

Music Composition and Self-Evaluation Assessment Task Grade 5

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Connecticut Common Arts Assessment Initiative

Connecticut State Department of Education

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CONNECTICUT COMMON ARTS ASSESSMENT

GRADE 5 MUSIC COMPOSITION & SELF-EVALUATION

ASSESSMENT TASK

Task Abstract

Students create, notate and perform a short musical composition that demonstrates their understanding of compositional structure (unity/variety) within specified musical guidelines (consistent tonality, at least four different pitches, demonstrates consistent meter, at least two rhythmic values, at least eight measures long). They then reflect on their composition, evaluating its effectiveness and demonstrating knowledge of music vocabulary, terminology and concepts.

Connecticut Performance Standards (Grades 5-8)

Students will:

- MU8: 4a. compose short pieces within specified guidelines, demonstrating how the elements of music are used to achieve unity and variety, tension and release, and balance.
- MU8: 5d. use standard notation to record their musical ideas and the musical ideas of others.
- MU8: 6a. describe specific music events in a given aural example, using appropriate terminology.
- MU8: 6c. demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of meter, rhythm, tonality, intervals, *chords and harmonic progressions* in their analyses of music.
- MU8: 7b. evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and others' performances, compositions, arrangements and improvisations by applying specific criteria appropriate for the style of the music, and offer constructive suggestions for improvement.

Task Objectives

Students will demonstrate their ability to:

- Compose a melody with attention to melodic shape and form.
- Organize at least four pitches around a tonal center.
- Organize rhythm around a consistent meter.
- Create a composition that is at least 8 measures in length.
- Notate a melody accurately using traditional (Western) notation.
- Use musical vocabulary to describe, analyze, evaluate and recommend possible improvements to their music composition (see attached reflective and evaluative questions and rubric).

Enduring Understandings

1. The way composers manipulate the elements of music to create unity and variety, tension and release, and balance has a significant impact on the effectiveness of the composition.
2. The limitations and guidelines for a composition, both external and self-imposed, have a profound impact on the course of the composition process.

3. Musicians use vocabulary and the understanding of musical concepts to articulate the nature of specific musical events and their impact on the effectiveness of a composition.
4. The way that composers choose to communicate their compositions to others (i.e., notation, graphic representation, narrative) shapes others' final understanding and interpretation.

Essential Questions

1. How do composers use the elements of music to communicate ideas?
2. How do I use my musical knowledge of melody and rhythm to compose?
3. What are the steps involved in the compositional process?
4. Why is it important for a composition to have form?
5. How do composers use patterns to create unity and variety (same, similar and different)?
6. Why do we use standard notation to communicate musical ideas?
7. How am I going to evaluate my composition?

Task Description

Prior Learning Required

- Students have had previous experience with improvising and creating melodies with attention to melodic shape and form/structure.
- Students have been exposed to question/answer phrases in music and the concepts of unity and variety.
- Students have received extensive and sequential instruction in the elements of pitch/melody/tonality, duration/rhythm/meter and form, and understand and use correct music terminology.
- Students have had repeated exposure to high quality song repertoire (as a means of demonstrating well-created melodic lines).
- Students have had previous experience with writing music using traditional (Western) notation, through processes such as taking melodic dictation and creating short compositions.

Possible Teaching Strategies

Establish Prior Knowledge:

1. Review vocabulary (meter, tonality, unity, variety).
2. Listen to music and identify melodic phrase shape and cadence points.
3. Encourage students to connect to the music that they are familiar with.
4. Help students review and describe musical elements through in-class examples, listening exercises, etc.
 - a. Lead students through a process of creating “mini” compositions (e.g., using one music element and one compositional principle) in class.
 - b. Ask students to identify form and the elements that change and those that remain the same between sections.
5. Have students notate a melodic dictation.
6. Create and use a “Beginning to Compose” worksheet to help students get started.

7. Play familiar pieces and melodies.

Suggestions for Teaching Composition:

1. Generate ideas in groups and then as individuals:
 - a. foster a culture where creating is safe and encouraged, and varied ideas are accepted; and
 - b. provide time for students to generate their own ideas, moods, or feelings that will translate into their composition.
2. Enable students to hear their own compositions — including prior to completion, so they can revise/refine the performance. Students might:
 - a. perform their work themselves;
 - b. teach the composition to classmates who perform the work; or
 - c. ask the teacher to perform their work.
3. Ensure that students understand what they create and hear by asking them to write about their own and others' compositions using musical vocabulary.
4. Provide clear timelines for the composition process, performing, recording and self-assessment.
5. Provide a vocabulary list posted in the music room for students to use in written narratives and reflections. See Suggested Vocabulary List.

