



Pop! by Tawnie Olson

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Featured readings and worksheets designed to be printed and shared with students can be found throughout this curriculum. They are easily identifiable - each page has a border

POP! IN A NUTSHELL

ABBREVIATED CURRICULUM

If you don't have the capacity to dive into the fully integrated curriculum outlined above, see the "*Pop!* in a Nutshell" documents located in your downloaded curriculum folder. This is a compact teaching guide to introduce your students to the main facets of the piece.

Teacher's Guide

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

BandQuest® was conceived and launched by the American Composers Forum to create new music for middle level bands. In addition to recent commissions by some of today's leading composers, BandQuest® also provides a rich curriculum with multiple resources for ensembles and music classrooms. The BandQuest® curricular goals are to provide educators:



- Tools for creating effective ensemble lessons that teach students how to perform the piece
- Lesson and resources that support interdisciplinary teaching and learning related to the piece

We believe that when students approach a piece through multiple entry points and make connections between the music they play and other disciplines, they not only develop into stronger performers, but also make meaning of the music and its relationship to their own life experiences.

FRAMEWORK

The materials are developed using a curricular framework called the Facets Model (Barrett, McCoy, & Veblen, 1997). The Model presents a comprehensive approach for studying musical works in depth, one that helps students relate music to other disciplines in meaningful ways. Used to create curricula in many settings, it provides a useful structure for the content of the BandQuest® curricula.

Eight essential questions are key to the Facets Model. The questions are grouped into categories which encourage teachers and students to address fundamental ideas about the origins of the work, its elements and form, and the range of expressive meanings it conveys. For in-depth information on the facets model, go the BandQuest® web site at composersforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/FacetsModel.pdf.

The materials for each BandQuest® curriculum can be downloaded. The curriculum includes:

- A Teacher's Guide
- Audio recording of the piece
- Background information including Composer Biographies and Program Notes
- Lesson plans for Rehearsing the Music including Warm Ups
- Lesson Plans for Listening and Responding
- Lesson Plans with an Interdisciplinary Focus
- Lesson Plans for Creating Music
- Readings, Worksheets and Handouts for Students
- Assessment Strategies
- Links to other web-based resources

POP!

Pop! by Tawnie Olson was commissioned by the American Composers Forum BandQuest® Series in collaboration with the E.C. Adams Middle School 8th Grade Band, Susan Oakley, director. It received its premier performance on June 12, 2018.



Lesson: Recognize, Define & Locate the Musical Elements in *Pop!*

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this lesson is for students to be able to visually and aurally identify the critical musical elements that are contained within the piece. In addition, the conceptual analysis of the score provides the director with information about the critical attributes of the piece that will assist in interpreting and teaching the music.

LEARNING GOAL

Students will:

1. define, visually/aurally identify, and locate musical elements contained in *Pop!*.
2. visually and aurally identify and locate those same elements in other pieces of music they are rehearsing and in audio examples of recordings of other music.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

1. A table with an analysis of the distinguishing musical elements and compositional techniques that comprise the piece to be used by the teacher to plan instruction.
2. The individual parts and/or a recording of other repertoire the students are rehearsing.
3. Print and audio examples.

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR INTRODUCING AND ASSESSING THE ELEMENTS:

The following activities can be used to present the musical elements contained in *Pop!*:

- Students identify the measure that contains a particular element in their parts after you have defined and described it.
- Pick a measure and ask the students identify all the elements and characteristics discussed in class that are contained in that one measure. (Different parts may require different responses.)
- Pick two contrasting measures where only one contains a particular element. Ask the students to identify which measure contains the element.
- Students identify selected elements in measures from other pieces they are rehearsing.

- Play an example of recorded music as an example illustrating several musical elements and characteristics. Ask students to describe what they hear.
- Students play a measure(s) that provides an example of a particular element. Have members of other sections identify what element or characteristic is being illustrated. If necessary, provide a list of choices from which to choose an answer.
- Pick a section of the piece and play the recording of that section. Students identify the musical function (melody, accompaniment, etc.) being fulfilled by specific instruments that either you are they choose (e.g. “What is the function of the clarinets starting in measure 29?” or “What do you notice about the functions of a particular instrument in measure 44?”).
- Students mark with a pencil the function their instruments fulfill in their parts. They may also note the names of the other instruments that share that function.

POP! MUSICAL ELEMENTS ANALYSIS

An analysis of the musical elements contained in *Pop!* is provided on the following pages, along with a definition and examples of measures that contain each element.

Tonality

Main Pitch Set:

The main pitch set on which composer Tawnie Olson based *Pop!* is the Bb Blues Scale that appears below. The note in parentheses appears as an accidental in the piece.



Compositional Techniques

Tawnie Olson incorporates several different compositional techniques throughout *Pop!*

Additive Process

Building a melody note by note. An Additive Process is a technique commonly used in minimalism where a motive 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. By the end of this example, all of the pitches from the Bb Blues scale have occurred.



