

# ARTS • BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

• middle school •  
• elementary • • high school •

title **Listening Maps**

skill



music



visual art

about the strategy

Listening maps are visual representations of songs or musical listening selections. Beginning by analyzing the piece's elements, students create a map that shows the time sequence of musical events. This activity is effective at every level if the musical material is developmentally appropriate.

visual

Representing sounds with images, and designing a map

auditory

Listening, analyzing, and describing musical elements

kinesthetic

Drawing and constructing the map

instructional steps

objective Students will create a listening map to visually represent the form and musical elements in a song or listening selection.

materials A developmentally appropriate song or listening selection such as:

Primary – Song: "Take a Bite of Music," by Mary Ann Hall  
Instrumental Listening: "Magic Sound March," IDEAS Music CD I

Intermediate – Song: "Sorida," Ghanaian greeting song, *Let Your Voice Be Heard*  
Listening: "Minuet," *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, by Mozart  
Listening: "Circle Dance," by Linda Worsley, IDEAS Music CD III

Middle School – Song: "Sky Colors," by Margaret Campbelle-Holman  
Listening: *Fanfare for the Common Man*, by Aaron Copland

High School – Song: "Tonight," *West Side Story*, by Leonard Bernstein  
Listening: *African Sanctus*, by David Fanshawe

Board and chalk/markers, or long strip of paper for analysis

Newsprint and pencils for first draft

Drawing paper and colored media such as markers, colored pencils, paints, collage materials and glue.

Computer and digital images or drawing tools (optional)

## Listening Maps

instructional steps

procedure

### 1. Introducing the Music

- Listen to and learn the piece of music.
- Add movement when appropriate.

### 2. Determining the Form and Predominant Musical Elements

- Analyze the structure of the piece, constructing a time-line on the board or on a long strip of paper.
- First put in the large chunks along the time line, then add elements that describe the outstanding pitch, rhythm, tone color, dynamics, tempo, and other features. If there is a game or movement, such as in “Sorida,” this may be a predominant feature.

### 3. Creating a First Draft

- Individually, in pairs, or in small groups; design the map.
- Determine the pathway the eyes will travel, and the overall design.
- Assign blocks of space for each section of the music.
- Determine the media for the final map (paper and markers, collage, digital images, etc.)
- Add details and refine, checking against the music at frequent intervals.
- Ask another student to follow the map as the music is played. Use the student’s responses to help you improve and clarify your map.

### 4. Creating the Final Map

- Construct the final map, using chosen media.

### 5. Sharing

- Display the maps and share with others. This may be done in a class setting, as a bulletin board display with written descriptions of the process, or at a more formal concert.

## Listening Maps

strategy for curricular connections



science

- Some musical selections are based on science concept or objects, such, Share the Music, Grade 6, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill; or Miniwanka, or the Moments of Water, by R. Murray Schafer that represents the water cycle in sound. The Seasons, by Vivaldi offers opportunities for using seasonal images to map musical elements and form.



mathematics

- As a map is constructed, each section is placed on a time line. The representation of that section should use a comparable amount of space on the map, using the mathematical concept of ratio.



language arts

- Mapping music that has vocal text will require representation of the words literally or in images. Just as music enhances the meaning of the text, the map images can also illuminate the meaning. Have older students work past stereotypical concrete illustrations to represent the metaphorical meaning of the text. For example, in “Stairway to Heaven,” by Led Zepplin consider images other than a traditional stairway to convey the meaning of the song text.



music

- Explore a range of vocal and instrumental pieces from different historical periods and world cultures. This activity is most successful with shorter pieces, or those that have clearly delineated sections and form.



visual arts

- Use a variety of media to do this activity.



dance

- Movement can be used to explore the musical selection before mapping as a way of clarifying the form, mood, and elements of the piece. Movement is also appropriate as a way of further interpreting the map once it is complete.



theatre

- There are many musical selections that suggest a story line or specific mood. The listening map can become the impetus for a dramatization or play writing.

# ARTS•BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

## Listening Maps

multiple intelligences target



visual•spatial



logical•mathematical



interpersonal



musical



bodily•kinesthetic



intrapersonal

adaptations

to simplify

- Represent each section of the music with one image.

to challenge

- Create computerized interactive listening maps on the computer using PowerPoint/Keynote presentations, Hyperlink, or digital movie images.

special needs

- Listening maps provide a visual aid for listening that motivates students and helps focus attention.