Assignment

The student will:

1. create a musical composition which he/she can sing or play (as part of the compositional process) and notate using traditional Western notation.
2. perform the melody for the teacher, to communicate the student's intention.
3. (optional: only if using text) create a musical composition based on text.

The composition will:

1. demonstrate and maintain consistent tonal center (resting tone in major/minor), and use at least four different pitches.
2. demonstrate and maintain consistent meter, use at least two rhythmic values, and be at least eight measures in length.
3. demonstrate musicality by using the elements of music to create a coherent composition with attention to melodic shape.
4. (optional: only if using text) appropriately express the meaning of the text, including attention to meter and cadence points in the text.

Resources Required

- Digital sound recording device(s)
- Staff paper, blank paper, pencil

Reflection Questions

Student Code: _____

Use music vocabulary and refer to specific examples from your piece as you answer the following questions. You can refer to the list of music vocabulary as you write.

Composition and Technical Elements:

1. What pitch is your **tonal center**? _____
2. Where is the first time the tonal center pitch occurs in your composition?

3. Where is the last time the tonal center pitch occurs in your composition?

4. What **rhythmic values** did you use (names of notes and rests)?

5. How many **beats** are there in each measure of your composition? _____

Use music vocabulary and refer to specific examples from your piece as you answer the following questions. You can refer to the list of music vocabulary as you write.

6. Were there any spots where your **performance** was different from what you **wrote**? If so, please explain below:

WHERE was the performance different? (measure number)	What was different?	What should have happened?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

7. How did you create **unity** in your piece? What musical ideas hold your piece together?

Musical Idea(s)	Measures?

8. How did you create **variety** in your piece? What musical ideas did you change to keep your piece interesting?

Musical Idea(s)	Measures?

9. What is your **favorite part** of this piece? What makes it work well?

Favorite Part	What makes it work well?

Student Composition Checklist

Please refer to this checklist as you create your composition

My composition has:

- Melodic shape.
- Unity
- Variety
- At least four pitches around a tonal center.
- Consistent meter.
- At least two different rhythms
- At least 8 measures in length.
- Is notated accurately.

Please refer to this checklist as you complete your reflection

My reflection

- Used musical vocabulary
- Refers to specific places in my composition
- Identifies my favorite part of the composition
- Explains one idea for possible improvement

Grade 5 Music Composition Task Rubrics

Student Code: _____

Guidelines of Task (check all that apply)

- _____ pitches are organized around a tonal center
- _____ at least 4 different pitches
- _____ at least 2 rhythmic values
- _____ at least 8 measures

Notation (check all that apply)

- _____ key signature matches pitches
- _____ pitch: note heads make pitches clear
- _____ time/meter signature matches rhythms
- _____ rhythm: correct note heads/flags/beams, rests, number of beats in each measure

Notation-Performance Match (circle number that best applies)

- 3 Performance matches notation throughout.
- 2 Performance generally matches notation, with minor deviations possibly attributable to performance issues.
- 1 Performance mostly matches notation, but significant differences raise questions about student's intent.
- 0 Performance differs from notation so significantly that student's intent is unclear.

Compositional Structure and Effectiveness

(enter the number that best applies for the following 3 traits)

- 2 Consistent throughout
- 1 Generally present, but some weaknesses.
- 0 Little or no evidence.

_____ **unity**: composition is coherent (i.e., employs repeated motives, patterns, ideas, etc.)

_____ **variety**: musical elements varied to generate interest (i.e., steps and skips, antecedent-consequent phrases, etc.).

_____ attention to **melodic shape** within phrases and/or throughout the entire composition

(check if sufficient evidence)

_____ evidence of a formal **structure** (ABA, AB, through-composed, strophic, etc.)

_____ effective **beginning**

_____ effective **ending** with an appropriate cadence (resting tone)

Text Setting (Optional: score only when words are included) (check if sufficient evidence)

_____ phrase structure and cadence points enhance the meaning of the text.

_____ meter and rhythms reflect the text

Reflection

Reflection (check if sufficient evidence)

_____ accurately described at least one example contributing to unity.

_____ accurately described at least one example contributing to variety.

_____ identified a favorite section and explained why it worked well.

Vocabulary (circle number that best applies – based on written reflection)

- 2 At least 2 vocabulary words used accurately (demonstrates understanding of meaning) and none used incorrectly
- 1 EITHER at least 2 vocabulary words used accurately but one incorrectly
OR 1 vocabulary word used accurately and none used incorrectly
- 0 EITHER no vocabulary used accurately
OR multiple words used incorrectly.

Directions to Piloting Teachers Regarding Data Collection

What to Collect and Submit

1. The digital file containing the student's composition
2. Completed rubrics
3. Students' responses to the Reflection Questions.
4. Each student's visual notation, to which scorers will refer as they read the student's comments about elements in his/her piece
5. Completed Data Reporting Form

Note to Teacher: Make sure that all student writing and notation is dark enough to be easily scanned and photocopied.