Imitation/Canon

Imitation happens when a motive or fragment of a motive occurs and then later is answered by being repeated in another voice or instrument. A canon is a polyphonic piece in which one part is imitated by other parts that subsequently enter in a way that overlaps. In the example from *Pop!*, each occurrence of the motive enters one beat after the previous statement of the motive.

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. The composer of *Pop!* refers to aleatory as "guided improvisation." 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. She refers to this section as the band "basically gets to become a pot of popcorn."

Pitched instruments: play any of the pitches indicated, in any octave. Begin by playing softly and leaving lots of space between notes. Then get louder and play faster - like a pot of popcorn when it gets going. At the conductor's cue, start getting softer and spacing out the notes more and more, like a pot of popcorn when nearly all the kernels are popped. Stop when the conductor cues m. 147. It might be helpful to designate section leaders, and have the section wait to enter until after they have played. It is also helpful to talk to the people next to you to make sure you don't play the same thing that they do (everyone should play a unique pattern). **Percussion of indefinite pitch:** make a similar shape (non-sustained notes moving from soft, slow to fast, loud to soft, slow, like a pot of popcorn) on any instruments you wish, making sure that the rest of the band can always be heard.

Simultaneous Performance of Repeated Rhythms of Different Lengths

In *Pop!*, a clave rhythm that is three beats long is repeated simultaneously with a repeated cowbell rhythm that is similar, but is four beats long due to the inclusion of a quarter rest. At the end of six measures, both rhythms once again align on beat 1.

Melody Accompanied by Reoccurring 4-Beat Percussion Rhythm while Meter and Feel of Melody Changes

In *Pop!*, a 4-beat cowbell rhythm is repeated unchanged while the meter and the feel of the melody in the low woodwinds, tuba, and keyboard percussion changes.

[H]

MOTIVE/TEXTURE/ORCHESTRATION

Main motives (all excerpts in concert pitch):

Beginning – Measure 8

A pulse is established by a steady rhythm in the Shaker part (perhaps the shaking of the pan used to heat the popcorn.) The solo B Sax introduces the fundamental note from the pitch set (Bb Blues Scale) used throughout the piece. Different instruments (T Sax, then A Sax & B Sax together) enter every 2 measures and an additional note is added that make up the first three notes of the pitch set and serve as motivic material. Next, Solo Cl 1 & B Cl enter together with the same three pitches in a double time rhythm along with the Marimba playing the fundamental pitch as a quarter note. A, T, & B Sax once again play the three pitches in an eighth note rhythm, with the last pitch separated from the first two pitches with rests. This section finishes with Solo Cl 1, Solo B Cl, and Solo Fl extending the motif with a more active rhythm and the introduction of an accidental (concert E natural.) BD plays along on the beat with each occurrence of the motif and Tri or Quiro play during the silence in between the pitches. The silences between each entrance of wind instruments represent the beginning popping of popcorn kernels.

Letter A: A Theme

The first main motif of *Pop!* is developed in the Ob, tutti Saxophone section and Tp 1 using the entire pitch set (Bb Blues Scale) that comprises the entire piece (Bb, Db, Eb, E nat., F, Ab.) Bass notes interspersed with silences support the melody. The Shaker maintains a steady pulse and accessory percussion (BD, Claves, Cowbell) add color.

8 Measures after Letter A

The motif introduced at Letter A continues in the Fl & Ob, but without the Sax section or Tp 1, while the Cl 1 and B Cl imitate and overlap the melody one beat later. Shaker continues to maintain the steady pulse along with the addition of Bongos. The Vibraphone (with the pedal off at all times to create a more staccato sound) emphasizes some of the pitches in the main melody, while the Marimba does the same in the imitated version. At 4 measures before Letter B, the imitation continues and gets more intense with the addition of more instruments (Cl 2, Bsn, Sax section.)

Letter B: B Theme

A second, more sustained, theme is introduced in the Bsn, B Sax, Bar, and Tba. The Ob part, doubled by the Vibes and later the Mar, performs a countermelody that is accompanied by staccato unison notes in upper WW and A & T Sax that crescendos and splits into a chord made up of a cluster of notes in close intervals.

Letter C: Return of A Theme with Imitation

A 4-measure variation of the main melody introduced at letter A occurs in imitation three times, each entrance of the imitated theme being one beat apart. It first occurs in the Bsn, Tp 1, Tbn, and Vib parts. One beat later it passes to the Fl, Ob, Cl 1, and Xylo. On the next beat it enters in the T Sax, B Sax, Tba, and Mar parts. The Claves and Shaker maintain a steady, active pulse.

Letter D

The main melody introduced at letter A is further developed through use of an additive process. The order that the pitches appear is similar, but there are more repetitions of pitches and fewer silences due to fewer rests in the melody. The steady rhythms of the Claves and Shaker stop, and BD (with a harder mallet) and Cr Cym highlight selected beats. At the 8th measure of Letter D, the melody occurs a second time, but shifts down a whole step.

