Bentley School: Utilizing Technology in Music Classes

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Today you might learn...

- about a grades 4-8 music curriculum with technology
- about a method and sequence of teaching and using Garage Band
- Garage Band skills of your own - and use them to create composition(s)
- how to use technology to demonstrate musical concepts (some of which can be applied to other academic areas)

Technology in Lower School

Grade 4

    iPad: note reading and rhythm drills

    Computer: intro to Garage Band

Grade 5

    iPad

        note reading and rhythm drills continued

        creative apps: Thumb Jam and Garage Band

    Computer: Garage Band (optional after school)

Middle School Digital Music

This elective course focuses on:

- Technical skills
  - how to use the program
  - how to incorporate already acquired musical skills
- Form and Composition
  - project-based assignments in musical form
- Collaboration with Theater and/or Dance
  - use of dropbox and google docs

Middle School Songwriting

- Theory skills
  - iPad (tenuto app)
- Musical analysis
  - group and individual
  - sharing via google docs
- Composition
  - Noteflight - web-based tool
    - ability to share and comment

Time to try it yourself!

1) grab headphones and/or a keyboard
2) open skills list: http://goo.gl/aho7uw
3) open Garage Band on your computer
4) optional: use today's meet (see screen)
5) who has experience?

NB: I AM GOING TO BE RUNNING THE NEXT HALF HOUR OF THE PRESENTATION IN A SIMILAR FORMAT TO HOW I TEACH GARAGE BAND (THOUGH AT A FASTER TEMPO - PUN CLEARLY INTENDED)

Step 1: skill acquisition

Try going down the list of skills and poke around the interface trying to figure them out for yourself.
If you get confused or need assistance, ask your neighbor (or Today's Meet, the way I do it in class) or ask me.

In a little while, I will explain some musical concepts that I teach my students as a basis for composition exercises...

Step 2a: concept = repetition/change

In a general sense, form is defined by one of three relationships between sections:

1) all aspects repeat
2) all aspects change
3) some aspects change and some repeat ("variation" in musical terminology)

What aspects can be repeated / changed?

1) When using overlapping tracks…
   a) number and type
   b) how they combine (volume)
   c) entrance and exit
2) Tempo
3) Key (transposition)
4) Others?

Step 2b: concept = transitions

In a general sense, transitions are either gradual or sudden, either previewed or surprising, either ending the last section or beginning the next

A few ways to create transitions…

1) Fade and create a blank space before the next section begins
2) End a section definitively with a louder or more percussive sound
3) Overlap two sections and create a cross-fade
4) Insert a short passage unrelated to either section as a bridge
5) Others?

Step 3: examples of ABACABA form

Gina used a MIDI file for a Mozart sonata as her A section and varied them in pitch (one thing you can do with green loops)

Liam's form is shorter and simpler but makes good use of variation in the A sections (he adds a different drum track to the same melody)

Step 4: You create an ABA form

Create a few examples of a form where something happens, then something else happens, then the first thing happens again.

This can be very simple (and doesn't even have to be music) or complicated (consider making the second A section recognizable as a repeat but make a variation of some aspect)

Step 5: Share your work

1) Switch with your neighbor and listen to each others' work (please use headphones)
2) Make some comments to one another about the creative ways in which you fulfilled the assignment (especially if you learned a new technique by listening to someone else's)
3) Anyone want to share for the group?

Bonus (if time): Noteflight

Noteflight: browser-based notation program
- allows teacher management of student accounts including group sharing
- does most of what a program like Finale or Sibelius can
- bonus: cloud storage, collaboration (alla google docs).
- Here's a piece written in Noteflight by a current MS student (which I've orchestrated for our school orch)

Thanks for attending!

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