Assessment and Data Submission Process

1. Send the *Permission Form for Student Work and Visual Images* home with your students. Explain that their parent/guardian only needs to return it s/he does NOT want the student's work included in the project.
2. Assign each student a unique Student Code Number from the range of numbers you have been assigned. This unique Student Code Number should appear:
 - a. on each piece of work from that student;
 - b. on each page of the rubrics;
 - c. as the first portion of the name of the digital file containing the recording of the student's composition; and
 - d. in the Student Code Number column on the Composition Data Recording Form.
3. Remove all student names or other personal identifying information from all student work, rubrics, and other material submitted. (Keep a copy of your class list including students' names and unique code numbers for your own reference, just in case.)
4. Record a performance of each student's composition digitally, assign it a file name consisting of "5C" followed by the student's unique Student Code Number (for example: "5C203"), and submit it either as an e-mail attachment or on a separate data CD labeled with the student's unique Student Code Number. (Acceptable digital file formats: if submitted as e-mail attachments can be either .mp3 or .wma files; if submitted on CD files can be submitted in .wav format.)
5. Score each student's work using the composition task rubric. Do NOT write any comments or scores on the student's work.
6. Transfer all scores to the Composition Data Recording Form. (If a student's parent(s) or legal guardian has returned a Permission Form indicating that s/he wants that child excluded from the project, do not include that work or the student's scores.)
7. Have each student complete the Student Reflection sheet.
8. Score each student's work. Do NOT write any comments or scores on the student's work.
9. Transfer all scores from the rubrics – both your scores and the students' self-evaluation scores – to the Composition Data Recording Form. (If a student's parent(s) or legal guardian has returned a Permission Form indicating that s/he wants that child excluded from the project, do not include that work or the student's scores.)
10. Forward all work and the Composition Data Recording Form to Scott Shuler by April 30.
11. Bring student work to our scoring/benchmarking meetings.

**Connecticut State Department of Education
Grade 5 - Music Composition Task**

Vocabulary List

- beat:** a metrical pulse. A sound or underlying emphasis that recurs in a regular pattern through time (same as **pulse**).
- contrasting sections:** two segments (distinct units) within a work of music that are different in one or more significant respects.
- dynamics:** the intensity of sound in music, such as would be adjusted using the volume dial on a stereo.
- expression:** the shaping of music by a performer — through changes in dynamics, tone quality and other qualities — to transfer and/or convey feelings, emotions, thoughts and/or ideas to the listener.
- form:** the overall structure (plan or design) of a piece of music, usually based on a combination of repetition and/or imitation (provides Unity) and contrast (provides Variety). The repetition and/or imitation and contrast may be obvious or subtle (same as **structure**).
- measure:** sections of a music staff, indicated by vertical lines, which divide the passage of music into regular time intervals.
- melody:** a series of notes (individual pitches), usually of varying rhythm, that create a single line.
- meter:** recurring pattern or grouping of weak and strong beats, generally grouped in twos (duple), threes (triple), or combinations of twos and threes.
- mood:** the state of mind (general feeling) created by music, as perceived by the listener.
- note:** a pitch used in music. Notes often have a specific name (such as “c-sharp”), particularly in notated music.
- pattern:** a set of musical components that recur in a recognizable and/or predictable way.
- phrasing (phrase):** a short, logical segment of music, comparable to a clause or phrase in language.
- pitch:** the level of a sound (high, low) that is related to its frequency.
- release:** musical relaxation, resolution or stability (opposite of **tension**).
- repetition:** exact reproduction of a musical idea (i.e., material, texture, size, shape, motion, etc.).
- rhythm:** the arrangement of musical sounds in and across time. Combinations of long and short moments of sounds and silences, usually over a recurring beat or pulse.
- scale:** organization of pitches according to a specific pattern.

shape (contour): the way music moves over time (up/down, gradually/suddenly, louder/quieter, thicker/thinner, etc.).

singable: music that can be repeated and/or imitated vocally.

staff: a music symbol consisting of five horizontal lines that helps musicians identify notes (pitch levels).

structure: same as **form**.

style: influences in structure that may be attributed to particular cultures, geographic locations, religions, time periods and/or ethnicities.

tension: musical stress, intensity, instability, or force (opposition, conflict) (opposite of **release**).

timbre: tone quality or tone color in music.

unity: consistency that holds a piece of music together as a single, coherent work, generally as a result of musical elements that are repeated, similar or varied in a recognizable way. (See **variety**.)

variety: change within a piece of music that creates and sustains listeners' interest, generally because of varying musical elements or introducing new musical ideas. (See **unity**.)