D *Picc (Svnt), Fl, Cl 1, 2, A Sax*

ff

ff

ff

f

f

mf

f

Mar

Trp 1
+ Trp 2
+ Vibes

+ Tbn

Letter E: C Theme

A variation of the melody introduced at Letter B, beginning on a pitch that is a whole step lower, occurs in A & T Sax, muted Tp 1, and F Hn, accompanied by staccato eighth notes in the Fl and Cl 1, 2. Two different Triangles highlight selected notes in the melody, first the main downbeats, and later some of the off-beats.

Fl 1, 2, Cl 1, 2

p

p

mf

p

p

Trp 1
+ Trp 2 (con sordino)

Trl. (Perc 2)

Trl. (Perc 3)

Letter F

A staccato version of the same melody from Letter E in the A & T Sax, muted Tp, and F Hn continues in the entire Sax section at Letter F. It is accompanied by the Upper WW in a similar style to 7 measures after Letter B, but with a different series of pitches. The steady pulse of the Shaker rhythm returns. Accented chords in the saxophone section emphasize shifts in the eighth note groupings of the Upper WW. The Whip highlights selected beats. As the music proceeds towards a climax at Letter G with a crescendo, the winds suddenly stop while the Shaker continues as a solo for two measures, the silence in the winds making the crescendo even more dramatic. The WW, this time joined by Tp1 (without mute), F Hn, Tbn, Mar, and Vib, enter again and crescendo for one measure, again leaving an exposed Shaker rhythm. Each entrance of the winds gets progressively louder and the amount of time the Shaker rhythm is exposed gets shorter.

The musical score for Letter F is divided into two systems. The first system, marked with a box 'F', contains four staves. The top staff is for Flutes 1 & 2, Oboe, and Clarinets 1 & 2, playing a staccato melody in 3/4 time. The second staff is for Alto, Tenor, and Baritone Saxophones, also playing a staccato melody. The third staff is for the Shaker, providing a steady eighth-note pulse. The fourth staff is for the Whip, highlighting specific beats. The second system, marked '7 min before G', contains four staves. The top staff is for Piccolo, Flutes 1 & 2, Oboe, Clarinets 1 & 2, and Vibraphone. The second staff is for Baritone Clarinet and Bassoon. The third staff is for Alto, Tenor, and Baritone Saxophones. The fourth staff is for the Shaker. This system shows a crescendo in the woodwinds and saxophones, with the Shaker continuing its pulse. Various instruments are added throughout, including Trumpet 1, French Horn, Trumpet 2, Xylophone, Maracas, and Tambourine.

Letter G

A fragment of the melody from Letter A begins in the Ob and Tp 1. One beat later, it is imitated in the Fl. In the fourth measure of Letter G, Low Brass and F Hn add to the texture with a third imitation of staccato accented and separated eighth notes. In the sixth measure of Letter G, the A, T, & B Sax enter with the same melody fragment introduced four measures earlier by the Ob and Tp 1 but starting the pattern on count 2 rather than on count 1 of the measure. The texture in the percussion section also gradually increases in density by beginning with an active rhythm in the Shaker and Claves at Letter G, adding bongos in the fourth measure, and Cowbell in the seventh measure, forcefully propelling the beat forward.

The musical score for Letter G, measures 1 through 7, is presented in 2/4 time. The score includes the following parts and markings:

- Fl a2:** Measures 1-7, marked *mf*. Measure 4 includes the instruction *+ Picc. 8va*.
- Ob, Tp 1:** Measures 1-7, marked *mf*. Measure 4 includes the instruction *- Tp 1 + Tp 2*.
- mf sub.:** Measures 1-7.
- A, T, & B Sax:** Measures 5-7, marked *mf*.
- F Hn, Tbn, Bar, Tba:** Measures 4-7, marked *f*.
- Shaker:** Measures 1-7, marked *mf*.
- Bongos:** Measures 4-7, marked *mf*.
- Claves:** Measures 1-7, marked *mf*.
- Whip:** Measures 1-7, marked *mf*.
- Cowbell:** Measures 6-7, marked *mf*.

4 Measures before H

The four groups of instruments playing staggered occurrences of the melody build as the music approaches Letter H, when finally one measure before Letter H the entire Brass section, B Cl, and Bsn complete the phrase with three forceful unison eighth notes along with driving rhythms in the Bongos, Shaker, Claves, and Cowbell.

This musical score is for the section '4 Measures before H'. It features six staves. The top staff is for Piccolo (8va), Flute, and Clarinet 1 & 2. The second staff is for Oboe and Trumpet 1 & 2. The third staff is for Alto, Tenor, and Baritone Saxophones. The fourth staff is for Bassoon, Baritone Clarinet, French Horn, Trombone, and Baritone. The fifth staff is for Shaker. The sixth staff is for Bongos and Claves. The music is in 2/4 time and features a driving, rhythmic melody that builds in intensity, with dynamics ranging from *f* to *ff*.

