

Jessica Wells  
Cityside Middle School, Zeeland, MI  
Band, 8th Grade  
89 students

Unit: December Concert

Lesson: "Coventry Carol" arranged by Larry Clark

**Lesson Objectives:**

- The students will play through the entire piece while being aware of balance.
- The students will learn about the history of "Coventry Carol."
- The students will understand what a "bell tone" is and play it appropriately when asked.

**Music Standards from the National Association for Music Education:**

2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
5. Reading and notating music.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

**LESSON (around 40 minutes)**

Warm-ups (10 min)

- hold F for 4 beats, rest for 4 beats, repeat while offering suggestions/ reminders during rests about posture, air, beginning and ending notes together, etc (1 min) (coached/guided practice)
- concert Eb scale "as written" (they play how it is in their books) (30 sec)
- concert Eb scale, "beat of one" (teacher beats a different number of beats for each measure and students change to next scale degree at beginning of each new measure) (1 min)
- concert F-dorian (written on sheet under document camera), half notes (2 min)
- explain that dorian is a mode, like major or minor, but it starts on the second note of a major scale
- Does that make a little bit of sense? Thumbs up, down or in the middle.  
(formative assessment - comprehension)

- concert F-dorian in round, whole notes (2 min)
  - group 1: tuba, trombone, baritone, bari sax, tenor sax, bassoon
  - group 2: clarinet, alto sax, French horn, low mallets
  - group 3: flute, oboe, trumpet, high mallets
- ask students to define "bell tone" (strong attack with quick decay and quiet sustain) (1 min)
- have chimes play and ask students to describe attack and decay of note (30 sec) (coached/guided practice)
- concert F-dorian in round again with each whole note as a "bell tone" (2 min)
- transition time: ask students to get out "Coventry Carol" (30 sec)

"Coventry Carol (Fantasy)" arranged by Larry Clark (20 min)

- play entire piece (3 min)
- work on m79-end (5 min)
  - tune last unison note, concert F (start with low voices and build up; encourage "listen to your neighbor and pick one other instrument across the band") (coached/guided practice)
  - last 4 measures (make sure you can hear timpani and chimes by having other students play bell tones and make sure final note is in tune)
  - m79 to the end and check dynamics and balance
  - to fix dynamics, just remind them and make them aware while conducting in a way that reflects the music
  - to fix balance, have just people with eighth notes play (while others listen and finger) to make others aware
  - play section (formative assessment - application)
- work on opening (beginning-17) (1 min)
  - focus on: dynamic contrast (esp. final decresc.), legato playing, and balance (coached/guided practice)
  - ask students in measure 3 who are not playing the melody to play their notes as bell tones so we can hear the melody (balance)
  - m7-12 do something interesting with the repeated line in trumpets (cresc.)
  - play section (formative assessment - application)
- work on next section (17-37) (1 min)

- biggest thing in this section is balance; encourage them to listen down to low instruments (coached/guided practice)
- make sure they watch for rit. in m36
- play section (formative assessment - application)
- work on Allegro staccato section (37-55) (2 min)
  - play through this section
  - have percussion play to get a steady beat while rest of band uses fingers to tap eighth notes on their legs (coached/guided practice)
  - have everyone play again, but enforce the importance of starting and ending a note together (formative assessment - application)
- work on 55-71 (2 min)
  - m55-57 - split up parts (trumpets, then everyone else) to hear moving eighth notes; have one part finger along while the other part is playing
  - m63-71 - split up parts (cl, ob, fl, xyl, then everyone else) (coached/guided practice)
  - play through section with balance in mind(formative assessment-application)
- work on 71-79 (1 min)
  - dynamics! start piano and crescendo to forte, but do it with a warm, round tone and while keeping balance
  - play section (formative assessment - application)
- work on transition into 71 (1 min)
  - start 4 before 71 and remind them to check out the dynamics (coached/guided practice)
  - practice going from a big, warm, round sound to a small, warm, round sound
- play through whole piece again (3 min) (formative assessment - application)

### History Lesson (3 min)

- How many of you recognize the main melody?
- Do you know what from?
- It is Christmas carol dating back to 16th century
- It was originally performed in a Christmas play called "The Pageant of Shearmen and Tailors."

-The lyrics are about a Bible story in which King Herod (the king at the time Jesus was born) ordered that all babies be killed and the song is written from the moms' perspectives.

-Because of this, there are many sad lyrics but do you notice how at the end of phrases, there's always a major chord? Maybe that is the little bit of hope at the end as they sing their babies off to sleep with this song as a lullaby.

Quick Write on iPads (7 min) (assignment/independent practice & formative assessment)

-Ask students to email me answers to the following questions:

With knowledge of the history of this piece, what do you think will be different next time you play it? (synthesis)

What is a bell tone? (knowledge)

What is one thing you learned while not playing your instrument? (knowledge)

What is one thing you learned while playing your instrument? (analysis)

What is one thing you are having a tough time with? (evaluation)

Encourage students to keep practicing the things they are having a tough time with at home. (assignment/independent practice)

Formative Assessment: Most of the formative assessment I am doing doesn't happen with the students orally responding to the information I present, but responding by how they play a given passage, considering what they know I expect of them through my verbal communication.

Summative Assessment: The next time I rehearse "Coventry Carol (Fantasy)," we will play through the piece and make sure all the things I rehearsed in this lesson stuck with the students. The final evaluation of this piece will be at the December concert when we perform the piece for an audience.

### **Materials and Equipment Students Need:**

- instrument
- band book
- "Coventry Carol"* music
- pencil
- iPads to do final quick-write

### **Materials and Equipment Teacher Needs:**

- "Coventry Carol"* score
- teacher band book
- conducting baton
- projector so whole class can see concert F-dorian scale and the quick-write questions
- document camera so the whole class can see concert F-dorian scale and the quick-write questions

### **Accommodations for Students with Special Needs**

- For the students with ADHD, I will always have something silent but productive for them to do while I am working with another section of the band.
- For the students with learning disabilities, I will try to say and show everything that I explain, whether I say it and sing it, say it and write it, say it and show it written out, or do a combination of many of these things.
- For the advanced students, I will encourage them to be leaders in their sections by helping with fingerings for newer notes.