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Kaleidoscope Music Framework

Example Activities

Created by Lauren Best for PCM Hub, 2023

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Exploring Skill Building

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Examples of Exploring and Skill Building activities:

- Everyone takes turns saying their name for all of us to repeat (unmuted). Then each person says/sings their name in a different way and everyone echos (ie. changing rhythm or volume, creating a melody within name, adding emotion, funny voice). Try adding an action!
- Teacher leads singing of a repeat-after-me and/or fill-in-the-blank song with new ideas contributed by participants (ie. Down By the Bay)
- Using their instrument/voice, each participant makes the sound of an animal, an object, or an emotion (can either choose just one category, or part of the game can be guessing the category or using the category as a hint). Everyone else guesses what is being represented based on the sounds.
- Decide upon a tempo together, and find the tempo with the metronome to do a practice countdown from 8. Without metronome, teacher leads then do a full body “shake-out” by shaking each arm and each leg starting at 8 counts, and reducing by one count (ie. next time 7 counts) each time until just one pulse/“shake” with each limb. To make it more challenging, try with the metronome or increase the speed.
- Rhythm actions: with a song playing in the background, pick a leader to create simple actions with the music. Use a short clip or a timer so each leader has a specific amount of time to lead the group. The leader shows rhythmic and repeatable actions, changing them every so often, and everyone else follows along mimicking the same actions. Action categories could include things like body percussion, dance moves, facial expressions, instrument miming, etc.
- Echo rhythms: leader is unmuted, all others are muted. Leader claps rhythms for everyone else to echo- leader can either clap the response echo too, count a space for everyone else to echo in, or the teacher or a student can be the “example echo”. It’s possible to do this with everyone unmuted (if audio quality is high enough and background noise is low enough), but a simple version is to have just the leader unmuted. Try repeating this with a metronome or a drum groove to back the rhythms. Students can even be their own echo, for example creating video assignments with hands tapping rhythms: one hand as “leader” and one hand as “follower”.
- Two note echo melodies: leader is unmuted, all others are muted. Take turns as leader singing/playing a two-note melody for everyone to echo. Either choose two notes that will work for all the instruments present, like a C4 and G4, or echo on different notes but approximating the person who is leading, ie. *“it doesn’t have to be an exact echo, just echo it the best you can on your own instrument if you aren’t in the same range”*
- Make a separate space on the whiteboard for each person to draw. Each person makes a simple line drawing in their space representing a type of weather, emotion, animal, type of story/movie, food, or other theme. Take time for everyone (muted) to explore a 20-30 second improvisation inspired by of each of the line drawings,

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beginning and ending with their own. The leader uses a timer to guide students through timing each improvisation. Then take turns unmuting and sharing- this could be participants sharing individually just their favourite of their improvisations, or the group can create a group improvisation based on each drawing.

- Improv images: students take turns performing 1 minute free improvisations, while the other students draw on the whiteboard or on individual pieces of paper (or visualize with eyes closed). Students share what they imagined, created, or thought of (for some students this might be words and not images)
- Use the whiteboard to draw lines as “story arcs”. Invite students to improvise a short theme with a beginning, middle, end using the story arc as a guide. Try drawing different kinds of arcs/shapes and consider how they could be played.