: melodic dictation, direct instruction on chord inversions, warm-ups in major/minor/models, part work, individual responses for assessment and questioning strategies.
- Teacher conveys a depth of content knowledge and guides students through high-level thinking exercises.
- Lesson connects to real-world experiences with discussion of historical elements of music theory and elements in the repertoire.
- Teacher leads the lesson with opportunities for dialogue and discussion.
- Teacher asks questions at remember, understand, and apply levels of questioning.

1. Planning	2. Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lesson is sequenced and aligned to standards and many TEKS are covered.• Lesson provides adequate time and closure.• Lesson makes some connections to other disciplines (e.g., social studies, technology, and music).	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson allows for probing of students' prior knowledge and connects to background before introducing new concepts. • Lesson includes Questioning strategies that encourage higher-order thinking. • Lesson activities are aligned to purpose and sequenced to learning. • Lesson provides an opportunity for individual assessment in a safe learning environment. • Lesson provides an opportunity for high-level thinking strategies. 	
<p>3. Learning Environment</p>	<p>4. Professional Practices and Responsibilities</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pace of the lesson keeps students engaged in learning. • The transitions of the lesson are clear and the activities are sequential. • Students engage in relevant, meaningful learning. • Students engage in high-level learning and are challenged. • Students feel safe to take risks, sing individually and create new melodic phrases. • Transitions from activity to activity are smooth and sequenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher conducts herself ethically in the classroom and at other choir events during and outside the school day. • Teacher reaches out to the broader community by bringing music to many school, district and community events • Teacher responds in a timely manner to emails, phone calls and other communication necessary to her job. • Teacher works outside the school hours as if outlined by her extra-duty stipend. • Teacher is organized and responsible when dealing with budget and other organizational duties regarding trips, fundraisers and all duties outlined by a Head Choir Director Job Description.

Summary

Reinforcement:

Ms. Lapham's Choir Rehearsal/Lesson with the Varsity Treble Choir displays a sequentially designed lesson that enables students to think at very high levels. The students are displaying their knowledge of major, minor, and modes that has been built through-out the year. They are also displaying an understanding of harmonic inversions as explained by the teacher. The students are using high-level thinking strategies as they display levels 2, 3 and 4 on "Webb's Depth of Knowledge" (DoK) moving from skills/concepts to strategic thinking to extended thinking as they apply knowledge. Students make connections to their prior learning as they take their knowledge of major/minor and modes and apply them during melodic dictation and the creation of an individual solo response to their teacher's melodic question. Additionally, students utilize knowledge of melodic concepts displayed in their warm-ups and apply them to their repertoire. Ms. Lapham has equipped students with sufficient knowledge to be able to offer their suggestions on improvement for the choir's repertoire work. Students are articulate and offer great suggestions for continued growth of the choir.

Refinement:

Suggested enhancements from T-TESS:

1. Planning	2. Instruction
<p>Planning 1.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the connection to real-world applications (spend more time on historical discussion of the use of modality in this modern piece.) • Integrate technology (use Smart board in room rather than marker board and integrate individual iPads for notation if available) • Build in the lesson more wait time for students and check on students having difficulty with modes. Slow down the warm-up to start for these individuals. <p>Planning 1.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for substantive feedback to students throughout lesson <p>Planning 1.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for varied opportunities for students to utilize individual learning patterns, habits, and needs. • Provide students opportunities to use their knowledge to enhance their peers' learning experiences by working in small groups at various points in the rehearsal (For example, when the students finish dictation, give short 	<p>Instruction 2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for students to experiment and self-correct. (Several students were struggling, perhaps allow time for students to work in smaller groups to enable individuals to catch up) • Enable students to set goals. (What did we accomplish today? What shall we work on at our next rehearsal? Take time at end to let students individually write down their own goals) • Anticipate potential student misunderstandings • Strengthen technology integration and connection to real-world disciplines <p>Instruction 2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate potential student misunderstandings • Strengthen technology integration and connection

