

LESSON PLAN: Forbidden Rhythms & Pitches

Objective:

Students will rely on musical memory (audiation) and build ear-training skills through a series of rhythmic and melodic call-and-response examples.

Resources:

Pitched instrument and/or voice, drum

Procedures:

Forbidden Rhythm:

- 1 Explain the rules
 - a) The teacher will perform a forbidden rhythm. If you hear this rhythm you must be silent and freeze like a statue. If you hear any other rhythm you must clap it. If you make any sound in response to the forbidden rhythm you must sit down. If you hesitate in performing the 'allowed' rhythm you must also sit down!
- 2 Ask students to stand up and give them a forbidden rhythm of your choice (either 4 beats long or 8, depending on age and level). It helps to keep the beat with your foot while performing the rhythm so that students have a reference for timing.
- 3 Before the game begins allow them to clap it a few times to internalize it.
- 4 Begin the game. The closer your 'allowed' rhythms are to the 'forbidden rhythm' the harder the game will be. If it is too easy you may also make rhythms longer or more complicated the next round.

Forbidden Pitch:

- 1 Keep in mind that this game is not about pitch matching. It is about critical listening, and having fun singing. For this reason be sure that singing on pitch has no consequence for winning or losing!
- 2 The rules are the same but instead you will sing or play a succession of pitches or a melodic fragment that is 'forbidden'. This can be very difficult at first so start with just a couple of pitches! You can expand by letting kids know what the pitches are (1 – 3 – 5 – 3, etc.) However, do not say the names as you sing or else they will simply be responding to words and not sound!

Extensions:

Allow students to lead. Vary complexity to up to 4 measures or more!

Variations:

You may also refer to this game as "Poison" rhythm or melody with younger kids. Following this, you might play in a sitting circle and when they get 'poisoned' they go in the middle of the circle which is the "shark tank" and become shark meat. This adds some excitement to the game and makes losing more interesting and less boring for the little ones.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

