Lesson 1:
Rapid-Fire Response Game

from the **Inspire Creativity Together** sequence

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

As presented at the Inspire Creativity Together workshop,
Missouri Music Educators Association Conference 2025

Missouri Alliance *for* Arts Education
Support • Promote • Advocate

Description

Students will explore music through a fast-paced, creative activity where they respond to musical excerpts using various art forms. After rolling a die to determine their response method—such as drawing, dancing, or making music—students will engage in real-time improvisation based on what they hear and feel. This activity helps students build confidence in their creative abilities, enhances active listening skills, and connects music with emotions, illustrating how music can be a powerful tool for expression and emotional regulation.

This lesson is adaptable for students in grades K–8. Its intentional flexibility allows teachers to modify the content to best suit their students' needs.

Objectives

Students will:

- Build confidence in their creative capacities.
- Engage their active listening skills.
- Connect music and emotions on a fundamental level.

Standards

Missouri Music Learning Standards

- MU: Cn10A.K-8a
- MU: Cn11A.K-8a

Missouri Visual Arts Learning Standards

- VA: Cn10A.K-8

Materials

- Large six-sided dice, one for each group of students, prepared with six creative responses: Make Music (percussion), Write, Dance, Mime, Draw, Sculpt (provided on page 3)
- Creativity supplies, including but not limited to:
  - Non-pitched percussion instruments
  - Lined paper
  - Blank paper
  - Crayons, colored pencils, or markers
  - Pencils
  - Clay or Play-Doh
  - Scarves
- Recordings of short musical excerpts of your choosing. For example, Arturo Márquez's *Conga del Fuego* could be excerpted as follows:

  Excerpt 1: 0:12-0:26 (32 counts)

  Excerpt 2: 0:42-0:58 (32 counts)

  Excerpt 3: 2:19-2:40 (44 counts)

  Excerpt 4: 2:40-3:02 (32 counts)

  Excerpt 5: 4:13-4:27 (32 counts)

  Excerpt 6: 4:28-4:45 (36 counts)

Setup

- Put students into groups of 6-8.
- Provide each group with a six-sided die, each side marked with a different way of responding to music: Make Music (percussion), Write, Dance, Mime, Draw, Sculpt.
- Supply each group with the materials they may need to respond in the different ways outlined on the die. For example, if they roll "draw," they should grab paper and crayons. If they roll "make music," they may want to grab a percussion instrument. If they roll "creative movement," they may use a scarf, etc.

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Procedure

- First, one person in each group rolls a die. The activity rolled determines the creative medium everyone in the group will use to respond to the upcoming musical selection.
- Students should then get the creative supplies they need to create in their medium.
- Once each group has determined their creative medium and gathered their supplies, play one of the musical excerpts for the class. Use one of the excerpts provided in the materials section or choose your own.
- Students should begin creating as soon as the music begins, using the creative medium their group rolled.
- When the music ends, continue the beat using an instrument like the clave or clapping for an additional phrase length while the students improvise in real time in their creative medium. If unsure of the exact phrase length, continue the beat for approximately 16-32 counts.
- Repeat this activity, rolling the die before each new listening example. You may choose to vary the listening examples or repeat a previous one. Remember that this is a rapid-fire improvisation activity meant to be fast-paced and spontaneous.
- You could have students share their creations, but the main focus should be on reflection. Ask students to consider their reactions to the music and how those reactions influenced their creative process.
    - How did it feel to create and respond to the music in real time?
    - What did you like most about the music and why?
    - How did the music make you feel and why?
    - Did your mood change after listening to the music? How so?
    - Did your mood change after creatively responding to the music? How so?
    - Describe your creation and explain how it relates to what you heard and felt in the music.

Evaluation

Using a three-point rubric, look for the following. The student:

- Actively participated in the rapid-fire response activity, demonstrating engagement and willingness to explore their creative capacities (Active participation: 1 point).
- Clearly demonstrated confidence in their creative abilities by using creative media to express their emotional response to the music (Creative expression: 1 point).
- Demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between the music and their emotional reaction, showing the ability to connect the two on a fundamental level (Music-emotion connection: 1 point).

If you enjoy this lesson, extend the fun by participating with your students in the SLSO's Picture the Music



Make Music



Sculpt



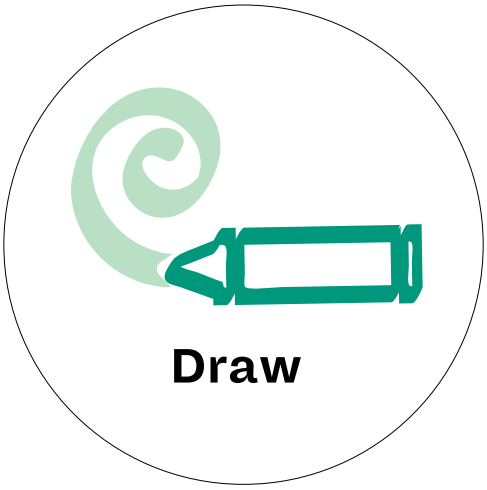
Dance



Mime



Write



Draw