

Sample Jazz I Learning Plan

Big Idea/Topic

KSU MASTERCLASS: CONVERSATIONS IN JAZZ

Connecting Theme/Enduring Understanding:

Improvising in jazz music can be as simple as having a great conversation with a friend. Listening is key!

Essential Questions:

What are some steps to get more comfortable with improvising?

How do jazz musicians have “conversations” with one another as they are playing?

Standard Alignment

CREATING

HSAJB.CR.1 Improvise, compose, and arrange music within specified guidelines

- a. Improvise or compose rhythmic patterns (e.g. clapping, singing, playing an instrument).
- b. Improvise or compose a melody and/or variation of a melody (e.g. using a five-note diatonic scales or scale modes) using traditional notations which incorporate use of dynamics

PERFORMING

HSAJB.PR.2 Perform on instruments through a varied repertoire of music, alone and with others.

- a. Demonstrate characteristic tone quality utilizing playing technique (e.g. embouchure playing position, posture, breathing techniques, articulation and enunciation, vibrato , appropriate percussion technique) based on the level of music.

Instructional Design

This lesson has a flexible timeline and may span across several days, if necessary. This lesson is intended to reach students in an in-person or virtual (synchronous or asynchronous) learning environment.

FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION:

This lesson is intended to be a conversational improvisation lesson for a jazz band or jazz band rehearsal. Students need to know the basic jazz techniques and skills as well as characteristic tone quality and playing techniques on their instruments.

CONCEPTS:

- Improvisation skills

VOCABULARY:

Improvisation, Conversation

LINKS:

[KSU Masterclass: Conversations in Jazz](#)
[Call and Response Jazz Improvisation](#)
[Three Note Improvisation](#)
[Example 12 Bar Blues Backing Track](#)



STUDENT SUPPLIES:

- Instrument
- Chair + Music Stand

TEACHER SUPPLIES:

- TV/Projector for viewing KSU Masterclass video
- Free Flipgrid account (see below for helpful Flipgrid resources)

WORK SESSION (approx. 30 mins):

STUDENT AND TEACHER PROCEDURES

- **Activity #1: Jazz Band Warmups (approx. 5 mins)**

Take time to appropriately warm-up students on their instruments as seen fit for your jazz program. The teacher should model warmups (with or without an instrument), then have students echo back on their instruments until they become comfortable. Discuss with students why warmups are important. Stress to students that warming up on their instrument appropriately is ESSENTIAL to develop healthy practice habits and to continue developing their technique.

- **Activity #2: Diagnostic Discussion (approx. 5 mins)**

Ask students prompting questions improvising to engage them in the lesson. Allow time for discussion and any tangents about improvising that may come up from student interest. Here are sample questions you could ask students:

- What is improvising?
- In what ways do we improvise outside of music?
- What are the main parts of keeping a conversation going that you're having with a friend?

- **Activity #3: KSU Masterclass Video (approx. 30 mins)**

Have students watch the KSU Masterclass: Conversations in Jazz with Professor Skelton and Professor Jackson. While students are watching the masterclass, have them participate through active listening. If needed, take additional time to pause the video and discuss topics further with students. Ask the students prompting questions to engage them in watching the masterclass. Make sure to discuss students' thoughts and understandings of the Masterclass video after they watch the video as well as how comfortable they think they are with improvising to use as a diagnostic assessment of their upcoming performance.

Here are some sample prompts you could ask students:

- How do you think that these two jazz players got so good at improvising?
- What did you notice about their jazz "conversation?"

- **Activity #4: Question or Answer (approx. 5 mins)**

If time allows, watch the Three Note Improvisation video provided in the Links Section of this lesson plan to introduce the activity that the students are about to do. The teacher will discuss with students how improvising in jazz is often compared to having a conversation with one of their friends and can be as simple as improvising rhythms on one note! This can also lead to conversations about question/answer phrases in music. Have the teacher model this idea with students by playing a question phrase and asking students if it sounded like a question or an answer (or maybe if it sounds finished or unfinished).



- **Activity #5: Improvising with the Whole Ensemble (approx. 15 mins)**

For the first level, instruct students that they will be improvising only on one note, meaning that they will have to improvise a rhythm on that note for two-bars. First the teacher will play the one-note “question” (improvisation) and then the students (as a whole group) will play a one-note “answer” (improvisation). This may take a couple of tries to get the hang of it with your ensemble. If needed, you may want to try this as sections of your ensemble at a time as well. Once students get comfortable with just one note improvisations, increase the rigor by incorporating another pitch. For the second level, play a two-note, improvisational question for students and then have them respond as a whole group with a two-note, improvisational answer. Repeat this process until they can successfully play a two-note improvisation. Then once they are ready, increase the rigor again to level three, which is playing a three-note improvisation... and so on (just as the Three Note Improvisation video suggests).

