

# LESSON PLAN: Hearing Notes in the Major Scale

## Objective:

*Students will be able to tell which note they are hearing from a Major scale through an exercise that guides the way they pay attention to it.*

## Resources:

Any pitched instrument like a piano or guitar

## Procedures:

- 1 Play a one octave, ascending Major scale for your class. It doesn't matter which key you choose; some teachers may want a key that fits the vocal range of their students, while others may want one that the students can play on their instruments. For the sake of this example we'll use the key of C Major.
- 2 Ask the students to sing the scale in an ascending direction only. Use numbers to represent the pitches they hear while singing at a comfortably slow tempo "one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, one".
- 3 Tell students that you are going to play a pattern of notes from the Major scale and that you'd like everyone to say the sequence of numbers as a group. Be mindful at first to always begin on the lowest note of the scale (1) and only use ascending or repeated notes without any skips. For example you may play C D E E E and then as a group everyone will say "1-2-3-3-3." Then try another pattern C D D E F and everyone will repeat back "1-2-2-3-4."
- 4 After it is obvious to you that everyone has no trouble hearing ascending and repeated notes, incorporate a few descending examples.
- 5 Ask students to again sing the ascending scale with you. Now play just one of the notes and ask everyone to answer together which number they all heard (this way no-one gets singled out for answering incorrectly while everyone benefits from participating in the exercise). After everyone announces answers, play the scale up to the individual note you just played. Paying attention to music this way builds a foundation in musical perception for students that allows them to perceive notes in relationship to the "tonic" or starting note of any scale. As their skills improve you can mix in singing patterns that involve skips or descending patterns. Soon you'll be able to play a new song for your class and they'll be able to tell you which note of the scale the singer begins on!

## Extension:

To expand on the ever-important skill of ear training, invite students to intentionally remove one note from the scale they are singing. For instance, when they arrive at the predetermined pitch, they may hear it in their mind and account for it rhythmically, but they are not allowed to not externalize the number or the pitch. Another extension activity is to repeat steps 1-5 on the minor or pentatonic scale.

## National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Responding - Anchor Standard #7

