



Lesson: Rhythm Stand Composition Projects

OVERVIEW

Three projects in which students create original compositions that feature nontraditional sounds found in the environment.

LEARNING GOAL

Students will:

1. locate sounds in the environment (either in nature or manmade) that have a rhythmic pulse.
2. integrate the found sounds into an original musical composition by recording the sounds or replicating them with traditional or nontraditional instruments.
3. map out a plan for the piece they intend to create.
4. create an original cohesive piece of music.
5. play a recording of or perform their original compositions for the class.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS

In *Rhythm Stand*, composer Jennifer Higdon uses the nontraditional sounds of pencils tapping on various parts of a music stand to create a rhythmic ostinato. The three different composition projects require students to locate nontraditional sounds in their environment and integrate those sounds into original musical compositions. Teachers may select one of the three possible composition projects and assign it to all students, assign different projects based on what the teacher knows about each student's knowledge, skill, and experience, or let the students choose which of the three assignments they would like to do.

The order that the composition projects are presented in this set of three lessons reflect an increase from basic to a more complex application of musical knowledge, skill, and experience. The **Disco Fingers© Project** provides the students an opportunity to experiment with combining sounds to produce a variety of musical effects and textures in very brief pieces with a fixed tempo determined by the program. The **Found Sounds Recording Project** provides students with the experience of creating a fully developed composition where the form, tempo, and other musical elements are determined by the student composers. Only the **Found Sounds Imitation**

Project requires students to write formal musical notation to create a fully developed piece where the students determine all the musical elements.

- [Link to Disco Fingers Project](#)
- [Link to The Found Sounds Recording Project](#)
- [Link to The Found Sounds Imitation Project](#)