

Name of Lesson: **The Sound Spiral: Learning to Interpret Sound through Drawings** Grade Level: 4th-8th Grade

<p><b>Lesson Materials:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Sound Spiral (this can be put on an Elmo projector.)</li> </ol> <p><b>For Lesson Extension:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Half-sheets of paper</li> <li>3. Assorted markers</li> </ol>	<p><b>National Standards:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.</li> <li>2. Creating and performing abstract sounds through unique student interpretations.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Prior experience required (groundwork):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The students are in the earliest stages of learning how to solve puzzle card problems, or map a song.</li> <li>2. Students understand pitch/duration relationships: high, low, long, short, etc.</li> <li>3. Students understand dynamic relationships: choppy, smooth, loud, quiet, etc.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Musical Process:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussing alternative and unique ways to draw sound on paper.</li> <li>2. Creating sounds/sound effects that accurately represent each doodle on the Sound Spiral.</li> <li>3. Performing the entire sound spiral as a class with student leaders (pointers).</li> </ol> <p><b>Organization:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Large group discussing/creating/performing</li> </ol>
<p><b>Objective: For students to experience sound representation through abstract doodles.</b></p>	
<p><b>Lesson Process:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce the Sound Spiral. Explain to the students that the doodles in the spiral currently <b>have no meaning</b>. They are not meant to look like any specific “thing.” The students’ objective is to <u>give</u> the doodles meaning by assigning each one to an abstract sound effect. The sound can be created through voice, body percussion, movement, or a combination of methods. Each sound needs to be a logical match to its doodle, taking into consideration pitch, duration, and dynamics. There is no such thing as an incorrect answer, as long as the creator can provide reasonable support for their idea. <b>BE CAREFUL:</b> Students commonly assign meaning to a doodle by thinking of it as a picture of a tangible thing. As an example, a student may say: “That black dot looks like a bumble bee, so I think the sound should be BZZZZZ...” In this case, the sound created by the student is <u>not</u> a true sound match to the abstract doodle. This method of reasoning may seem harmless, but it will impede the student’s success in the future when they are asked to create a song map directly from a recording without any visual prompts.</li> <li>2. As a class, assign a sound to each doodle. (It may take a few brave volunteers to get the class warmed up to the idea of making “funny sounds” in front of each other.) Sometimes multiple ideas are given, and a class vote becomes necessary. Use these opportunities to determine which sound idea represents the doodle with the <u>most</u> accuracy. This is usually a very fun process. ☺</li> <li>3. Once every doodle is assigned a sound, “perform” the spiral as a class. Tracing with a finger, start on the outside of the spiral and work your way slowly toward the middle. As you pass over each doodle, the class must perform the sound assigned to it. You can move backward or forward, but you cannot skip over sounds.</li> <li>4. Choose a few student pointers to lead the class in a sound spiral performance. Each time a new pointer goes to the front of the room, a new piece of “sound art” is created, determined by the student pointer’s choice of speed and sound repetition.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Assessment:</b> The students will understand how abstract doodles can represent sound if they are able to contribute thoughtful and musically-informed ideas in the sound-assigning activity. They will also be able to accurately perform the Sound Spiral as a class.</p>	
<p><b>Extension:</b> As an extension, ask the students to choose a partner, a half-sheet of paper, and a few markers. The pairs will be asked create five simple, abstract doodles and assign a logical sound to each one. The teacher will move around the room and assess the students’ ability to create “nonsense doodles” and assign matching sounds. As an extension, each pair could switch doodles with another pair and create new sounds for their classmates’ doodles. (This activity would emphasize that there are many different ways to interpret sound through doodles, and all ideas are equally correct if they have reasonable support from the creator.)</p>	

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