

## Courageous Composers

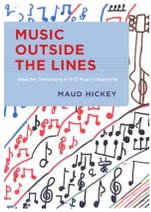
Melinda Metzger and Kendra Skinkle

Saturday, November 9th, 2019 - Session 5

Music-Ed Specialists, Waterloo Region District School Board

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To *compose* is to **CREATE**. Creating often involves experiments! Composing is to imagine sound in many different ways. So be **BRAVE** and be **BOLD** and experiment and improvise with some of our youngest and most imaginative students.



Some inspiration from the book *Music outside the lines: Ideas for composing K-12 Music Classrooms*. By Maud Hickey

When children are young and first learn to speak, we don't teach them grammar rules. So why is it that when we first teach composition, we think we should teach composition and theory rules?

Children often view themselves as writers long before they view themselves as readers. "If we write it we can read it." Why do we think children should be able to read music before they can "write music"?

### Things to Consider:

1. The music "rules" we use today are ones based on other composers' compositions.
2. Music notation is not music. Music is sound and notation provides a means for representing that sound.
3. Students should notate their music so that they and others will be able to play it.

Ken Robinson says: "Music and the Arts is something that comes OUT of us, as opposed to something that comes AT us, like reading or television or teachers talking."

We must be mindful to allow our students the opportunity to express themselves musically.

## Rhythm Compositions

### Candy Bar Compositions

Source: <https://laytonmusic.wordpress.com/2009/05/03/candy-bar-rhythms/>

Layton Music Games and Resources Blog

- Have students practice clapping the rhythms together.
- Once they are confident playing them, each student receives their own candy bar rhythm sheets
- Students then cut apart the cards, and glue them in whatever order they wished on a large sheet of construction paper.
- Students then perform their rhythms for each other
- OPTIONAL: then students get to choose a candy bar to eat after the performances.
- Extension: Students can add notes or pitch names to their candy bar rhythms. Then play them on orff instruments, boomwhackers, recorders, etc. Older students can then add chords to their melodies...the possibilities are endless!



### BODY PERCUSSION



### Body Percussion

Snap, Pat, Clap and Stomp are great body percussion actions to begin with when composing.

- Show some videos of groups performing body percussion.
- After showing a few videos, begin a discussion with your class about what they liked about the groups (the number of parts, the actions they use, how they synchronize well/not well as a group).
- Place one 4-beat rhythm on the board and as a class create different body percussion to go with the rhythm on the board. Practice together with the class.
- Depending on the grade level, add a second 4-beat rhythm. This can be done in ABA form or in 2-parts at the same time.
- In groups, handout a rhythm grid. Each group will create and perform their own body percussion composition.

### Extensions:

- Circle one line of music to be a repeated rhythm aka ostinato. Have half the group play the ostinato while the other half play the entire grid and then switch.

**COMPOSITION**

Create your own body percussion.

Each square must add up to one beat.

Use red pencil for **clapping**, green for **patting knees** and blue for **stomping**.

Example:

♪	♪	♪♪	♪
♪	♪	♪	♪
♪	♪	♪	♪
♪♪	♪	♪	♪

Then get your group of four or two and try playing it anyway you want.


Now add **f** and **p** where you want the sound to go loud or soft

- More two-part music - have half the group read and play their composition from top to bottom while the other half read and play their compositions from left to right.

### Some YouTube Links of B.P. Performances:

- Body Percussion by Latin Groove Kids  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AhrTeBVW4M&list=PLpIRqNXR93InKsEUEyk5EnpOZ4yiyGdzU&index=3&t=0s>
- Body Percussion  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWmoLP7A0MY&list=PLpIRqNXR93InKsEUEyk5EnpOZ4yiyGdzU&index=17>
- Bohemian Rhapsody with Body Percussion  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQzuCScjs08&list=PLpIRqNXR93InKsEUEyk5EnpOZ4yiyGdzU&index=39>

-Your Tribe Speaks English\_body percussion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xeYBmZcJWYg&list=PLpIRqNXR93InKsEUEyk5EnpOZ4yiyGdzU&index=16>

### Bucket Drumming Composition

- Side of the bucket, centre of the bucket, edge of the bucket and stick clicks are all ways to create a bucket drum compositions. Possibilities are endless!
- Bucket drumming compositions can be done by rote or with standard or non-standard notation.
- Rhythm grids are a great way to start composing. Have students create a rhythm grid, then assigning a rhythm to a location of the bucket drum (side of the bucket, centre of the bucket, edge of the bucket and stick clicks).
- Use 4 beat rhythm patterns sequenced and layered over each other to create your own bucket song

### Examples:

1. Picking a topic (ex. Things that are Red), have students come up with 16 items that match the topic. Then assign those items with their corresponding rhythm (ex. Apple = ti-ti). Organize all sixteen words with their rhythms into 4 rows of 4. Then decide how to play each rhythm on the bucket drum by colour-coding (ex. Side of bucket = orange). Have students play rehearse and play their compositions in front of the class.

3. Now put your 16 words into groups of 4. Under each word write the rhythm for that word.

Example: COLOUR: Blue

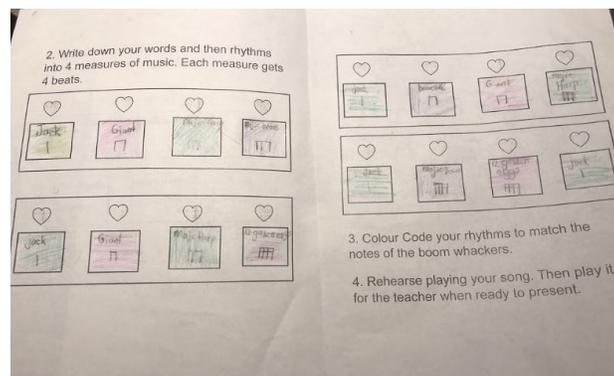
Blueberries	Smurf	Water	Ocean
□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □

2. Compose to a pop song by rote. Figure out the form of the song, then come up with a 4-beat rhythm to play along with each section of the form. Ex. If the song is AABA - then students come up with 2 different rhythms.

## Special Events Compositions

Connect special events or field trips that are happening at your school with music class by having students compose! Using words that connect to the event, students can discover the rhythms that correspond to the words. From there the possibilities are endless.....you can play rhythm instruments, add pitch and note names and then play their songs with orff, boomwhackers, recorders, etc.

