

## Improvisation Lesson Plan

### Melodic Pentatonic Improvisation on Recorders Using the Pentatonic Pitch Set (C, D, E, G, A)

Start by teaching the section A material. (Great Big House shown below).

Once they have this down, demonstrate a call and response improvisation. I will improvise for 8 beats and then they will improvise for 8 beats.

The first time they will only use C, D, and E to improvise.

Second time they can use only E, G, and A.

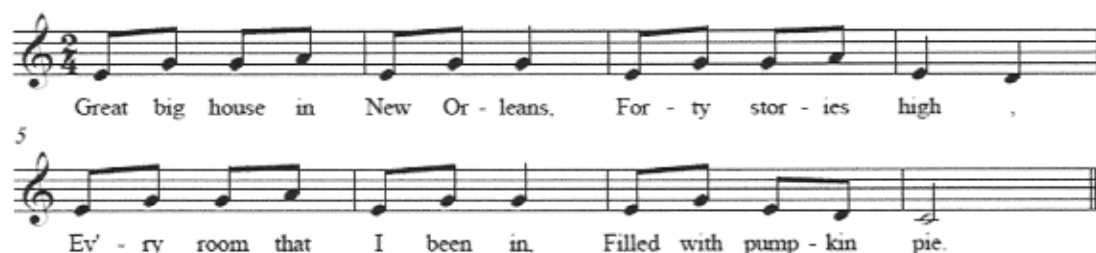
Now they will break the 8 beats into two sets of 4. The first set of 4 they will use pitches C, D, and E. The second set of 4 they will use pitches E, G, and A.

Now that they have had comfort doing call and response with me, they will split off and do the same thing with partners. The tallest one will be the call; the shorter one will be the response.

To put the whole piece together, we will play the A section, followed by the call and response section (B) and then go back to the A section. They can now choose the pitch sets they use for their 4 counts as either the call or response.

Once they have improvised with their partners a few times, they will present the call and response to the class in a circle in the context of the piece.

## Great Big House in New Orleans



## **Improvisation Reflection**

In my opinion, the teaching episode for improvisation went fairly well. I feel like the sequencing was clear enough that no vital components of the lesson were skipped. The students successfully improvised in front of the class without a lot of hesitation or confusion. This made me think that they understood the concept and what I was teaching.

I think if I were to teach improvisation again, I would try to incorporate the accompaniment sooner. I kind of forgot about the fact that by accompanying the students it helps them with pulse and time. I didn't incorporate the accompaniment until the final step in this lesson, but it may have improved their rhythmic skills and transitions if I had started on that shortly after demonstrating the improvisation portion.

I also think that I would be more specific about what rhythms they can improvise with. Students need to understand that there is still subdivision and time involved, and sometimes that needs to be as specific as saying what rhythmic values they are allowed to play. If they then use those values in the pulse given by the accompaniment, there is more of a sense of ensemble, even though they are improvising. This would improve their overall musician skills and hit some important topics (such as rhythm, time, and pulse) that by this lesson they would already know, though maybe need reminding of.