<p>period of time for discussion with neighbor)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect students with opportunities to develop social-emotional learning through discussion of the text of the piece being rehearsed. Prepared question: How did composer convey the emotion of the text? <p>Planning 1.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for students to generate their own questions • Guide students in setting goals especially during individual assessment/creation during call/response. • Plan for more student-centered instructional groups and pairings of students. 	<p>to real-world disciplines</p> <p>Instruction 2.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions that are creative/evaluative and require deeper levels of student understanding. • Use discussion to provoke and inspire curiosity about the text of the song. • Increase wait time to and questioning techniques to develop more student directed learning. <p>Instruction 2.4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide differentiated instructional methods. • Adapt lessons to individual student needs. • Recognize where confusion or disengagement occurs and respond to students social/emotional needs. <p>Instruction 2.5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continually check for understanding through questioning directed to individual students rather than "all call" to group. • Adjust pacing of instruction to maintain engagement.
<p>3. Learning Environment</p>	<p>4. Professional Practices and Responsibilities</p>
<p>Learning Environment 3.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for students to take active leadership in managing classroom routines, and engage in groups. <p>Learning Environment 3.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve students in adopting and maintaining classroom behavior standards. 	<p>Since educators are not expected to demonstrate elements of this domain in the lesson, consider the following question:</p> <p>What kinds of professional learning might help Ms. Lapham improve her teaching of this and other lessons?</p>

Learning Environment 3.3

- Provide students the opportunity to collaborate with each other and the teacher.
- Empower students to ask pertinent questions about music concepts, harmonic properties and text of piece being studied.

Professional Practices 4.1

- Model professional practices
- Advocate for all students in the classroom and on campus

Professional Practices 4.2

- Set short and long-term goals
- Implement substantial change in practice resulting in significant student improvement in performance

Professional Practices and Responsibilities 4.3

- Leads colleagues in and beyond the school
- Build faculty knowledge and skills
- Develop and fulfill school and district improvement plans

Professional Practices and Responsibilities 4.4

- Leads in communicating school mission.
- Develops collaborative efforts within the community to enhance student learning.
- Maintains systemic contacts with parents/guardians regarding each individual student's learning.

Enhanced Scenario

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Students then warm up using solfège, moving from major to minor to modes depending on what the teacher calls out. After the warm-up, the teacher sings a pattern and students respond individually by creating a pattern. (Safe environment for risk-taking) Warm-ups then continue in parts. At one point when several students seemed confused and slow to show their solfège hand signs she adjusts the pace of the warm-ups. She slows down the process and asks for students to articulate specific changes that need to be made when switching modalities this time asking different students to articulate the solution. Then teacher begins the call response with students having to make up a response based on their modality. One student struggles and next the teacher slows down the tempo giving the student more time to respond. There is still trouble but the student feels safe enough to keep trying. The teacher allows wait time while the student thinks about their response. The student tries the third time with these things in place and is successful. The teacher then praises the students for her efforts and other students show their support. There is definite evidence of a safe and nurturing learning environment where students feel secure in taking risks.

Students then take out repertoire – "The Seal Lullaby" by Eric Whitacre. Students identify melodic patterns/sections studied in the warm-up. Students are able to easily identify the areas that were the same as the patterns they reproduced. The teacher allowed the students time to articulate the connections between the music and their dictation and warm-ups. The teacher allows time for the students to ask their own questions and find their own connections from the warm-ups to the literature. After this work, the teacher leads a discussion about the composer Eric Whitacre. The text of the piece is discussed and the students brainstorm the reasons that the various modalities were used to reflect the text. The teacher guides the students in the discussion of the type

of emotions that are being reflected in the text and in the modalities of the music. Lastly, students are questioned on what areas continue to need work and what areas of improvement are needed. The students are given four reflective questions to consider before they leave.

- What are the modalities that most touch you and how do they connect with the text at that point in the music?
- How does the composer Eric Whitacre use both modern and ancient sounds in this piece?
- Musically, what areas does the choir need to work on in our next rehearsal?
- Musically, what areas do you need to work on individually regarding anything we did in class today?

Please discuss your first three questions with your neighbor. Then place your questions and music in your choir folder as you leave.