For example, our juniors went to see the play “Jack and the Beanstalk”. We chose words as a class to work with (i.e. Jack, Magic Harp, Beanstalk, etc). Then each of those words were made into a rhythm (i.e. Jack = ta). From there, students colour coded according to the notes they wanted to play on the boomwhackers, and performed their finished composition.



## Form

### Rhythm Compositions with Cups and Music Play-Alongs

#### PLAY-ALONGS

Use known rhythms to tap and clap along to any piece of music.

- As a class decide how many beats are in a group with in the song (usually 2, 3, 4, or 6).
- Decide what repeated rhythms you want to play
  - Premade flashcards are perfect for this, or make your own!
- Decide how many times you want to play the rhythm before moving on to a new rhythm.

Extension Ideas:

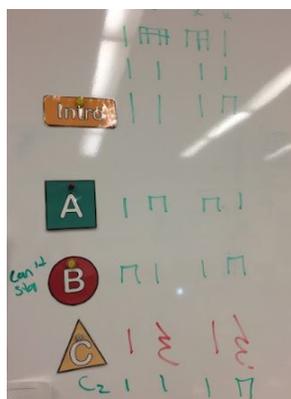
- Try to figure out the form of the song (AB, ABAC etc) and make set rhythms for each form.
  - Try 1-4 different instruments to play the rhythms.
    - Have triangles play beats 1 and 3, and rhythm sticks play beats 2 and 4.
    - Have tambourines play the first 8 beats and the drums play the next set of eight beats.

Song possibilities

- Vivaldi: Domine Fili from *Gloria* (in 3)
- Mozart: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik -Allegro (in 4)
- Tchaikovsky: Trepak (in 4)
- Tchaikovsky: Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy (in 4)
- Copland: Hoe Down from *Rodeo* (in 4)
- Can't stop the feeling
- Best day of my life

Link to form cards

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Marvelous-Musical-Deli-Large-Form-Cards-FR-EEBIE-1740340>



## CUP COMPOSITIONS

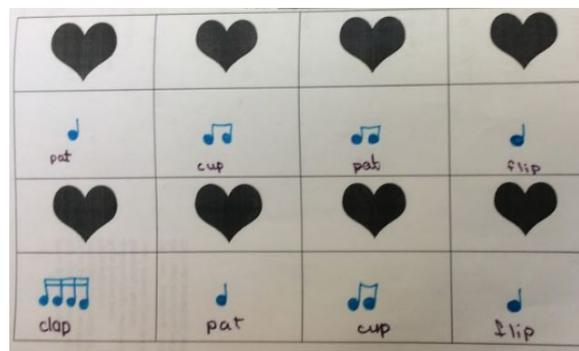
Composing rhythms on cups as a class while listening to and concentrating on form.

- As a class, sit in a circle and hand out a cup to each student. The cup is their instrument.
- Explore and share different ways to play the cups using the floor and your hands.
- Choose a song that has a relevant form for your class (4s - Verse & Chorus, 5s - Rondo ABACABA, 6s - Themes & Variations, Repeats, Different endings).
- Listen to the entire song and have students listen to it (no cup playing yet!), and map out the form as the song is playing on a chart paper or whiteboard (ex. ABABA)
- Then as a group come up with some rhythms or cup routine to go with each SECTION within the form.....i.e. A section, B section.... (ex. Tap, tap, pass to the right).
- Rehearse each section without music and with, and then put it all together for a performance! These are great for assemblies or videos to share at meet the staff nights, etc.



Some songs that we have used and recommend:

- Nancy Mulligan - Ed Sheeran
- Sleigh Ride - Mozart
- Nutcracker March - Tchiakovsky
- Tell My Ma - The O'Brians
- Donkey Riding - Great Big Sea
- Hooked on a Feeling - Blue Swede
- Trashin' the Camp - Phil Collins & N-Sync

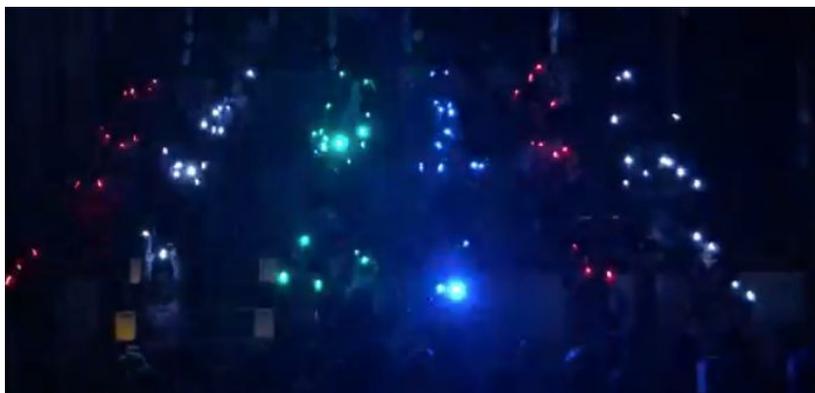


- In small groups, using a rhythm grid, compose 8-beats of music to play on the cups to a song that they are currently singing or learning. Students write the actions that they do with the cup underneath the rhythm.

## Light Show

Focusing on form, create a light show!

- Pick a song
- Have students determine the time signature of the song
  - Have students determine the form of the song
  - Have class try different moves to go with each section of the form.
    - Use finger lights to test out if the moves have a pleasurable/desired look for the audience.
    - Have students suggest new moves if needed. (Simple is often better).



This is a great activity to perform at a concert.

## Composition Notation



### Boomwhacker Compositions

To help students practice notation, you can use boomwhackers as a starting point to create original compositions.

#### ACTIVITY #1:

- Give students 4 rhythm cards .
- Have students decide which boomwhackers should play each card.
- Have them sequence the order that they will play them.
- Then perform.
- Then notate on a staff if desired.

#### Extension / Accomodation:

- To help differentiate use boomwhacker discs to create compositions.
- Have students put the discs in a pattern and then play that pattern on the boomwhackers.



#### ACTIVITY #2:

-Direct students on what key they will be working on (ex. key of C where do is C).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Compose a Song with Boomwhackers!