Letter H: Return of B Theme

At Letter H there is a reoccurrence of a similar motive first introduced at Letter B, but with some changes in instrumentation. A 4-beat Cowbell rhythm is repeated unchanged several times as the meter and feel change in all the other parts.

This musical score is for the section 'Letter H: Return of B Theme'. It features six staves. The top staff is for Flute (div.), with a note that (A# appears as Bb in score). The second staff is for Oboe. The third staff is for Bassoon, Baritone Clarinet, Tenor & Baritone Saxophone, and Trombone. The fourth staff is for Vibraphone, Xylophone, Maracas, and Vibes. The fifth staff is for Xylophone. The sixth staff is for Cowbell. The music is in 2/4 time and features a reoccurrence of a similar motive first introduced at Letter B, with dynamics ranging from *p* to *mf*.

Letter I: A Theme Melody with Imitation

The melody is given the same imitation treatment as at Letter D, but now the melody first occurs in the brass section and is answered one beat later in the woodwinds. The Xyl and Vib highlight notes in the brass section and the Mar does the same in the woodwind section. BD and Cr Cym emphasize selected beats.

1 Picc, Fl,
Cl 1, 2, A Sax

T Sax, Mar *ff*

Bsn, B Cl *ff*

Trp 1, 2, F Hn,
Tbn, Bar *ff*

Xyl & Vib *f*

Mar *f*

Cr Cym

BD *mf*

3 Measures before Letter J

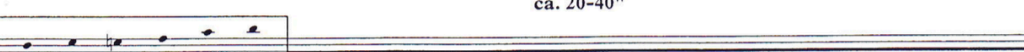
At 3 measures before Letter J, the staggered parts finally rhythmically come together and crescendo towards a climax at Letter J. Forceful and accented unison notes are played by all of the wind instruments, and sometimes by percussion instruments. The notes get progressively more spaced apart, in the same way that sounds of kernels popping become more infrequent as cooking process gets closer to completion.

Letter K

In the aleatoric section at letter K, a set of pitches from the Bb Blues scale is provided for each instrument with instructions on how to perform them to recreate the sounds of popcorn popping.

Pitched instruments: play any of the pitches indicated, in any octave. Begin by playing softly and leaving lots of space between notes. Then get louder and play faster – like a pot of popcorn when it gets going. At the conductor's cue, start getting softer and spacing out the notes more and more, like a pot of popcorn when nearly all the kernels are popped. Stop when the conductor cues m. 147. It might be helpful to designate section leaders, and have the section wait to enter until after they have played. It is also helpful to talk to the people next to you to make sure you don't play the same thing that they do (everyone should play a unique pattern). **Percussion of indefinite pitch:** make a similar shape (non-sustained notes moving from soft, slow to fast, loud to soft, slow, like a pot of popcorn) on any instruments you wish, making sure that the rest of the band can always be heard.

ca. 20-40"



Picc.

Fl.

Ob.

Last 6 Measures

The piece ends similar to how it began, with notes in solo instruments (B Sax, Fl) spaced apart, until the final notes of the entire band abruptly break the silence in the last measure.

TEMPO

Tempo

Tempo of entire piece, until Letter K:

Rhythmic, ♩ = ca. 100

Free tempo at letter K during aleatoric section

lunga: Hold for a longer duration; Grand pause at four measures and two measures from the end

FORM

For an overview of the form, please refer to the [Narrative Outline of Pop!](#).

The inspiration for *Pop!* is the sound of popcorn popping. Like how it sounds when kernels start popping, single sounds are spaced out at the beginning of the piece, become faster and closer together as the piece progresses, and then become more spread apart and infrequent towards the end, and finally winding down to spaced apart, single sounds again until the final three notes.

The formal structure of *Pop!* is Rondo or Art Form: A B A C A B A

EXPRESSIVE MARKINGS

Articulation Markings and Dynamics:

Accent, Staccato, Staccato Accent, Slur, and *p sub.*



Accent		Place extra emphasis or stress on a note.
Staccato		Separated in length between the note and the next note that follows.
Staccato Accent		Place extra emphasis or stress on a note and separate the length between the note and the following note.
Slur		Smoothly connect notes without re-tonguing.
<i>p sub.</i>		Piano subito: Suddenly soft.



Mini-Lesson: Meet Composer Tawnie Olson

OVERVIEW

When student rehearse a new piece, learning about the composer adds another layer to support understanding and insight about the music. In this lesson, students will read a biography, then discuss what they found interesting about Tawnie Olson's life experiences, accomplishments, and inspirations for creating music. Students will develop a simple portrait of the composer working individually or in small groups.

LEARNING GOAL

After reading a biography about Olson, students will select and organize their thoughts and key information into a *Composer Portrait* to support their understanding and performance of *Pop!*.