STUDENT ACTIVITY (allows for flexible timeline):

STUDENT AND TEACHER PROCEDURES

- **Activity #6: Improvising is Easy as 1, 2, 3... notes! (approx. 15+ mins)**

For the remainder of class (or this could carry over into the next class—or even become a warm-up activity every day), have students pair up and play two-bar phrases back and forth to each other on one or two pitches (or three if they are comfortable enough to do so). After giving them time to perform, bring them back to full group. The teacher then will play a four-bar phrase and have every student play you one back. To increase the rigor further past three-note improvisations (or increasing the length of the phrases such as four bars instead of 2 bars) or play an improvised solo over the blues scale. Then, let the students give it a try on their own.

- **Activity #7: At-Home Activity: Flipgrid Recording and Student Self-Evaluation (approx. 15+ mins)**

For this activity, students will use [Flipgrid.com](https://flipgrid.com) to submit a recording of themselves playing a three-note improvisation on their own time at home (before practicing). See the Flipgrid Student Assignment document to share with students. After recording their video, students will complete the self-evaluation rubric and return it to the teacher. This can be seen as a diagnostic assessment for the student.

- **Activity #8: At-Home Activity: Practice (approx. 15+ mins per day)**

Students will take time to practice improvising over a pre-determined backing track (such as the example in the Links Section of this lesson plan) to perform their improvisations. Students can practice as their schedule/their teacher’s schedule allows (such as before/after school, during lunch, or at home). Students will practice over a teacher-selected period of time (such as two-four weeks of practice before their performance). The teacher can give students the link to view the KSU Masterclass as needed during their individual practice time.

- **Activity #9: Flipgrid Performance Test (approx. 15+ mins)**

For this performance assignment, students will record their final improvisation performances while performing for their teacher using the teacher-selected backing track. Students will be graded based on a standards-based rubric that is attached to this document for you to use. This can be used as a summative assessment to show student growth from the diagnostic Flipgrid video to the summative Flipgrid video.



Evidence of Student Success

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

- Informal discussion about improvisation

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Informal teacher observation of students' understanding of KSU Masterclass information and observation of students' improvising performance.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Teacher observation of students' growth of improvising techniques through the performance task

Distance Learning Supports

DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING:

INCREASED RIGOR:

Students can increase the number of pitches with which they improvise. Students can try their hand at rhythmic dictation. Students can also attend live events to watch professionals improvise.

ADAPTED ASSIGNMENT:

Students requiring a simplification can improvise rhythms on just one or two notes. It is not important what the students create, just that they create.

Engaging Families

SUPPORT MATERIALS: (See Below)

- Student Rubric



Improvisation Student Rubric

Criteria	Needs Work 1 Point	Good 2 Points	Great 3 Points	Excellent 4 points	Score
HSAJB.CR.1 Improvise, compose, and arrange music within specified guidelines	The student rarely practices and performs with a characteristic tone on their instrument. The student does not maintain a steady beat while improvising and does not attempt to use rhythms and pitches in their improvisation.	The student practices and performs with a characteristic tone on their instrument some of the time. The student maintains a steady beat some of the time while improvising and successfully includes 1-2 rhythms and pitches in their improvisation.	The student practices and performs with a characteristic tone on their instrument often. The student maintains a steady beat most of the time while improvising and successfully includes 2-3 rhythms and pitches in their improvisation.	The student consistently practices and performs with a characteristic tone on their instrument. The student maintains a steady beat while improvising and successfully includes various rhythms and multiple pitches (3+) in their improvisational performance.	
				Overall Score	

Self-Evaluation Rubric

Evaluate yourself and your performance by placing an 'X' in the box for each attribute.