Start on do, and end on do.  
No rests allowed.  
Each box is worth 1 beat.  
You can use the following rhythms:



Do is 

1. Fill in the rhythm grid.  
2. Colour code each rhythm to match the notes of the boomwhackers.

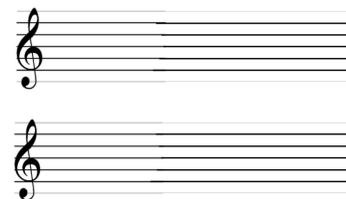
			
			

- Students are to compose 8 beats of music starting on do and ending on do. (Not allowed to use rests!)

- Students will write out their rhythms on the rhythm grid and colour code according to the notes of the boomwhackers.

-They will then transfer what they wrote on their rhythm grid onto a staff using standard notation.

3. Now write your song on the staff using standard notation.



4. Rehearse and perform your song.

### Recorder Compositions

Recorders are a great way to help students practice notating on the staff. It is helpful to have students create a rough draft of their composition that is not on the staff so that students can first focus on the music before they focus on the notation.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

As the teacher:

1. First decide the number of lines or beats you want the composition to be.
2. Which rhythms you would like them to include (max: 3 half notes, 3 rests, Minimum 2 ti-tika, and 2 tika-tika)
3. Suggest that they include patterns in their rhythms and notes

- Decide if you would like there to be form (ABA) to this composition.

Students:

- Write the rhythm first. Decide what rhythm patterns you will use in your composition.
- Get the rhythm approved by your teacher.

Teacher:

- Select a key (G) for your composition.
- Select which notes would be appropriate for students/class to use (GABD, GABCD, GABCDF#, etc).
- Decide if students must begin and end on the tonic note (G)
- Make available plenty of staff notation reference sheets to help students transfer their song from letter names to the staff.

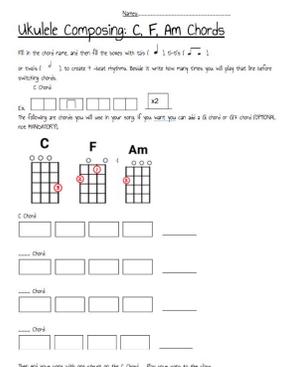
Students:

- Add the pitches to their rough draft below the corresponding rhythms.
- Have students try out their composition as they are composing, making any changes they would like along the way.
- Remember that using patterns in our music makes composing easier and sound better
- Get your rough draft approved by the teacher
- Transfer your composition to staff notation

## Ukulele Compositions

To further enhance students playing chords on the ukulele, have them create their own songs with some simple chord compositions.

- You can have students write out simple rhythms to strum and then write the chord names underneath each rhythm.
- You can also have them write out different measures of music and then designate a chord to each measure.
- Accommodations: For students struggling transitioning in between chords, each student in the group is designated one chord to play. Ex. Susie plays only F chord while Bobby only plays the C chord when they are presenting (until they feel comfortable).



## Soundscapes

By using images we can help students imagine sounds. There are many ways to help students do this. Below are a few activities you could use. These activities often work best when first modeled and created together as a class.

Once you have selected an image:

- Select a minimum of 10 sounds to use in your soundscape.
- Use instruments, found objects and yourself to create the sounds needed for your soundscape.
- Decide what order you would like the sounds to occur and write them down in the chart below.
- Your soundscape should be approximately 45-60 seconds.

## Arts together Inspire: A Soundscape Activity:



### Before students compose:

- Have students listen to *Orange Blossom Special* - what does it sound like? Paint a picture in your head, what did you see?

- Then explain what the music was called and explain that the Orange Blossom Special was a deluxe passenger train on the [Seaboard Air Line Railroad](#) and connecting railroads between [New York City](#) and [Miami](#) in the United States. It ran during the winter season only.

- Ask the students what instruments made the music sound like a train?

Was it a good choice? Why or why not?

- Then play Grofe's *Sunset* from his *Grand Canyon Suite*. Again ask the students what they heard. Then show them a picture of the Grand Canyon at sunset. You can explain how Grofe fell in love with the Grand Canyon and how picturesque it was. He wanted it to take shape in a tangible form - music.

### Now it's the Students Turn to Compose:

- Choose 4-6 paintings and project them on the board.
- Students will choose their favourite painting from the selection.
- They will then write down as many adjectives as they can, to describe their painting.
- What would your painting sound like? Using the Garageband App on the iPads students will then create 16 measures of music that would "fit" with their painting.
- Students also have to report on their musical decisions (ex. "I chose to add some high notes of the piano into my piece because it sounds like the stars twinkling in the painting").
- Presenting: The class gets to listen to each song while looking at the painting. The composers state their musical choices and why they chose them. Then the class gets to give feedback on the composition with two stars and a wish.

Arts Together Inspire - Junior Composition Project

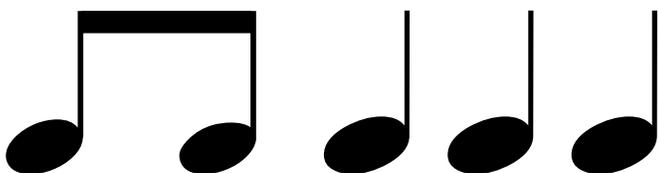
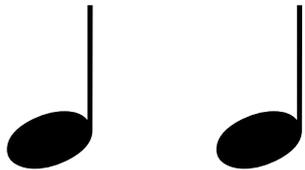
1. Pick your favourite painting from the selection.
2. Write down as many adjectives you can to describe the painting.

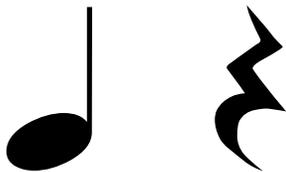
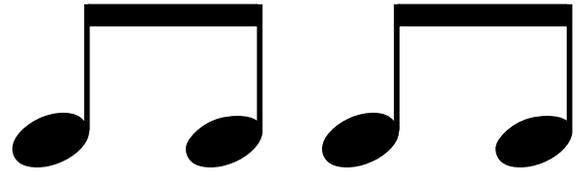
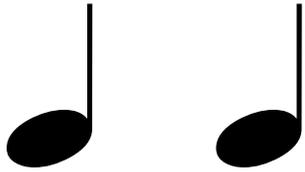
3. Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Compose music to the painting using Garageband.
5. Describe why you chose to use the instruments and music that you did to accompany the painting. Report on your musical decisions.

