

Lesson Plan Form

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Microteach: Dynamics and dynamic contrast **Grade Level:** M.S. General Music

National Standard: 3.8.1, 5.8.1, 5.8.2

List Your Long Term Musical Goals for Students (what major goals will you accomplish)

- Students will be able to understand and recognize the qualities (and the terms for those qualities) that make a piece of music interesting to them: dynamics, instrumentation, style, contrast, etc...

Short Term Musical Goals for Students (what immediate goals will you accomplish)

- Students will have a basic understanding of dynamics, their markings, and how they are applied in music
- Students will know the different methods by which composers and songwriters utilize dynamics
- Students will be able to hear and recognize dynamic contrast when hearing an excerpt

List all the Materials You'll Need to Run Your Lesson (both for you & the students)

- Powerpoint
- Speakers
- Youtube
- Listening Ears

Script Your Lesson Sequence in Order (take as much space as needed – will probably be 1-3 pages long)

- So why are dynamics important? They are important because we then get great video clips like these *play youtube video*
 - All in all, dynamic contrast creates interest, it's add something to the music that can either excite us or catch us by surprise *change slide*
- There are multiple ways dynamics can be utilized in music, but there are four primary ones to know
 - The first contrast to know is probably the most common one which is a subtle contrast in a melody. Imagine you have a simple melody about four bars long. The melody starts at a mezzo-forte dynamic, grows to a forte dynamic towards the middle, and then comes back down to mezzo-forte
 - These dynamic contrast are subtle but give the melody some natural interest and character

- The second is contrast by section. Remember when we listened to “Good 4 U” in class last week, and remember how when the chorus it the dynamic shifted completely with the new section. That is what this contrast is all about.
- The third contrast is a sudden one. Think of horror movies or horror films. You’ve got the guy with the knife sneaking up on someone, the background music is playing very quietly, and then suddenly the music gets loud as the attacker attacks
- The final contrast is a gradual shift. You don’t see this in pop music or film music very much, but you will see in classical music a lot. This is when the piece of music starts off very soft and gradually gets louder as the piece goes on, usually over the course of 10 to 15 minutes.
- So we are going to play a game. I’m going to show you seven music excerpts from various pieces of music and I want you to first determine if there is a major dynamic contrast, and what the dynamic contrast is if there is one
- Before we go on to the listening, let’s review our four major dynamic markings...
 - The p stands for piano, which means soft
 - If we go one level higher we get mezzo-piano, and then mezzo-forte if we want to get even louder
 - Now remember mezzo is never used by itself, it’s always used in combination with piano or forte
 - And then we have forte for our loud sections
- There is also one other warning to know! Dynamics are subjective and relative
 - If a piano is playing really loud, and a full orchestra is also playing really loud, well then what do we label them? Even though the orchestra is much louder than the piano, they both are still playing at a forte level. Dynamics are relative to the instrument that is playing them, so let’s take a listen
- *Listening excerpt #1*
 - *Call on a student*
 - Does this excerpt contain dynamic contrast? *wait for response*
 - Okay, what are the dynamics presented here? *wait for response*
 - Excellent!
- *Listening excerpt #2* (*repeat this for excerpts 2-7*)
 - *Call on a student*
 - Does this excerpt contain dynamic contrast? *wait for response*
 - Okay, what are the dynamics presented here? *wait for response*
 - Great job!
- I have one more example to show you, but first we have to ask ourselves...
- How loud can dynamics get exactly? Well... They can get as loud as you want.
- This piece of music actually has real cannons they are used and written into the music
 - *play video*
 - There are truly no limits to dynamics in classical music, and that’s why this piece of music has become so famous.
- You all did a great job, and that’s all I’ve got today

Evaluation (how do you know the students learned what you taught them)

- Students will listen to 8 excerpts of music. Students will first decide if the excerpt contains a dynamic contrast, and if so, what the dynamics are that are presented.