CORE STANDARDS CONNECTION

Connect #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make music.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Paper copies or electronic posting of the article "Meet Composer Tawnie Olson"
- Copies of the 'Composer Kaleidoscope' organizer for students to complete
- Optional: BandQuest [YouTube video](#) starting at 2:10, Olson talks about how she became a composer and how she planned *Pop!*

PROCESS

Decide if the *Portrait of the Composer* activity will be done as a group project or individual assignment, and whether it is a homework, or an in-class project.

Students Will:

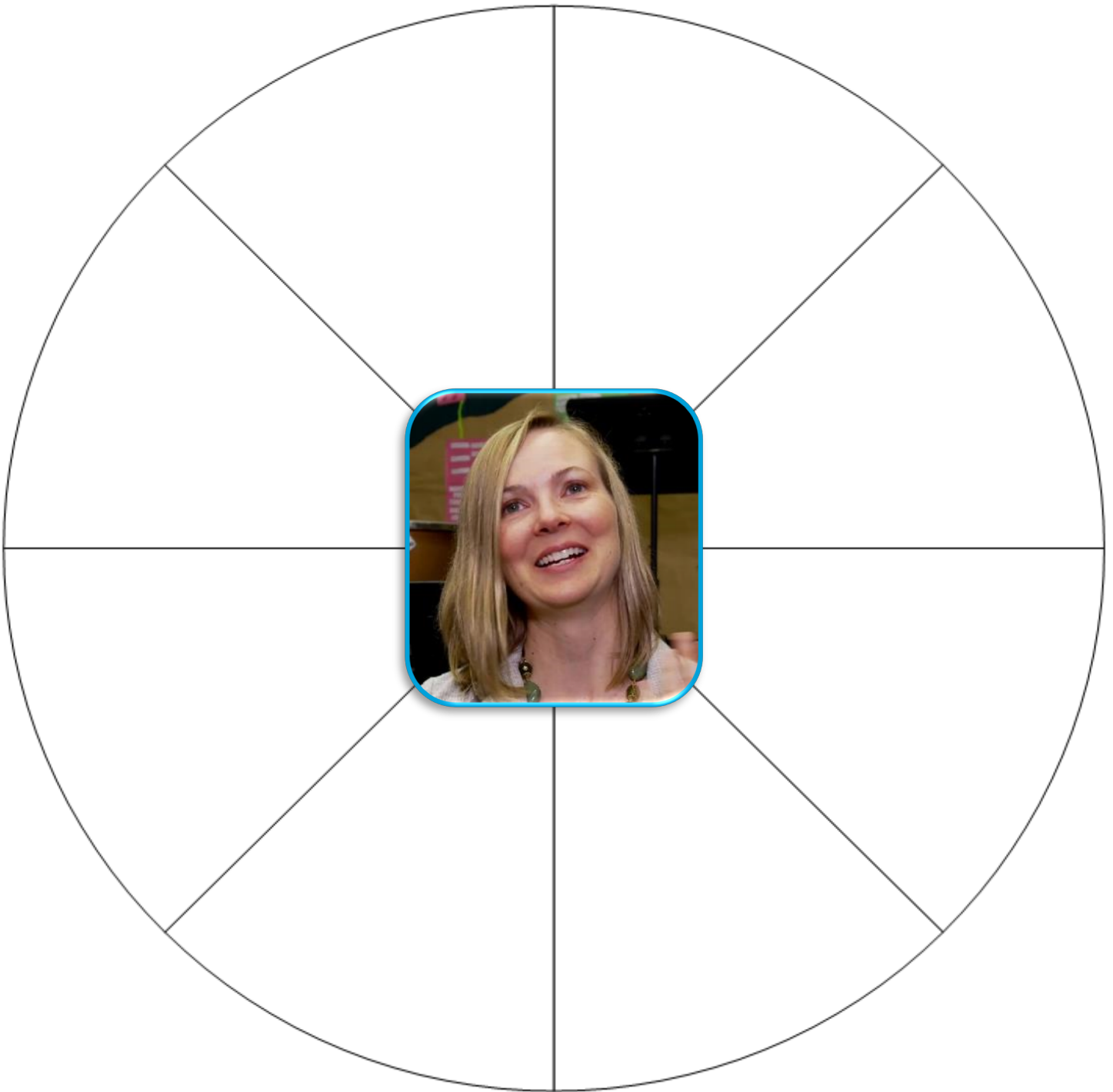
1. Read the article, "Meet Composer Tawnie Olson" before rehearsing or early in rehearsals for *Pop!*.
2. Note facts, information, and stories about Olson that they find interesting as they read the article. They will use this information and additional personal insights about the composer to complete the "Portrait of the Composer" written assignment.
3. Read and share out loud some of their entries in class. Post completed portraits on the walls of the band room and at the concert when you perform *Pop!*.

ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION

The completed composer profile can be assessed for accuracy and breadth of information. An option is to ask students to complete this activity near the end of working on *Pop!* to assess students' knowledge about the composer and the creation of the piece.

A Composer Kaleidoscope

Create a Composer Kaleidoscope from what you've learned about Tawnie Olson, composer of *Pop!*. Write one fact or insight you now have in each section of the circle.