## Report Card Comments

- In music, \_\_\_\_\_ can create body percussion compositions using different types of musical notation. He/She can perform his compositions in front of the class.
- In music, \_\_\_\_\_ is applying the elements of music when singing, composing, and arranging music to create a specific effect. He/She demonstrates this with his/her project in composing a soundscape to a painting.
- In music, \_\_\_\_\_ can create compositions using the boomwhackers in 4/4 time and perform them in front of the class.
- In music, \_\_\_\_\_ confidently uses the tools and techniques of musicianship (good posture, correct breathing technique, correct fingering, produce a clear sound) while playing the recorder. (He/She) can read musical notation from the staff in order to play the correct notes and rhythms. (NAME) demonstrated this with his/her own BAGED composition.





# COMPOSITION



Create your own body percussion.

Each square must add up to one beat.



Use red pencil for **clapping**, green for **patting knees** and blue for **stomping**.

*Example:*


Then get your group of four or two and try playing it anyway you want.




Now add **f** and **p** where you want the sound to go loud or soft



3. Now put your 16 words into groups of 4. Under each word write the rhythm for that word.

Example: COLOUR: Blue

Blueberries	Smurf	Water	Ocean

COLOUR: \_\_\_\_\_


4. Then circle/highlight/colour-code (according to the bucket drumming legend on the board) what parts of the drum you will play each word on.
5. Practice playing your colour word rhythms in 4/4 time, in 4 measures. Each row across is one measure.
6. Present your 4-measure rhythm colour composition to the class.

**My Cup Composition**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Compose a Song with Boomwhackers!

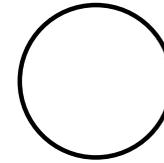
Start on do, and end on do.

No rests allowed.

Each box is worth 1 beat.

You can use the following rhythms:

