

Reconnecting the Dots

Leading Your Students from
Virtual to Reality with Storytelling
with Jacob Kohut and Kristen Sheridan

Storytelling

Storytelling isn't about sitting in a circle and opening a book or reciting something from memory. It is the connection between humans about our experiences. That can happen at the subconscious level, musically or through direct storytelling. On this handout you'll find the tips and activities that will be shared during the presentation.

Narrative Fallacy

Our brains are hardwired for stories. Sometimes the craving for correlation to mean causation is strong enough to build a story. As soon as something unexpected comes into our lives, our brain develops a story for how that can be logical and possible. It isn't always rational.

The Four Stories of the Music Class

Your Story

Your story is what binds the classroom together and what drives students to love music the way they do. Sharing the stories that make up our identity forms deep bonds.

Stories Behind the Music

Music doesn't exist in a vacuum. Stories behind the creation of music can amplify our connections to it.

Student Stories

The stories that make up their identity are fragile and developing. Doubling down the focus on the stories they share can help fill the voids from last year.

Stories within the Music

Because our brains love stories, making up stories about what's going on in the music can make it tangible and accessible.

Games for the Music Class

Rhythm Poison

Equipment: Instruments
(Variations might not)

Time: 5 Minutes

Minimum Note Knowledge: 1 Note

Players: 3-15

Object:
To be the
last
musician
standing.

Setup:
Form a
circle
facing
inward.

Notes: Choose
a note that's
appropriate for
your students'
ability.

Gameplay: The starting musician is chosen at random. The starter makes up a rhythm and plays it using a single note. Beginning on the starter's left, musicians take turns playing the rhythm.

Getting Out: If a musician makes a mistake, they're poisoned and out. If no mistakes are made and the rhythm returns to the starter, the starter is poisoned. Once somebody is poisoned, the next person becomes the starter and creates a new rhythm.

Cheat Rhythms: A cheat rhythm is one that is so difficult, not even the creator can remember it. If any musician thinks the starter is making a cheat rhythm, they can yell out "challenge!" and the starter has to repeat the rhythm. If they fail to repeat it, they are poisoned. If they are able to repeat it, then gameplay continues as normal.

Winning: The last musician standing is the winner.

Variations: Students without instruments can clap or the entire game could be played with clapping.

Games for the Music Class

Mad Music Memory

Equipment: Instruments
(Variations might not)

Time: 5 Minutes

Note Knowledge: 2 Notes

Players: 2-15

Object

To be the
last
musician
standing.

Setup

Form a
circle
facing
inward.

Note Bank

Choose notes that are
appropriate for your
students' ability. Even
two notes is difficult!

Gameplay: The starting musician is chosen at random. The starter selects a note from the note bank. The musician to their left plays that note and adds another. The third musician plays the previous two notes and adds another. This pattern continues until a mistake is made. There's no limit to the length of the chain.

Getting Out: A musician is out if they make a mistake. The teacher is the judge for anything that is questionable.

Winning: The last musician standing is the winner.

Variations: As the chain of notes gets longer, the patterns can be very difficult to remember even with two notes. But as rounds advance, additional notes can be added as options to make gameplay more interesting. In homogeneous settings, the game can be played without instruments and just speaking the note names.

Games for the Music Class

Band Volleyball or Orchestra Volleyball

Equipment: Instruments
Time: 5 Minutes
Minimum Note Knowledge: 2 Notes
Players: 3-15

Object
To eliminate all members of the opposing team

Game Ball Theme
The theme can be a single note, two notes, or an entire phrase

Setup: Divide musicians into two groups. Create a net dividing the two teams using music stands.

Gameplay: A starting musician is chosen at random. The starting musician plays the gameball theme while looking at a player on the opposing team. That opposing player repeats the gameball theme while looking at a player on the opposing team. Gameplay continues like this until a mistake is made.

Getting Out: A musician is out when they make a mistake, play at the wrong time, or take too long (if you are using a shot clock).

Winning: Once a team has eliminated all members of the opposing team, they win.

Variations: A shot clock can be used to avoid delay of game.

Games for the Music Class

The Circle of Doom

Equipment: Instruments
Time: 5 Minutes
Minimum Note Knowledge: 2 Notes
Players: 3-15

Object
To be the last musician standing

Notes
Choose a gesture, either 2-3 notes, 5 notes, or a scale.

Setup: Form a circle facing inward. Percussionist cannot play with winds and vice versa.

Gameplay: A starting musician is chosen at random. For the percussionists, if the gesture is played going up, the player to their right must go next. If the gesture is played going down, the player to their left must go next. Visually this is intuitive. Because of that, wind players will use the opposite directions (think of a flute playing a scale going down → it goes to the right).

Getting Out: A musician is out when they make a mistake, play at the wrong time, or take too long (if you are using a shot clock).

Winning: The end games when only one player is left.

Variations: A shot clock can be used to avoid delay of game. For increased difficulty a metronome can be used and players have to play without missing a beat. The speed can also be altered to increase difficulty as the gameplay goes on.

The Three G's of Student Stories

Groundings

Open the class with activities such as "Weekend in 9 Words," "Yes, And" or Brain Teasers

Games

End class with games such as "Band Volleyball" "Rhythm Poison" or "Simon Says"

Group Dynamics

Develop a unique class culture through regular conversations, non-music games, and structured unstructured time

Three Good Forms of Storytelling

Twitter Story

A story that lasts less than 140 characters

Pixar Story

Once upon a time _____. Every day the same thing happened _____. Then one day _____. And because of that _____. And because of that _____. And because of that _____. And finally (conclusion).

Three Part

Story
Origins,
Tribulation,
Triumph

Contact Info

Jacob Kohut

www.jacobkohutmusic.com

Email: jacobkohut@gmail.com

Facebook: Jacob Kohut

Youtube: Jacob Kohut

Kristen Sheridan

www.kristensheridan.com

Email: kristensheridan1@gmail.com

Facebook: Kristen Sheridan

Instagram: Kristen Sheridan