Name(s) _____ Date _____

Meet Composer Tawnie Olson

Tawnie Olson was born in Calgary, a large city in the province of Alberta,



Canada. Alberta is just north of the state of Montana and the United States.

Young Musician

As a child, Olson liked to play almost any instrument she “could get her hands on.” Her favorites were the piano, flute, and piccolo. She began piano lessons at age nine, then learned to play the flute in the school band.



That led to flute lessons and playing the piccolo in the 9th grade band. She continued playing all three instruments during high school in the concert band, wind ensemble, and

the jazz band. Olson also played outside of school. With her flute and on the piano, she accompanied adult and children’s choirs at church. Near the end of high school, she joined flute sections of the Calgary Youth Orchestra.

Many people encouraged her musical interests growing up. Her mother, who loved to play the piano, especially around Christmas, motivated and encouraged Olson’s interest in music. She also had friends who played; musical friends made playing important. One of her best friends played double bass and her three sisters played the violin, viola, and cello. Olson also gives credit for her success as a composer to wonderful music teachers, and her good friends in band.



Tawnie Olson playing flute in Middle School. Looks like a winter concert!

In high school she decided that she wanted to be a musician for the rest of her life. But the idea of becoming a

composer didn't occur to her until college, when she was required to write pieces for a music theory class. It was fun, and she loved it!

Musical Inspiration

To do her creative work, Olson regularly schedules composing time in a quiet



dedicated work space. A nice cup of tea also helps her creative process. If those are in place, she says

"... almost anything can inspire a piece!"

When asked what the best things are about being a composer, two stand out for her:

- "Getting to meet and work with wonderful conductors and performers!"
- "Hearing them perform my music beautifully."

Even more rewarding is when, every so often, someone is really touched or helped by something she's written. Olson says that this "is incredible, too."

Advice about composing

Olson says it is important, as often as possible, to write music for real, live musicians. Make friends with musicians. Aspiring composers can and should write pieces for their friends, and ask their

music teachers if they can write for their band or choir.

Listening is important! Listen to all kinds of music, especially music by living composers. If you have access to a computer and a recording device, try recording sounds and manipulating them in a digital audio workstation. Audacity is free, Reaper is not expensive, and Garage Band comes pre-installed on some computers.

Keep at it. It won't sound as you imagined at first, but it will get better. The more you do it, the more you



will be able to do it. "Anyone can compose music! It's not just for specialists or experts. If you haven't composed anything yet, give it a try!"

We asked what Tawnie Olson would do if she were not a musician and composer. She responded that she would probably be a novelist and write books.

Listen to other compositions by Tawnie Olson at her website:

<http://www.tawnieolson.com/audio.html>

TAWNIE OLSON, COMPOSER OF POP!

Biography for Teachers

Described as "especially glorious... ethereal" by [Whole Note](#), and "a highlight of the concert" by the [Boston Musical Intelligencer](#), the music of Canadian composer Tawnie Olson draws inspiration from politics, spirituality, the natural world, and the musicians for whom she composes. She has received commissions from the Canadian Art Song Project, Third Practice/New Music USA, the Canada Council for the Arts, Mount Holyoke College/The Women's Philharmonic, the Blue Water Chamber Orchestra, Ithaca College, the American Composers Forum, and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music's Robert Baker Commissioning Fund, among others. In 2017, she received an OPERA America Discovery Grant to develop a new work about Hildegard of Bingen and Eleanor of Aquitaine with re:Naissance Opera (libretto by Roberta Barker), and a Canada Council for the Arts Professional Development Grant to study field recording at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. In 2018 she is the Composer-in-Residence of the Women Composers Festival of Hartford and an American Composers Forum BandQuest Composer-in-Residence at E.C. Adams School in Guilford, CT. She is the winner of the 2018 Barlow Prize and the 2015 Iron Composer Competition, and her *Three Songs on Poems by Lorri Neilsen Glenn* took second prize in the 2018 NATS Art Song Competition. She received a 2018 Connecticut Artist Fellowship, and has won awards from SOCAN and The Guelph Camber Choir/Musica Viva.



Recent projects include *Pop!*, for concert band, commissioned by the American Composers Forum for the E.C. Adams 8th grade band, Susan Oakley, director, *Incantation*, for eight voices, violoncello, and continuo organ, commissioned by Third Practice, an arrangement/re-composition of "Know the Way" (by electronica artist Grimes), commissioned by Geof Holbrook and the Cluster Festival for the Plumes Ensemble, *Magnificat*, commissioned by Karen Clute for the Elm City Girls Choir and Yale Schola Cantorum, *Three Songs on Poems by Lorri Neilsen Glenn*, for soprano and piano, commissioned by the Canadian Art Song Project for Magali Simard-Galdès, *Summer's End*, commissioned by The Sebastians, *Glimmer*, *Gossamer*, *Glint*, for orchestra, commissioned by the Blue Water Chamber Orchestra, and *Meadowlark*, for marimba and fixed media, composed for Ian David Rosenbaum.