Do is



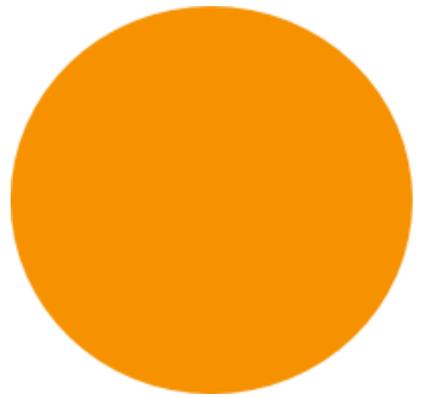
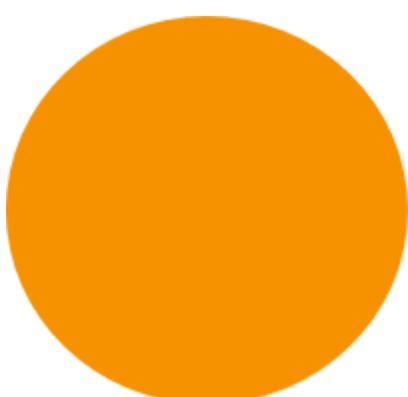
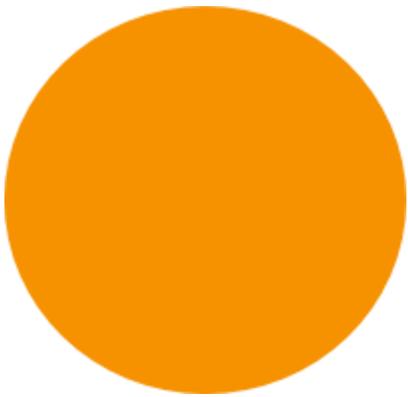
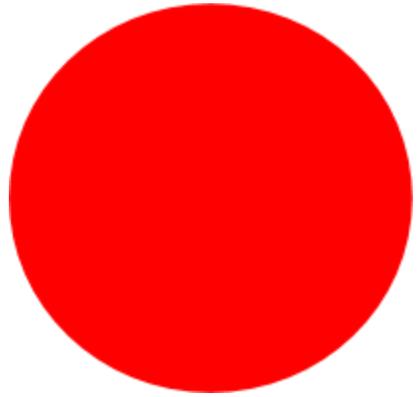
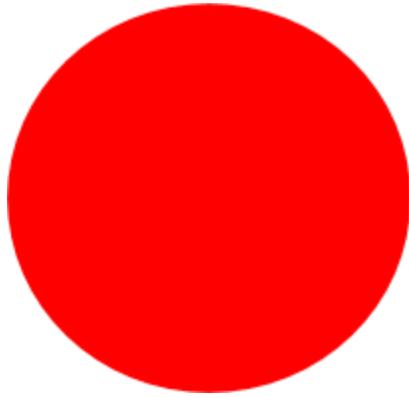
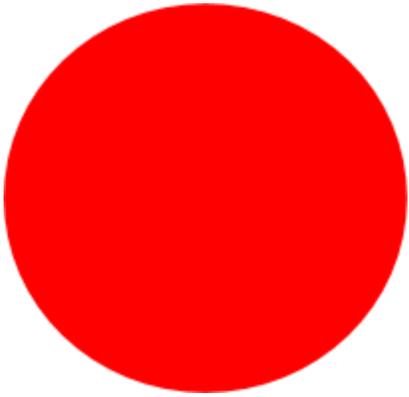
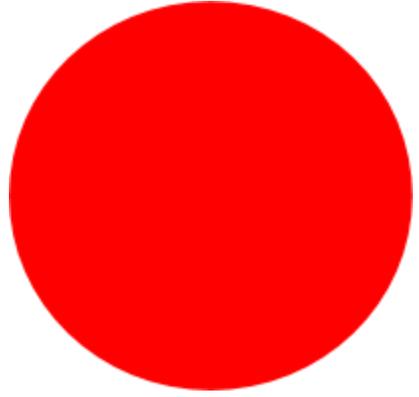
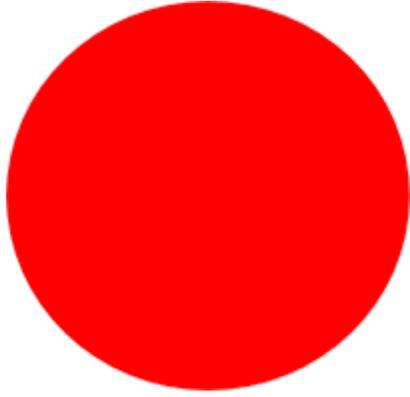
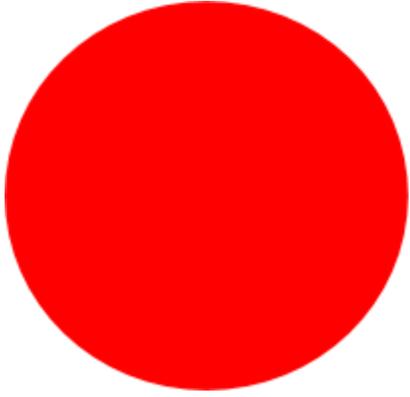
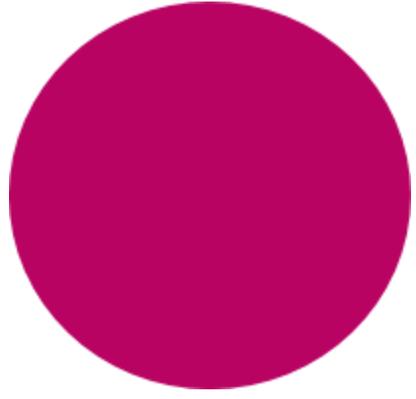
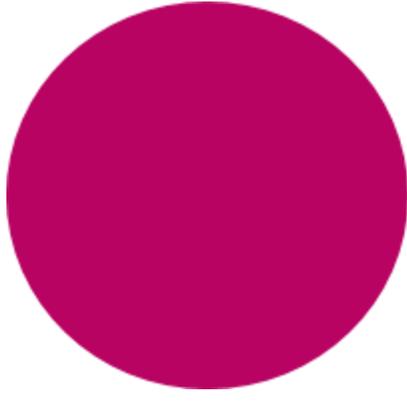
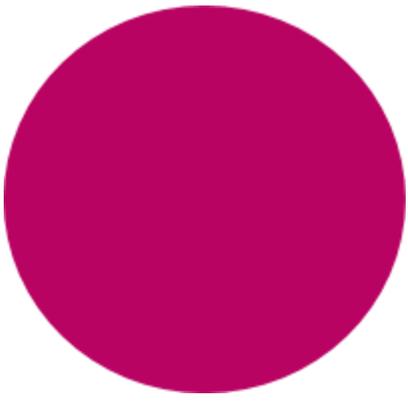
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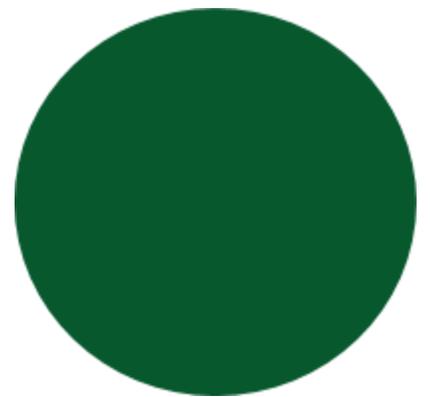
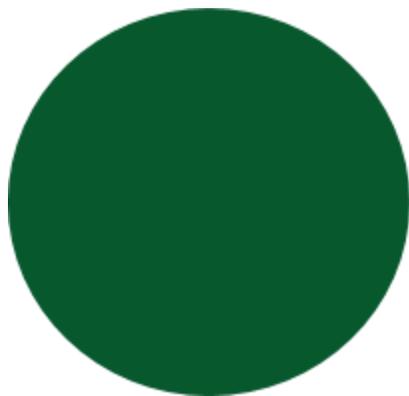
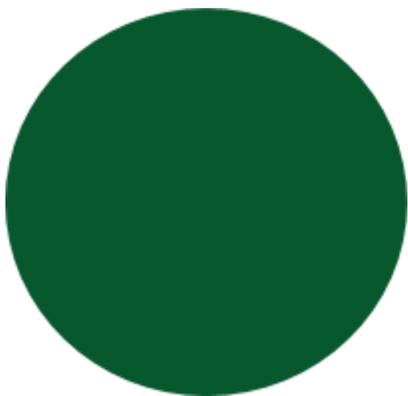
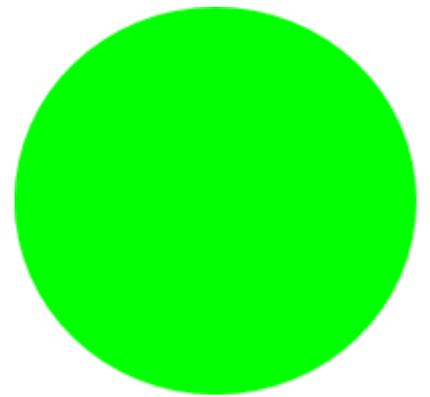
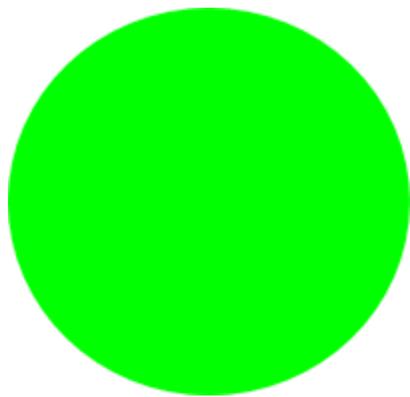
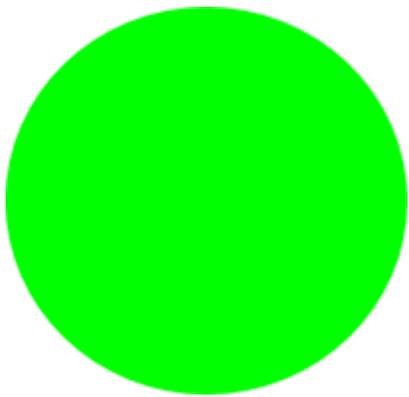
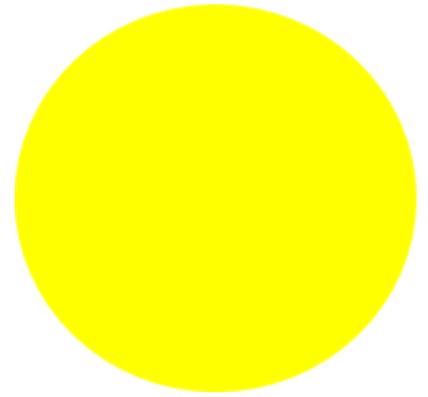
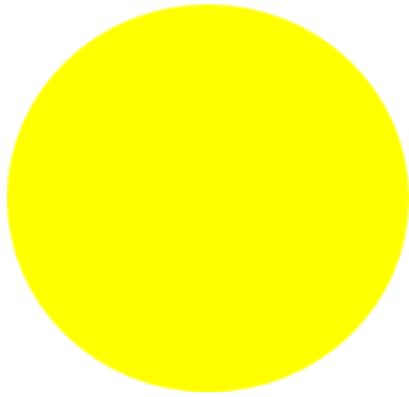
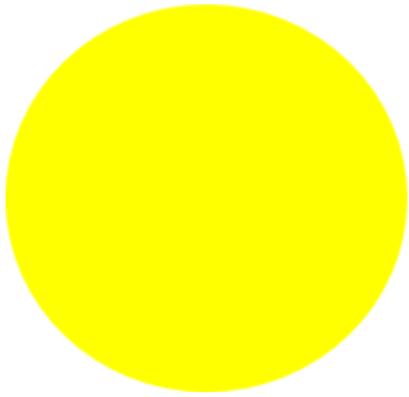
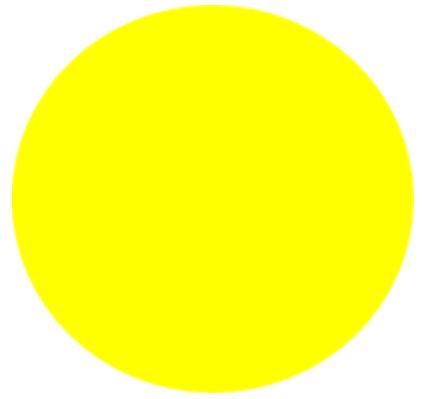
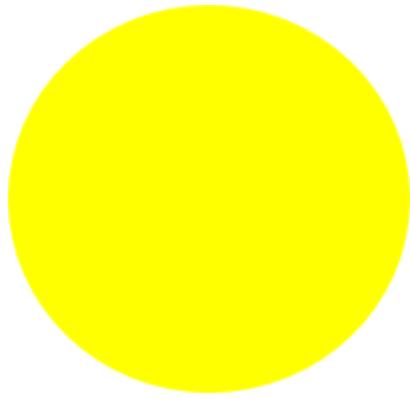
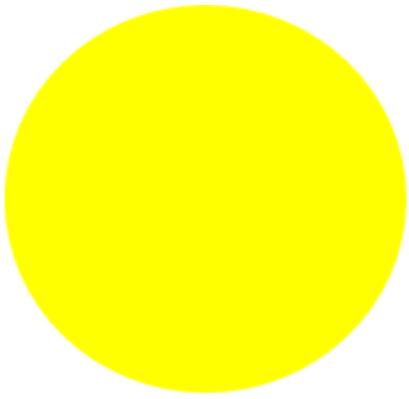
2. Colour code each rhythm to match the notes of the boomwhackers.