Attribute	Needs Work 1 Point	Good 2 Points	Great 3 Points	Excellent 4 points	Grammy-Worthy 5 Points
I can play a one-note improvisation.					
I can play a two-note improvisation.					
I can play a three-note improvisation.					
I can play more than three notes in an improvisation.					
I am able to create an improvisation question.					
I am able to create an improvisational answer.					
I can hold an improvisational conversation with another member of the jazz ensemble.					
				Total Points:	



Write a couple of things you could have done better for this performance:

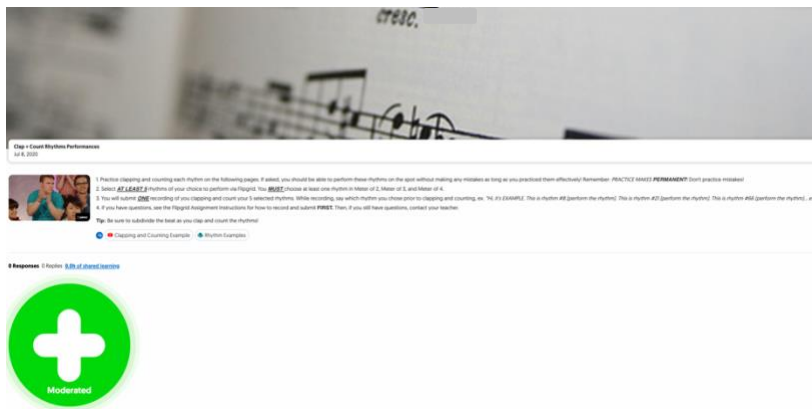
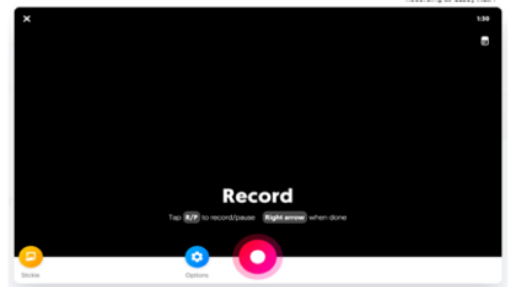
Write one thing you are proud of about this performance:



FLIPGRID ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

INSERT
QR CODE
HERE

1. Go to www.flipgrid.com or download the Flipgrid app.
2. Enter this code: **INSERT CODE HERE** that says:  Or scan this QR code in the app:
3. Once in the grid, click on: 
4. Then type **YOUR FIRST + LAST NAME** in the space provided! You DO NOT need to put in an email.
5. It's time to record your first attempt! Record yourself performing the excerpt and submit via Flipgrid. You have 1 minute and 30 seconds to record your first attempt.
6. Press next and then review your recording.
7. **TITLE YOUR VIDEO: Improvisation Attempt #1**
8. Snap a selfie!
9. Press Submit! Congrats! You sent in your first attempt!
10. On your own time, practice improvising using the back track that your teacher provided for you.
11. On your performance test date, record yourself performing your improvisation and submit via Flipgrid. You have 1 minute and 30 seconds to record your second attempt. You can record as many times as you may need, but the final video you submit will be the video that is graded. You will submit **ONE** recording.
12. Press next and then review your recording.
13. If you are happy with your recording, **TITLE YOUR VIDEO: Improvisation Attempt #2**
14. Snap a selfie!
15. Press Submit! Congrats! You sent in your second attempt!
16. The KSU Masterclass Assignment is due on **INSERT DATE HERE.**



Teacher's Additional Resource Guide

GaDOE Fine Arts Resources:

- <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Fine-Arts.aspx>
- <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Documents/Fine-Arts/Digital%20Teaching%20%26%20The%20Arts.pdf>

KSU Masterclass:

- https://arts.kennesaw.edu/community-programs/masterclass_series.php

Flipgrid Resources:

- Flipgrid Getting Started Guide: <http://blog.flipgrid.com/gettingstarted>
- Flipgrid Tips and Tricks for Remote Learning: <https://blog.flipgrid.com/news/remoteteaching>
- Flipgrid Educator Guide: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzZGEfOtEWqPcGUzcFd2RzRjYTQ/view>



Here is an example of how you could use Flipgrid for Student Practice Logs:



My Activity **My Grids** Mixtapes #GridPals Disco Library Shorts



My Grids < Band I

Grid Details



Band I

Jul 8, 2020 Flip Code: [bandlexample](#) Add a CoPilot

Share

Actions

Topics **Students**

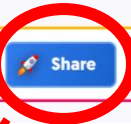
Add New Topic

1 Topic 0 videos 0 views 0 hours of engagement

Export Data

Search Topics

Actions	Title	Last Response
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Clap + Count Rhythms... 0 Videos + Pinned Topic	Jul 13, 2020



Clap + Count Rhythms Performances

Share the Topic link with your students.

flipgrid.com/f8ea3674 Copy

Topic Guest Mode
Make it easy for guests, such as family members and content experts, to access this specific Topic.

flipgrid.com/605c2eb0 Copy

Allow guests to record

Make sure that when you share the assignment with students that you select the "Topic Guest Mode" and "Allow guests to record" options so that students do not have to login with an email to record their performances. Be sure to send them THIS link/code, not the one above.



