

**CMP General Music Plan
June 2011
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Title: Old Joe Clark
Composer: Unknown: Folk song of 1860's
Instrumentation/Voicing: Unison singers/folk instruments

Source: Making Music Text
Silver Burdett – Gr. 5 text – 2008

Making Music Text
Silver Burdett – Gr. 6 text – 2008

Share the Music Text
MacMillan McGraw-Hill – Gr. 5 text – 1991

Wee Sing Fun 'n' Folk
By Pamela Conn Beall and Susan Hagen Nipp
1989 Price Stern Sloan

This plan was designed for Grade 5.

ANALYSIS

Broad Description: Traditional

Type/Genre: American Folk Song/Fiddle Tune

Background: Old Joe Clark is one of the most widely know Southern fiddle tunes. It has to some degree become a part of the national folk repertoire. You can hear it in most old time fiddle jam sessions, many blue grass concerts, on multiple recordings, and at country dances across the nation. It has also become a children's favorite with its fanciful verses and easy melody.

Joe Clark was born in Clay County, Kentucky on September 18, 1839. He farmed near the Sexton's creek and lived in a log home that had been built by his pioneering ancestors. When the Civil War started he enlisted in the army at the age of 22. He was married and had three children. He became ill and was given a disability discharge. He returned to Clay county and resumed farming. He lived in a log house that had been built by his pioneering ancestors on Sexton Creek.

Joe Clark was known for being a rough mountaineering character. There was a popular break down tune that did not have lyrics so his friends started making up rhymes to be sung with the tune about some of his adventures. Joe Clark is said to have enjoyed the fun loving verses but not some of the less complimentary verses. Joe Clark was known to have a still near his home that was licensed by the state and he also owned and operated a general store. He would deliver the whiskey to different areas of the county and many stories arose from the fights and parties that were part of that tradition. There are stories about Joe Clark divorcing his wife and then living with several different women over the years. One of the women's names was Chris Leger. Joe left Chris Leger to live with someone else by the name of McKeeny. Chris Leger devised a plan with her friend Jim Howard to kill Joe Clark in order to claim that Joe Clark had left the farm and the general store to her. Howard shot and killed Joe Clark on April 22, 1885 near the back porch of his store. Joe is buried in the Clark Cemetery overlooking the farm in Sexton's Creek.

This song has traveled all across the nation as a fiddle tune. It also has a tradition of being a children's play party song. Children have sung it and made up their own verses for many years. Adults have sung it and created verses of their own as well.

In 1970, the Kentucky historical society put up a historical marker in Clay county that reads:

"Mountain ballad, about 90 stanzas, sung during World War I and later wars by soldiers from eastern Kentucky. Early version, as sung in Virginia, printed in 1918. Joe Clark, born 1839 lived here, a shiftless and rough mountaineer of that day. His enemies were legion; he was murdered in 1885. In the moon shining days of 1870's he ran a government supervised still."

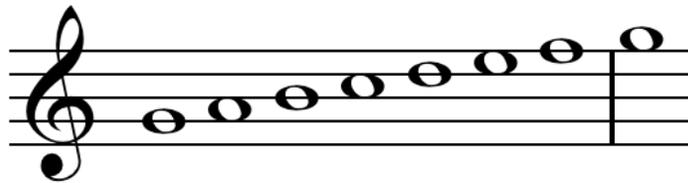
Elements of Music

Form: Verse and Refrain. (AB form)

Rhythm: This arrangement is in 2/4. The two main rhythmic patterns are a steady eighth note pattern in the verse (A) section and a dotted eighth note- sixteenth note - quarter note pattern in the refrain (B) section.

Melody: Mixolydian mode.

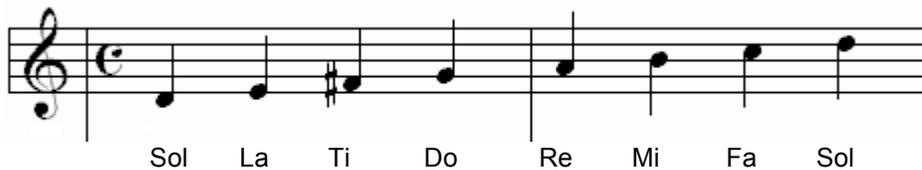
The Mixolydian scale, or mode, is the fifth of the seven musical modes. It is similar to the major scale except for the lowered seventh. The Mixolydian scale is the scale that appears when a major scale is played with the fifth note (fifth scale-degree) as the root. Thus, a C major scale played from "G" is a G Mixolydian scale. This is why the term "mode" is more appropriate than "scale".