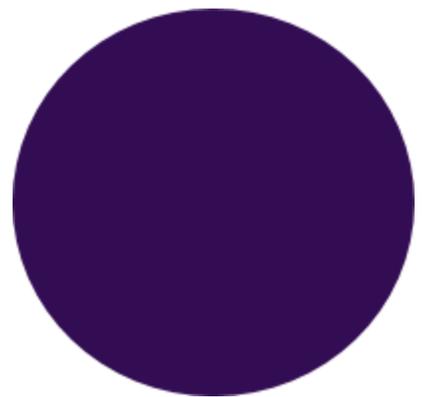
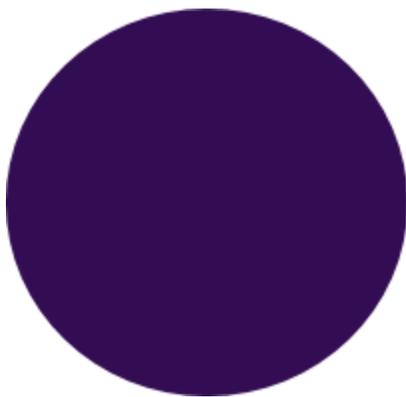
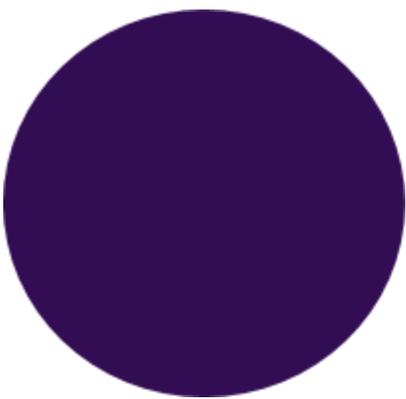
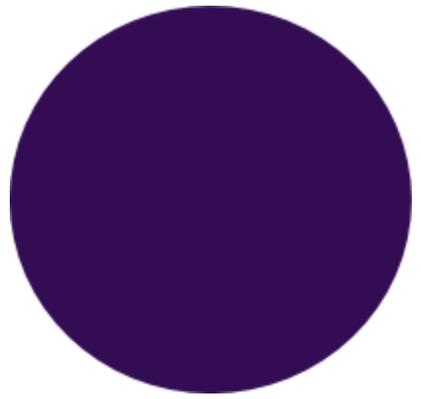
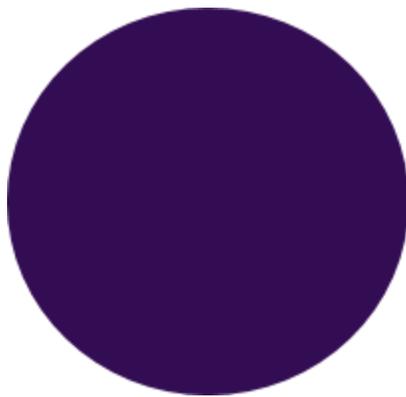
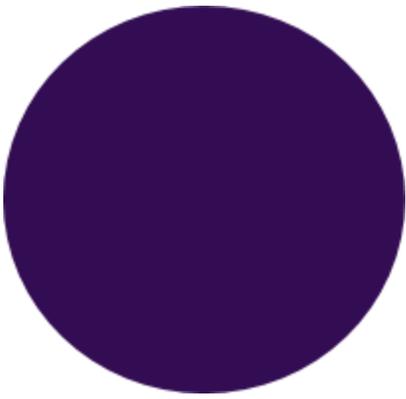
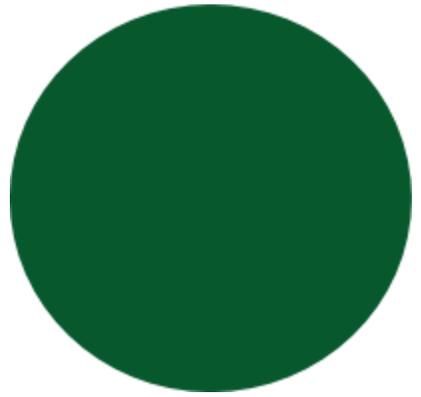
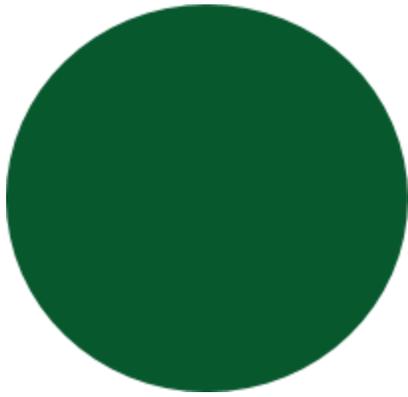
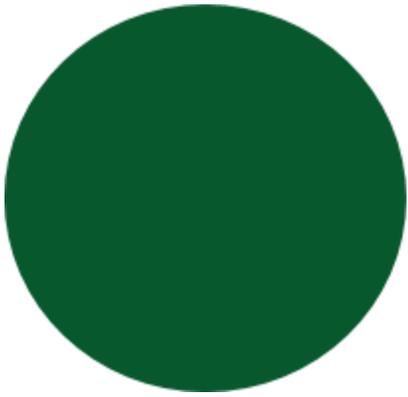
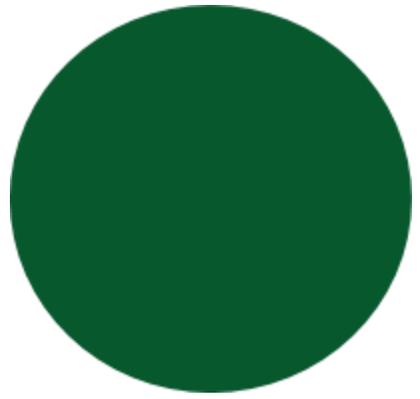
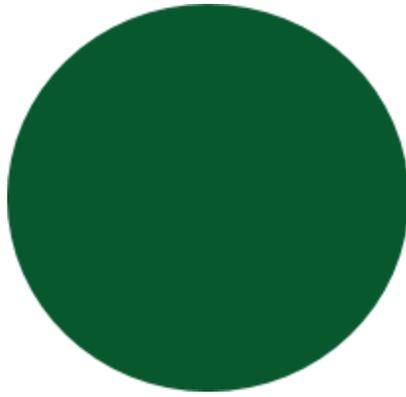
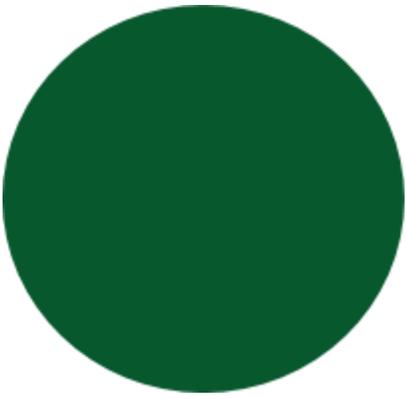