Topic Details



Clap + Count Rhythms Performances

[Share](#) [Actions](#)

Jul 8, 2020 Flip Code: f8ea3674 Guest Code: 605c2eb0

1. Practice clapping and counting each rhythm on the following pages. If asked, you should be able to perform these rhythms on the spot without making any mistakes as long as you practiced them effectively! Remember: **PRACTICE MAKES PERMANENT!** Don't practice mistakes!
2. Select **AT LEAST 5** rhythms of your choice to perform via Flipgrid. You **MUST** choose at least one rhythm in Meter of 2, Meter of 3, and Meter of 4.
3. You will submit **ONE** recording of you clapping and count your 5 selected rhythms. While recording, say which rhythm you chose prior to clapping and counting, ex. "Hi, it's **EXAMPLE**. This is rhythm #8 (perform the rhythm). This is rhythm #21 (perform the rhythm). This is rhythm #66 (perform the rhythm)... etc."
4. If you have questions, see the Flipgrid Assignment Instructions for how to record and submit **FIRST**. Then, if you still have questions, contact your teacher.

Tip: Be sure to subdivide the beat as you clap and count the rhythms!

[Clapping and Counting Example](#) [Rhythm Examples](#)

Assignment View (Teacher)
Topics = Assignments

0 Responses

0 replies 0 views 0 hours of engagement

[Export Data](#)

Start the discussion!

Add a video or share this Topic with your students to have them record.

[Record a Response](#) [Share Topic](#)

Topic Essentials

Title

Clap + Count Rhythms Performances

33/35

Prompt

[Undo](#) [Redo](#) **B** *I* U [Link](#) [Insert](#)

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884/1000

Recording Time

1 minute 30 seconds

Video Moderation

New videos will be hidden from students until you activate them. Previously submitted videos will remain active.



[Learn more about Moderation.](#)

Focus Optional

Add a media resource to engage your students.



Delete to select a new Focus.

Delete Focus

Editing a Topic/Assignment View
(Teacher)



Topic Tip

Add a tip to help your students best answer the Topic.

Be sure to subdivide the beat as you clap and count the rhythms!

Editing a Topic/Assignment View
(Teacher)... continued

Topic Attachments

Attach up to 9 external links (OneNote, Google Docs, Dropbox, YouTube, etc.) to this Topic.

Feature Link

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNmxLvtXewU8>

Attachment Title

Clapping and Counting Example 29/30 

Feature Link

 <https://shealy-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/cas>

Attachment Title

Rhythm Examples 15/30 

Add another Attachment

Topic Status

Status

Make your Topic Active, Frozen (view-only) or Hidden.

Active

Launch & Freeze Dates

Schedule an Active [12:01am] and Frozen [11:59pm] date. Your timezone is set to America/New_York. [Update your timezone.](#)

07/23/2020 → Never 


Video Features

Video and Selfie Styles

Students can add filters, stickers, drawing, and text to their videos and selfies.

Selfies Only

Video Editing

Students can trim and rearrange video clips. 

Video Title

Students can add a title (80 characters max). Add hashtags for searchability. 

Attachment Link

Allow students to include an external link with their video (e.g., OneNote, Google Doc, etc.). 

View Count

Display the number of views a video has received. 


Likes

Allow students to like other student videos. 

Sticky Notes

Allow students to add sticky notes while they are recording. 

Student-to-Student Replies

Allow students to Reply via video to another student. 

Feedback

Basic Feedback

Provide basic feedback on a Response based on student verbalization and clarity of expressed ideas.

Provide basic feedback on a video based on student verbalization and clarity of expressed ideas.

Ideas

Performance

Custom Feedback

Build and assign custom feedback rubrics based on the needs and qualifications of your classroom.

Save changes to my default settings

Cancel

Update Topic



Band I

Topic/Assignment Student View

Clap + Count Rhythms Performances
Jul 8, 2020



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- Clapping and Counting Example
- Rhythm Examples

0 Responses 0 Replies [0.0h of shared learning](#)