Sol La Ti Do Re Mi Fa Sol

"Old Joe Clark" is written in this version in D Mixolydian. So, the scale would be as listed.

The D Mixolydian mode (Related to the key of G major. DEF#GABCD)



Sol La Ti Do Re Mi Fa Sol

You will see many versions of the song that are notated in a Major key with accidentals because it is more familiar to people who are purchasing the sheet music or it is simplified in text series.

The verse has a step wise pattern during the first 8 measures. In m. 9- 10 there is a leap of a 5th. The song ends with the repeated leap of 5th and the step wise pattern.

Solfeggio could be used to teach this song if the emphasis was on teaching the mixolydian mode. I did not choose to emphasize this element in my lesson. I would only mention that this was in a mode if asked what key it was in. Folk songs often were modal in nature and go back to the historical use of modes in the European church tradition.

Harmony: The harmony consists of a two chord pattern. I will use D major from m. 1- 6 with the change to C Major on the second beat of m. 7 and back to D Major in m. 8. The refrain has a similar chordal pattern with D Major in m. 9-11 and change to C Major in m. 12. It returns to D Major in m. 13 until the second half of m. 15 where it changes to C Major and back to D Major on the last note of the song.

Timbre: Voice

Texture: Voice and accompaniment. This song is traditionally accompanied by guitar, fiddle, folk percussion (spoons, washboards etc.) banjo, string bass etc. The texture can vary depending on the group that is performing it.

Expression: This song should be sung with a lively, joyful and even silly spirit. It is all about having fun and singing with humor. The verses can often be sung by a soloist or solo group. The refrain should be sung a little louder with an emphasis on a steady pulsing beat and the entire community of players and/or singers joining in on this repetitive portion.

Special Considerations: There are so many versions of this song that it is important to emphasize that a group of students may have had experience with a different version than what is being taught. A discussion on the folk tradition of passing songs along through the generations without written notation or verses has created so many different versions. Discuss how different parts of the country may sing it differently. Connecting this song to the social studies unit of pioneers and westward expansion can establish additional insights into the song.

Reasons to Perform this Song:

- to learn an American folk song that is part of our American heritage
- to learn the historical significance of the song
- to improvise lyrics
- to learn the rhythmic patterns that include a dotted eighth – sixteenth note pattern
- to listen to a variety of versions of the song both vocal and instrumental
- to perform on folk instruments
- to compose a different verse using musical elements of dynamics and tempo.

Heart Statement:

The heart of “Old Joe Clark” is its humorous, joyful feeling that is created by its rhythmic composition of dotted rhythms and improvised lyrics. The fact that individuals would create lyrics for the verses and the community would sing the refrain gives this song the power of community building that is the cornerstone of great folk music.

Introducing the Piece:

1. I will wear a pioneer bonnet and a pioneer dress and play the spoons as students come into my room. I will welcome them to Pioneer Day and explain that we will be talking about the folk music and folk instruments. I will play some of the rhythms that will be taught later as a warmup.
2. Listen to a traditional recording of the song of “Old Joe Clark” that uses traditional folk instruments of today.

Skill Outcome

The student will perform dotted eighth and sixteenth note patterns accurately

Skill Strategies:

1. Echo warm ups of previously learned rhythm patterns using rhythm words and movements.
2. Echo warm ups of new rhythm pattern of dotted eighth and sixteenth note patterns.
3. Use rhythm cards to visually teach the patterns. Show previous cards with eighth note patterns and sixteenth note patterns. Use tray cards that illustrate how this dotted eighth note/sixteenth pattern is really the first note and last note of a group of 4 sixteenth notes. This visual tray card has the rhythm words listed below the notes. Repeat these using your voice with the rhythm words and clapping. Practice the new rhythm using other movements if necessary.
4. Sing the song with rhythmic accuracy.
5. Read rhythms in the song as a class from the notation using rhythm syllables.
6. Move to the rhythms using hands on lap and imitating the future spoon playing.
7. Read rhythms in percussion score using rhythm words.
8. Play percussion score with accurate rhythms.