Olson's music is performed on five continents; it can also be heard on recordings by Parthenia (with bass-baritone Dashon Burton), the Canadian Chamber Choir, percussionist Ian David Rosenbaum, the Chronos Vocal Ensemble, bassoonist Rachael Elliott, soprano Magali Simard-Galdès, oboist Catherine Lee, and Shawn Mativetsky, McGill University professor of tabla and percussion. Her scores are available from the Canadian Music Centre, Galaxy Music, Hal Leonard's Mark Foster series, and E.C. Schirmer. Olson holds a doctorate in music composition from the University of Toronto, a Master of Music degree from the Yale School of Music, an Artist Diploma from the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Calgary. She is an adjunct professor of composition at the Hartt School of Music. - From the composer's website, <http://www.tawnieolson.com/>

PROGRAM NOTES

Pop! By Tawnie Olson

When you make popcorn on the stove, it takes a while to really get going. After a test kernel or two pops, you pour in the rest of the corn, put a lid over them, and shake the pan a little. Fairly quickly, the number of pops increases. After a few minutes of wild popping (and more shaking of the pan), the pops occur at wider intervals. This is a sign that almost all the kernels have popped, and the pot needs to be taken off the burner. An experienced popcorn maker will leave the lid on for a minute or two after taking the pot off the heat, because often one or two more kernels will pop quite a while after the rest have finished. If the lid is off, those kernels will burst right out of the pan, taking others with them and causing the cook to jump with (dignified?) surprise. This piece was inspired by popcorn.



The 8th Grade Band at E.C. Adams M.S.

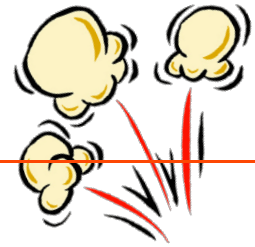
The opening of the piece, in which little fragments of a tune are introduced, is meant to suggest the popping of those very first kernels. As more kernels pop, we hear the tune in full. It turns out to be the main theme, which is made of up short staccato notes, some of which have accents that make them pop out of the texture a little. The piece builds from there (just like a pot of popcorn when it gets going), right up to a special section just before the end of the piece. In this passage, the whole band improvises sounds that suggest a pot of popcorn in the making. As well as being fun to play, this section gives students a chance to co-compose part of the piece, and asks them to play independently and to listen across the whole band.

Pop! is a type of Rondo sometimes called arch form: ABACABA. Within that form, each section grows and develops every time it is repeated. This is done through imitation and canon, through additive processes, and by changing the theme's color and character.

This piece is dedicated to Sue Oakley and the E.C. Adams 2017–2018, 8th Grade Band, with deep gratitude to the American Composers Forum for commissioning it, and to Laura Krider and Prof. Tom Duffy for working so hard to make sure everyone involved had a terrific experience.

—Tawnie Olson

A Narrative Outline of *Pop!*



Students and teachers can use this outline as an overview of the form, content, and musical vocabulary of *Pop!*. The outline highlights the rondo form of the piece.

Intro mm.1 - 8	The Introduction warms things up! • A single Bb ‘popping’ note is played by a bari-sax & bass drum over the steady rhythm of the shaker. It is the 1st note of the Bb blues scale, the main pitch set used in the piece. • Solo eighth notes (later, sixteenth notes) on tenor, alto & bari-sax, clarinets, then all saxophones, develop the rest of the Bb blues pitch set (additive process in action!). • Solo clarinet, bass clarinet & flute extend the opening motive into the A section.
Letter A mm. 9 m. 16 m. 20	Section A • Oboes, all saxophones, & 1st trumpets play the A theme using the full pitch set. Vibraphone emphasizes some pitches. 1st & bass clarinets imitate and overlap with the melody, one beat later. Marimba emphasizes main pitches. • Low brass & winds “pop” in & out to support the melody & add flavor. • Shaker keeps the steady pulse; bass drum, claves, & cowbell add color. • Melody continues in flutes & oboes; shakers with bongos continue steady pulse. • More instruments are added (2nd clarinet, bassoon, saxophones), building intensity.
Letter B m.24 m. 24-26 m.27	Section B • Bassoon, bari-saxophone, baritone, & tuba introduce a new, more legato theme. • Oboes add a staccato counter melody that crescendos from <i>p</i> to <i>f</i>. Flutes accompany & vibraphone doubles. • Staccato counter melody continues in oboes, now joined by all clarinets, again with a crescendo. Marimba doubles. Together they form a chord comprised of note clusters in close intervals. • The legato B theme continues through the section.
Letter C m. 36  Letter D m.45	Section A • A four-measure variation of the A theme is imitated twice. It begins in the bassoon, 1st trumpet, trombone, & vibraphone. One beat later, flute, oboe, 1st clarinet, & xylophone imitate the A theme. At meas. 41, tenor sax, baritone sax, tuba & marimba imitate A. • Syncopated claves & steady shaker maintain the pulse with an even rhythm pattern. • Using an additive process, the theme expands & develops. Pitches occur in the same order, but more are repeated, with fewer rests & silences. This thickens the texture. • Bass drum & crash cymbals add accents on selected beats throughout the section.
Letter E m. 59 Letter F m.71	Section C (long section with many developments... the center of the arch) • Variations of the B theme played by alto & tenor saxophones, muted 1st trumpet, & French horn. Accompanied by staccato eighth notes in flutes & 1st/2nd clarinets. • Staccato version of the same melody played by all saxophones accompanied by upper woodwinds. Steady shaker rhythm returns & the whip plays accents. • Through many musical developments, the section takes on the character of a strong,