3. Now write your song on the staff using standard notation.



4. Rehearse and perform your song.







Composition Rough Draft

Rhythm	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x
Notes				

x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x

x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x

x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x	x    x    x    x

---

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

# Ukulele Composing: C, F, Am Chords

Fill in the chord name, and then fill the boxes with ta's ( ♪ ), ti-ti's ( ♪♪ ),

or two's ( ♪ ), to create 4-beat rhythms. Beside it write how many times you will play that line before switching chords.

C Chord:

Ex. 

--	--

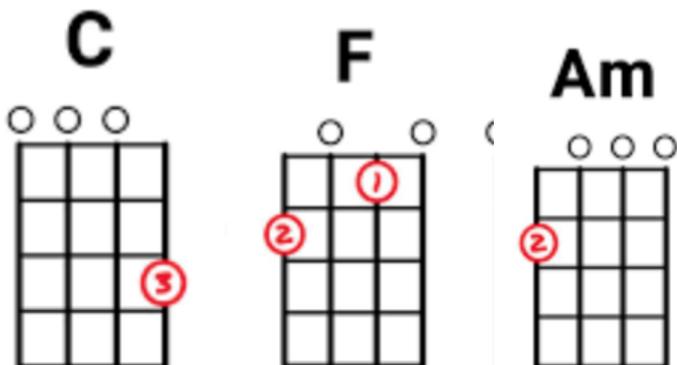
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x2
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The following are chords you will use in your song. If you want you can add a G chord or G7 chord (OPTIONAL not MANDATORY).



C Chord:

--	--

--	--

--	--

--	--

 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chord:

--	--

--	--

--	--

--	--

 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chord:

--	--

--	--

--	--

--	--

 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chord:

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--	--

--	--

--	--

 \_\_\_\_\_

Then end your song with one strum on the C Chord. Play your song to the class.

