

The Structure, Style, and Themes of Baroque Music

Subjects:

Computers & Internet, Music

Grades:

4, 5, 6

Title – Baroque Composition Discovery

Primary Subject – Music

Secondary Subjects – Computers / Internet

Grade Level – 4-6

LESSON DURATION: 50 minutes

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will identify the structure of Baroque music
- Students will identify the style of Baroque music
- Students will identify the themes they notice in Baroque music
- Students will hypothesize about the historical period of selected pieces following identification of major stylistic elements of Baroque music

MATERIALS NEEDED: Samples of 12 short excerpts of Baroque music and samples of several other examples of music from various classical historical periods (to include Baroque music), PowerPoint slides of Baroque art and architecture, blank hypothesis sheets numbered from 1-10, and computer workstations

LESSON STEPS

Anticipatory set: Show PowerPoint slides of Baroque art and architecture to students in the computer lab. Describe the “ornamental” features of art from the Baroque period and introduce Baroque music through playing an example from Handel’s Messiah showing ornamental style of the music.

Steps:

1. The teacher should play 12 short excerpts of Baroque music featuring the most influential composers from the period. Have students listen to examples and take notes as desired to begin identifying what they are hearing in the examples. Students will have the opportunity to hear several examples of Baroque music. They should begin to identify specific thematic elements.
2. Pair the students up. Have the students get into groups of two. The students will work as partners for this lesson.
3. Provide each pair a copy of the disk with the musical excerpts. Students should listen to the examples again. Students will begin to work together to complete lesson.
4. Students will classify the examples by theme, style, and structure. Students will work with their partners to make a chart in Microsoft Excel identifying stylistic, thematic, and

structural elements of the examples. Students will note ornamental aspects of the music, instruments played, tempo, form, rhythm, and melodic components of Baroque music.

5. Have students present their charts to the other students in the class. Students will identify the major elements of their charts for comparison with others in the class. Students will collaborate together to identify major components of Baroque compositions.
6. Pass out the blank hypothesis sheets for all students and play 10 further music samples ranging from all historical periods of classical music. Have students write yes or no following each example to indicate if the music played fits into the Baroque category. Students will write the word “yes” or “no” to indicate if the example played fits into the Baroque period according to stylistic, thematic, and structural elements. Students will begin to identify the music of the Baroque period according to their own understanding of music from that period.
7. Closure: Play an excerpt from Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* as the students are closing down the computers and moving back to their assigned seats. Have students give a “thumbs up” signal if they believe the music is Baroque or “thumbs down” signal if they think it isn’t. Quietly pass out a prize to those who guess correctly.
8. Going further: Have students research Baroque composers. Provide students musical examples from their chosen composer. Allow them to present their reports to the class and play their favorite musical excerpts from that composer.
9. STUDENT ASSESSMENT: Students will demonstrate their understanding of Baroque music through the completion of the blank hypothesis form. They will be presented with ten musical examples, half of which should be music from the Baroque period. The students will indicate their understanding of music from the Baroque period by correctly identifying music that fits into the Baroque category and music that does not. Students will obtain a score of 80% or better to demonstrate mastery on the assignment.