m. 88	central keystone of the rondo as Section C. Staccato articulation pushes music ahead. • Ends on a single, loud, ff accent.
Letter G m. 89 m.102 m. 105	Section A returns • Hints of the A theme played by oboe & trumpet, imitated by flutes. Saxophones play more staccato fragments of the theme. • Bongos, claves, shakers, & cowbell provide rhythmic energy.  • 4 measures before H, groups of instruments alternate playing more of the A theme. • 1 measure before H, the full brass section, plus woodwinds, play the final notes of the A theme with a ff unison flourish.
Letter H m. 106	Section B returns • Though similar to the earlier B section, this section includes changes in instrumentation and shifting meters (between 3/4 and 2/4). They give the section a different feel. • The 4-beat cowbell rhythm, however, stays the same throughout the changes in the other parts.
Letter I m. 118   m. 131 Letter J m. 134	Section A returns • Echoes of the A theme played earlier at Letter D are heard, but melody now occurs first in the brass answered one beat later by the woodwinds. • Xylophone & vibraphone highlight notes played by the brass, & marimba highlights notes in the woodwinds. • Bass drum & cymbals emphasize selected beats. • Three measures before the end of the section, the staggered parts come together in (almost) unison & build a crescendo to a climax at Letter J. • At J, all wind instruments (& sometimes percussion) play forceful, ff , accented, unison notes. As the section moves on, the notes become progressively more spaced apart - like the kernels in the popcorn pan when they are almost finished popping. • The guiro completes the section with one final sizzle at m. 146. 
Letter K m. 148 m. 150 m.154	An Aleatory Cadenza in the Style of Popcorn • Using the pitch set from the Bb blues scale & instructions from the composer, players select how they will play the 20 to 60 seconds of music that imitates popping corn. • All participate in constructing the crescendo/diminuendo as they play. • After a measure of silence, a solo bari-sax ‘pops’ the next to last kernel of corn (m.150), & the 1 st flute pops the final kernel (m. 152). • Silence is interrupted loudly with a final ff measure as the band brings <i>Pop!</i> to a close.

For a more detailed analysis of the piece’s musical elements, go to “[Recognize, Define & Locate Musical Elements in Pop!](#)” section.

Pop! Glossary

Accent		Place extra emphasis or stress on a note.
Additive process		Building a melody note by note. An Additive Process is a technique commonly used in minimalism where a motive 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.
Aleatory/Aleatoric		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.
Articulations		Expression markings that indicate how heavily a note is attacked and how long a note is sustained.
Blues Scale		A 6-note scale that is the tonal basis of both classic jazz, Blues, and rock music. In comparison to a major scale, it consists of 1, flat 3 rd , 4 th , flat 5 th , 5 th , and flat 7 th . Another way to describe the scale is a minor pentatonic scale with an added diminished 5 th .
Canon		A polyphonic piece in which one part is imitated by other parts that subsequently enter in a way that overlaps.
Graphic notation		Geometric shapes or designs suggest how sounds are to be performed without specific pitches or rhythms indicated.
Imitation		Imitation happens when a motive or fragment of a motive occurs and then later is answered by being repeated in another voice or instrument.
Metronomic marking		An indication of the speed of the beat represented as the number of beats per minute.
Motive		The subject or melody of a piece of music.

<i>p sub.</i>		Piano subito: Suddenly soft.
Slur		Smoothly connect notes without re-tonguing.
Staccato		Separated in length between the note and the following note.
Staccato Accent		Place extra emphasis or stress on a note and more separated in length.

Assessing the Facets of *Pop!*

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING

Teachers assess student learning in the areas of musical performance throughout the process of rehearsing a new work using rubrics that address district, state, or national standards in music. This suggested assessment provides a simple tool for summarizing student learning in the related interdisciplinary content you've presented in *Pop!*; the other facets of the work.

Enclosed is a suggested organizer/assessment template. Students complete the assessment as directed at the top of the organizer to provide evidence of learning.

***Pop!* Quiz**

Write at least two sentences defining/explaining the term or name in each box.
Feel free to add sketches, illustrations, and diagrams to your explanations.

Aleatory

Rondo

Additive Process (music)

Tawnie Olson

Name: _____

Date: _____