



Music - an art of sound in time that expresses ideas and emotions in significant forms through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony, and color.

Beat

- a. A steady succession of units of rhythm.
- b. A gesture used by a conductor to indicate such a unit.

Let's Write Music!

Life Skills:

Communicating with others – listening
Creativity
Performance

Educational Standard:

NA-M.K-4.2 & 5-8 Performing on Instruments

Success Indicator:

Youth create and perform a piece of music.

Time: 30 minutes

This activity can be expanded to cover several sessions, as desired.

Suggested Group Size: Classroom or less

Supplies:

Instruments from your club kit
Written lyrics to a popular song, including patriotic songs, seasonal songs, or current pop music.

Have you ever thought that most young people can write music? This activity will allow young people to write a “rhythm track” for a school song, popular tune, or seasonal or patriotic lyric. These songs can be performed as a group before school assemblies, PTA meetings or church or community groups.

Do the Activity:

Begin by having the young people play one or both of the two examples, *The Grand Old Duke of York* and *America the Beautiful*. These are simple exercises in which half of the performers strike their rhythm instruments or clap their hands on the beat at **A** and half on **B**. **AB** indicates both groups together. A “conductor” may call out the letters or point to the **A** and **B** musicians.

Have the young people find lyrics of songs that would be fun to perform as music. The lyrics should be typed up (see the attached examples) with plenty of space to write the music. The kids will need to determine where breaks (usually syllables) are found in the words.

Depending on the size and the age of the youth, you may wish to divide them into several groups. Provide them with copies of the song lyrics and have them note where different instruments or groups of instruments can play.

After they have written their music and practiced it, have them perform their song. Different groups may perform the same song with different interpretations. Some groups may determine to break up into more than **A** and **B** sub-groups – with **C**, **D** or more for different parts.

Older youth may choose to add additional beats or otherwise embellish the songs.

Talking it Over

Share What You Did

What part of this activity was most difficult for you? Easiest?
How did the group determine which beat would sound the best?
How did it feel to write a piece of music?

Process What's Important

What did you learn about matching the words and music?
How would it feel to perform your song for your family or friends?

Generalize to Your Life

What works best when a group works on a project together?
When is it best to work on a project by yourself and when is it best to work with others?

Apply What You Have Learned

How can you apply creativity – making something new -- to your everyday life?
If you can create music, what other kinds of things do you think that you might be able to create?

Try These or Other Lyrics

War Eagle!

War... Eagle, fly down the field.
Ever to conquer, never to yield.
War... Eagle, fearless and true.
Fight on, you orange and blue.
Go! Go! Go!
On to victory, strike up the band.
Give 'em heck, give 'em heck;
Stand up and yell, Hey!
War...Eagle win for Auburn,
Power of Dixie Land!

Yea, Alabama!

Yea, Alabama! Drown 'em Tide!
Every 'Bama man's behind you;
Hit your stride!
Go teach the Bulldogs to behave,
Send the Yellow Jackets to a watery grave!
And if a man starts to weaken,
That's a shame!
For 'Bama's pluck and grit
Have writ her name in crimson flame!
Fight on, fight on, fight on, men!
Remember the Rose Bowl we'll win then!
Go, roll to victory,
Hit your stride,
You're Dixie's football pride, Crimson Tide!

Alabama A&M Bulldogs

Stand up and cheer
Cheer loud and long for Dear Old Normal
For today we raise
The maroon above all others
Our noble team now is fighting
Is fighting hard to win the fray
We've got the win
We're sure to win
For this is Dear Old Normal's day.
Fight! Fight! Fight!

The Grand Old Duke of York

The Grand old Duke of York

A B A B AB AB

he had ten thou-sand men

A B A AB AB AB

He marched them up to the top of the hill

A B A B A B AB AB AB AB

And he marched them down a-gain.

A B A B AB AB AB

When they were up, they were up

A A A A A A A

And when they were down, they were down

B B B B B B B B

And when they were on-ly half-way up

A A A A A A B B B

They were nei- ther up nor down.

A B A B AB AB AB

America the Beautiful

O beau-ti-ful for spa-cious skies,

A B B B A B B B

For am-ber waves of grain,

A A A A A A

For pur-ple moun-tain ma-jest-ies

B B B B B B B B

A-bove the fruit-ed plain!

AB AB AB AB AB AB

A-mer-i-ca! A-mer-i-ca!

A A A A B B B B

God shed His grace on thee,

AB AB AB AB AB AB

And crowned thy good with bro-ther-hood,

A A A A B B B B

From sea to shin-ing sea!

AB AB AB AB AB AB