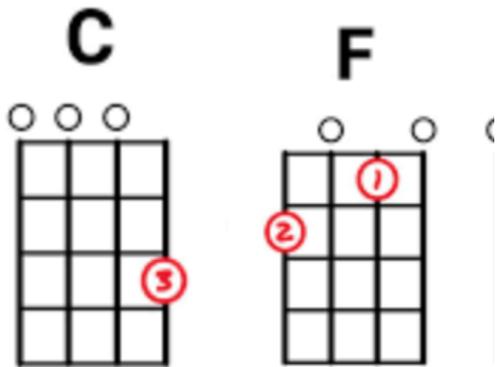
Names: \_\_\_\_\_

# Ukulele Composing: C & F Chords

Fill in the boxes with ta's ( ♪ ), ti-ti's ( ♪♪ ), or two's ( ♪ ), to create 4 -beat rhythms. Then beside it write how many times you will play that line before switching chords.

Ex.     \_\_\_\_\_

The following are chords you will use in your song:



C Chord:

\_\_\_\_\_

F Chord:

\_\_\_\_\_

C Chord:

\_\_\_\_\_

F Chord:

\_\_\_\_\_

Then end your song with one strum on the C Chord.

Play your song to the class.

## My Ukulele Composition

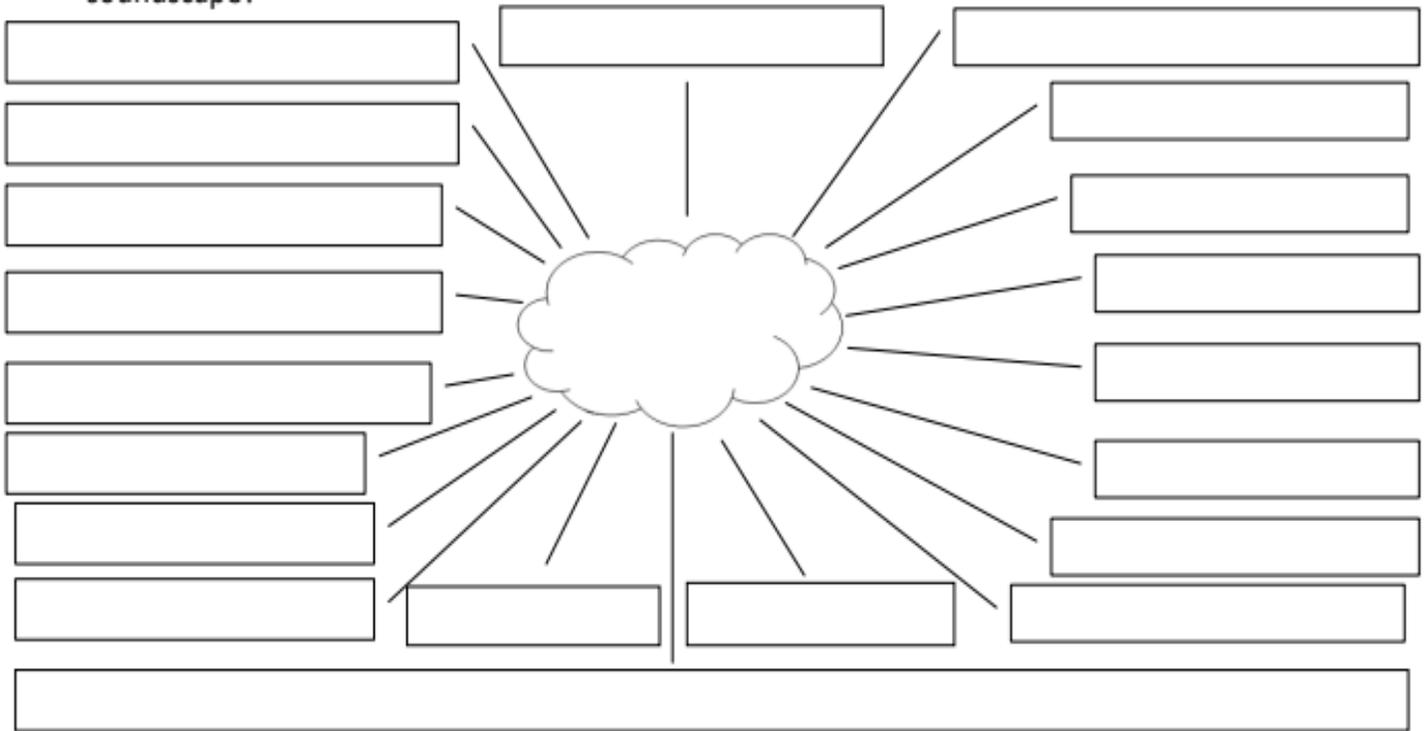
   	   
   	   
   	   
   	   

# ScoundScape Planning Document

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Idea:** What landscape have you selected \_\_\_\_\_

**Brainstorm:** What sounds would you hear at the location of your landscape? Name at least 20.



## **Classify your sounds**

From your brainstorm list above, classify each sound into one of the three categories below.

Constant	Intermittent	Sporadic

## Creating Your Final Soundscape

1. Select a minimum of 10 sounds to use in your soundscape.
2. Use instruments, found objects and yourself to create the sounds needed for your soundscape.
3. Decide what order you would like the sounds to occur and write them down in the chart below.
4. Your soundscape should be approximately 45-60 seconds.

<b>Constant Sounds</b>	<b>Intermittent Sounds</b>	<b>Sporadic Sounds</b>	<b>Timing</b>
			0 Sec
			10 Sec
			15 Sec
			20 Sec
			25 Sec
			30 Sec
			35 Sec
			40 Sec
			45 Sec
			50 Sec
			55 Sec
			60 Sec



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Arts Together Inspire - Junior Composition Project**

1. Pick your favourite painting from the selection.
2. Write down as many adjectives you can to describe the painting.

3

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Compose music to the painting using Garageband.
5. Describe why you chose to use the instruments and music that you did to accompany the painting. Report on your musical decisions.

**Arts Together Inspire: Junior Composition Assignment**  
**Composing a Soundscape to a Painting**

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Painting # \_\_\_\_\_

- Music composed is based on ideas inspired by an abstract painting.
- Music composed "fits" and goes together well with the painting chosen.
- Students can describe the musical choices made for the composition.

**Arts Together Inspire: Junior Composition Assignment**  
**Composing a Soundscape to a Painting**

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Painting # \_\_\_\_\_

- Music composed is based on ideas inspired by an abstract painting.
- Music composed "fits" and goes together well with the painting chosen.

Students can describe the musical choices made for the composition.