

Pop!: In a Nutshell

Director Edition

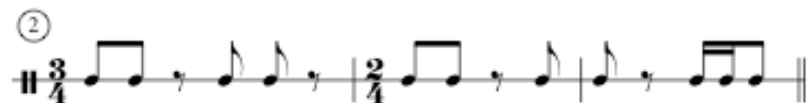
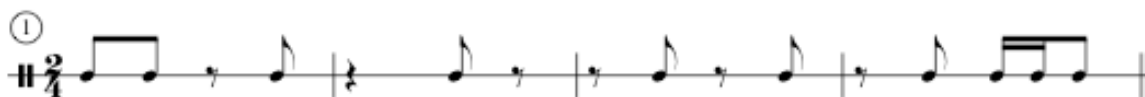
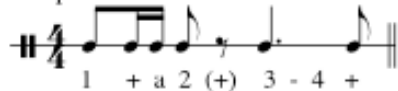
Use this compact teaching guide to introduce your students to the main facets of *Pop!*. For a Listening Map, additional interdisciplinary lesson plans, musical composition lesson plans, and other resources for *Pop!*, visit www.bandquest.org.

Rhythm Activity

1

Write counts under each of the notes. Use dashes to indicate notes longer than one beat and parentheses around the counts underneath rests. See the sample measure for an example.

Sample



Rehearsal strategies: After the students have written in counts, you may have the students:

1. Finger a designated pitch, tap, and count out loud.
2. Play the rhythms on a designated unison pitch.
3. Apply the rhythms to a scale, changing pitch at the beginning of each measure.
4. Verbalize the rhythm on a spoken syllable, such as "tah."

Warm-Ups

2

I. Pitch Set



The Pitch Set Warm-Up will enable students to become familiar with the pitches of the Bb Blues scale that are used throughout the entire piece.

II. Articulations



The Articulations Warm-Up enables the students to concentrate on the attack and length of each note.



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III. Main Themes

① *mf*

② *mf*

③ *mf*

The Main Themes Warm-Up enables the students to become familiar with the the main melodies that occur throughout the piece.

Musical Terms

3

In *Pop!*, Tawnie Olson used three compositional techniques as a part of the way she approached creating the piece:

1. Additive process - Building a melody note by note. An Additive process is a technique where a melody begins with a pitch or series of pitches that are repeated, each time adding on another pitch until the motive is fully developed in its entirety. The following example is from *Pop!* By the end of this example, all of the pitches from the Bb Blues scale have occurred. The pitches of the scale are Bb, Db, Eb, E natural. Notice that sometimes she repeats several of the pitches before adding the next one in the series.



2. Imitation - Imitation happens when a melody or fragment of a melody occurs and then later is answered by being repeated in another voice or instrument. There are some specific types of musical pieces that are completely structured based on imitation, such as round, canon, and fugue. In *Pop!*, at rehearsal Letter C, a melody starts in bassoon, trumpet, trombone, and vibraphone; one beat later it is answered in flute, oboe, clarinet1, and xylophone; one beat after that it is finally answered in the tenor and baritone saxophones, tuba, and marimba. Listen for all thre groups playing the same melody one beat apart when you perform this section.
3. Aleatory - Some element of what is performed is left to chance and/or the decision of what sounds to play are determined by the performer, often with some sort of directions or original type of notation that doesn't necessarily specify specific pitches or rhythms. In *Pop!*, at rehearsal Letter K, Tawnie Olson provides a set of pitches from the Bb Blues scale for each instrument with instructions on how to perform them to recreate the sounds of popcorn popping.

Using the Internet or other sources, find two examples of pieces that use each type of music composition techniques and note the title, composer, and source where you found the piece. Be sure to listen to each piece to see if you can hear the additive process, imitation, or aleatory!

	Title	Composer	Source
1. Additive process:	_____	_____	_____
2. Additive process:	_____	_____	_____
1. Imitation:	_____	_____	_____
2. Imitation:	_____	_____	_____
1. Aleatory:	_____	_____	_____
2. Aleatory:	_____	_____	_____

Meet the Composer: Tawnie Olson

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Tawnie Olson's music is performed throughout the world. Born in Canada, she earned her B.A. in Music from the University of Calgary. (Calgary is the largest city in the Canadian Province of Alberta. It is directly north of the state of Montana.) She received a Masters' Degree from the Yale School of Music in Hartford, Connecticut, and a PhD in music composition from the University of Toronto. She currently teaches composition at the Hartt School of Music in Connecticut.



Her music has been described as "especially glorious" and "ethereal" by critics. Her compositions are inspired by politics, spirituality, the natural world, and the musicians for whom she writes new pieces. Recent awards include winner of the 2018 Barlow Prize and the 2015 Iron Composer Competition. The Iron Composer Competition is one of the most interesting in the world of music. (describe) Another interesting award came from the Canada Council for the Arts Professional Development Grant to study field recording at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Olson was granted the time and the access to study the music of the birds!

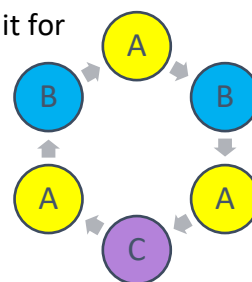
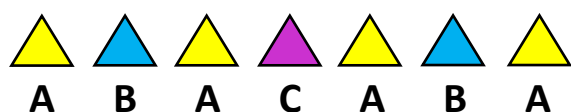
Respond to Rondo in Pop! (What Goes Around, Comes Around)

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Composer Tawnie Olson organized *Pop!* into a musical form called **rondo**. With the director's guidance, students will identify the returning A sections in "POP!" and locate the contrasting themes and melodies in between. They will sketch a personal interpretation of the **rondo** form of *Pop!* using emojis.

Some ideas, metaphors, and images for presenting the concept of **rondo** to students:

- **Rondo** is an Italian word for 'round.' In French the word is *rondeau*.
 - **Rondo** form has multiple sections where a lead section of music is repeated in between contrasting sections, creating a symmetrical pattern.
 - Rondo form in music is a circular journey. It begins with an opening theme, leaves it for something new, returns to it more than once, then closes the piece with the same theme.
 - Visually a rondo looks something like this. 
 - The term '**rondo**,' even sounds like the word round.
- You can imagine Rondo Form in a visual way. For example:



Process

1. Establish a basic definition with students for the term rondo form by:
 - Asking what students know about rondo form in music (prior knowledge).
 - Providing the teacher's preferred definition.
 - Using images and some of the above ideas.
 - Watching a light-hearted [video explaining rondo form through a song](https://composersforum.org/bandquest/pop/). It's a little silly, but right on target:

2. Find the rondo landmarks in *Pop!* with students. Hearing Olsen's unique variations of the A theme is challenging, but the basic melody is always somewhere inside the repeated A sections.
 - The recurring **A theme**/main theme of *Pop!* is first heard at Letter A (mm. 9 through 15); restated and varied through m. 23.
 - A new **B theme** introduced at Letter B (m. 24); a more sustained melody.
 - A variation of **A** returns at Letter C (m. 36). It continues at Letter D.
 - Letter E might first sound like a variation of the **B theme** (m. 59), but as it continues at Letter F, multiple alternations transform it into the new **section C**.
 - Letter G (m. 89) has a fragmented **A** melody.
 - Letter H (m.106), melodies derived from the **B** motives return.
 - A short version of **A** at Letter I (m. 118) that is similar Letter D brings the rondo back to A.
The improvised musical Popcorn section, Letter K, follows the last echoes of A (m. 146).
3. Using the student page from the Nutshell curriculum, direct students to create a visual version of Rondo form using original emojis.