Skill Assessments:

1. Assessment during percussion score playing. Use class check off sheet to notate which students are playing rhythms correctly. I only notate those who are playing the new rhythms so that I can assess a few at a time. This works if you assign instruments and focus on only 4 or 5 students who are playing the dotted eighth-sixteenth patterns. I note this on the seating chart that has their pictures on it. Rotate your students so that everyone has a chance to play every instrument. This gives you the ability to assess every student in a small group.
 - a. + = proficient accuracy
 - b. = emerging (minor mistakes)
 - c. - = needs improvement.
2. Student evaluation of rhythm accuracy with a fist to five assessment (5 being high and fist being low) for overall performance.

Knowledge Outcome

The student will identify traditional folk instruments.

Knowledge Outcome Strategies:

1. Identify folk instruments from listening lesson of folk group (guitar, bass, banjo, drum) using Powerpoint and class discussion.
2. Identify folk instruments from playing a percussion score (spoons, washboards, wash tub basses, drums, sticks)
3. Discussion of pioneer times and available instruments. Discuss how pioneers did not have room for pianos or other large instruments. Often they would use household items to make music with. Hold up each instrument and ask what they thought this was originally used for and then demonstrate how it is used as a musical instrument. This also serves as a way to teach the correct way to play the limberjack, the washtub bass, the washboards and the spoons so that they get a good sound.

Knowledge Outcome Assessment:

1. Worksheet to label names of instruments to pictures.

Aesthetic Outcome

The student will compare the expressive effects of tempo and dynamics and how these musical tools can express different emotions.

Aesthetic Outcome Strategies:

1. Listen to and sing "Old Joe Clark"
2. Discuss which "feelings" words fit this song when the class sings this song as a group. Use feelings and emotions word wall to help generate words for students. If a student comes up with a word that is not on the wall but is appropriate, ask them to write it down and tell them that we can add this word to our wall for future use.
3. Listen to Waunakee Community Band playing "Fantasy on a Fiddle Tune" by Pierre LaPlante. Discuss how we also have a community event that involves making music.
4. Discuss how this tune has been so famous that even bands want to play it and so this Wisconsin composer decided to arrange a fantasy using band instruments.
5. Use listening guide sheet for students to listen to the different tempos, dynamics and instrumentation.
6. Discuss how these compositional techniques changed the emotions. Use the "Feelings" word wall again.

Aesthetic Outcome Assessment:

1. Have students complete the "Old Joe Clark" improvisation and composition activity sheet individually.
2. Ask students to get into a pair/share with a partner and perform for each other.
3. Have students volunteer to perform their improvisation or composition and share their thoughts about the emotions that were expressed. Students may pass if they do not wish to perform for the class.

MUSIC SELECTION

"Old Joe Clark" has stood the test of time. It has been sung and played for many generations and has become a part of our national repertoire. It has a rich history and has been performed by a great variety of instrumental and vocal groups. This song has a sense of community because it has been sung for years in a community setting at barn dances, around campfires, at fiddle concerts, folk concerts, and community singing events. Its great sense of fun and humor is appealing to both elementary students and adults. There is so much to teach in the piece including the instruments, melody, rhythms, history, and expression to name just a few. This song just sticks in your head and gets your foot tapping. Every time that I teach this song, I have students tell me that they love making up new verses and singing it to their families.

RESOURCES

History of song and multiple listings of recordings and resources: Paul Castle Music website
<http://www.paulcastlemusic.com/old-joe-clark.html>

Youtube listening example: The Rosinators
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjsUI5XnSiQ>

Youtube listening example of Fantasy on a Fiddle Tune by Pierre LaPlante
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKyriMeQsV8>

FANTASY ON A FIDDLE TUNE Band Set & Score
arr. Pierre LaPlante Publisher: LUDWIG-MASTERS PUBLICATION

