



Lesson: Explore the Structure of A+: A “Precise” Prelude and An “Excellent” March

OVERVIEW

In addition to learning how to play a piece of music, all band members can study the structure of a piece of music and be alert to the interaction and relationship of the parts to the whole.

LEARNING GOAL

Following a visual Listening Map of A+, students will demonstrate their comprehension of the music’s structure when they independently move to each new section of music.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- [Music Map](#) to display via computer, Smart board, etc. or hard copies for students.
- [Recording of A+](#)

PROCESS

The Music Map can be used in different ways depending on when in the learning process it is introduced. It might serve as an introduction to the music, or a way to analyze the work once you are underway, or a summary activity.

1. If you are introducing A+, provide the title and the composer’s name as you would with other new pieces.
2. Ask students to listen as you play the recording of A+ and notice some of the ‘big ideas’ the composer uses in the music.
3. Display the [Music Map](#) on a screen or provide individual copies for students. Ask them to describe what they notice about the map; how many sections, repeated words or symbols, etc.
4. Listen with the Map and ask them to give a “thumbs up” when the piece moves to each new section.

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

Assess student responses as they move to each new section of the Listening Map along with the music. If students create individual or group maps (see Extensions below), you can assess individual work.

EXTENSIONS

- Make large maps of the music working in small groups. Provide materials (markers, large paper, scissors, glue, color paper scraps, etc.) for students to use as they determine how to communicate the structure of A+. CREATE A RUBRIC for the work ahead of time for students to use as they work. Encourage them to use images and symbols often instead of just words. Display the maps on the band room walls.
- Students can also use a variety of materials to create individual maps.



Music Map: A+: A “Precise” Prelude and “Excellent” March by Thomas C. Duffy

PRELUDE - AN “IMPRECISE” WAY TO WARM-UP THE BAND

- Wood winds improvise swirling threads of a pentatonic melody. They continue throughout the Prelude.
- The brass interrupts the swirling wood winds twice with a two measure tune. They seem to be urging the winds to get on with the march.
- Finally the percussion takes over as if to say...“Let’s just get going, okay?”

MARCH - WE'RE ON OUR WAY

- A Strain – The March tune takes off over the percussion patterns. Flutes and clarinets play the first strain.
- B Strain – The whole band plays rhythm games; tricky patterns with lots of rests. Watch out!
- Coda – The March finally comes to a big finish. There’s a surprise button chord at the end.

MARCH - WITH MISTAKES

- The whole March is repeated in exactly the same order, but now each player makes one mistake.

