

Creating Mood in a Story - and with Music -

Incorporating music and language arts – thinking creatively and critically in the classroom

Teacher/Classroom Activities with Wishapick, Tickety Boo and the Black Trunk

Grade Level 3-6 †

Subject area: Language Arts & Music Appreciation

Summary:

Students will explore how mood is established by an author in a story and how mood is created by a composer with music. Students will learn to incorporate new knowledge in undertaking how mood is created through word choice, dialogue, details, and descriptions using chapters from Wishapick, Tickety Boo and the Black Trunk. The students will also gain knowledge on how a composer sets the mood, through tempo, rhythm, melody, harmony to reflect the magical elements in music. They will learn how to critically examine a story or piece of music and learn how to distinguish the method the author or composer uses to set the mood for the reader and listener. This activity will culminate with students choosing a mood, describing that mood in words and imagery and creating a written paragraph setting the stage for their own short story or poem. Depending on the grade level and classroom time – you may want to divide the activity into three sessions (as represented here). The **first** session, being the critical and creative analysis of the corresponding chapter(s) from Wishapick, Tickety Boo and the Black Trunk. The **second** session, being the analysis of the corresponding music from Wishapick, Tickety Boo and the Black Trunk. The **third** session, involves the students choosing a mood, defining the mood they select through words and imagery and then writing the beginning paragraph for their own short story or poem.

Objectives:

- *Students will learn to analyze how setting the mood is used throughout both stories and music.
- *Students will understand the relationship between language and music and how the process is different and how it works together.
- *Students will gain critical skills in the reading and listening process.
- *Students will understand the literary term of ‘mood’ and be able to recognize that in a story and in music.
- *Students will learn how an author and composer are able to switch the mood of the plot.
- *Students will gain experience in selecting a mood and describing that choice in a written paragraph setting the stage for a their own creative story or poem.

Materials:

- *The book and CD (or download), Wishapick, Tickety Boo and the Black Trunk
- *CD player, ipod, or computer to play the music

*Pencil – Pens – Writing paper

*List of examples of moods

*Chapters, Music and lyrics must be selected before beginning the activity (see suggested chapters and corresponding music selections). Make copies of the chapter you select and lyrics of the corresponding song for each student.

Procedure:

Session One – *How does an Author Develop Mood(s)* -Opening: Give a verbal outline of today's class.

1. Review the definition of the word 'mood' with your students. Mood is a feeling the reader or listener gets when reading a book or listening to music. It can also be a variety of feelings all at once.
2. On the board, or overhead, have your students brainstorm examples of mood. Write those examples on the board and have students copy for reference. Keep this list so your students can refer back to these examples. Prompt your students for any important words they might miss in the brainstorming session such as: mysterious - gloomy - calm - humorous- ominous - reckless - cheerful - sad - dangerous - anxious – happy – cautious, etc.
3. Make another list for your students, on the board or overhead, of how an author might develop a mood(s). Example: an author develops mood through: word choice - dialogue - descriptions - action.
4. **Read the chapter:** Have the students take turns reading the chapter you selected out loud (lead the class into the chapter if they have not read the book), or they can read the chapter silently. If reading out loud, each student should still have a copy of the chapter in front of them so they can read along.

Assign students into small groups for # 5 through 7 below. After the class has read the selected chapter from *Wishapick*, *Tickety Boo* and *the Black Trunk*, they will discuss it within a group. Students must be held accountable so they will all take notes on the discussion these notes will be turned in at the end of the class period. The groups will be informed that they have _____ minutes to complete the task. Each group will also be required to select a leader to summarize their findings for the entire class.

5. **Divide the students into groups:**
Have each student write at the top of a blank piece of paper, next to their name, the mood or moods they experienced while reading the chapter. Remind them to take notes on this paper as they will be handing this in at the end of class. Have them discuss and answer the questions below as a group.
 - a. Discuss the character(s), what was the character(s) doing?
 - b. Discuss what was happening. What type of action(s) took place? The students may come up with different ideas of what was going on in the chapter. Have them

discuss and write notes on what action took place, even if their ideas are different within the group.

c. What was the mood(s) of the chapter? Describe the feeling(s) they got while reading. The group should come up with a mood or mood(s) upon which they all can agree.

d. After they have defined the mood(s) as a group have them review the chapter and underline the descriptive words, dialogue, details, or action that defined the mood they experienced while reading the chapter. They must support the mood(s) they decided upon using the chapter they read.

e. Have the students select someone to represent their group findings.

The entire class will come together and one person from each group will summarize their answers. Discuss what they found. Ask them to support their answers using word choice, dialogue, descriptive details or action from the chapter they read.

Closure: Summarize the day's work and give a preview of the next class. Collect the notes taken from each student.

Assignment: Read a page from any book you choose and think about what mood it created. Be prepared to discuss.

Session Two: *Music & Mood*- Opening: Give a verbal outline of today's session. Hand back student notes from yesterday.

Briefly discuss the page the students read per assignment. Ask how they felt after reading the paragraph from the book they selected per assignment. Hand back the students notes from Session One with your comments, if any. Tell them to set the paper aside for the moment.

1. **How can music set a mood?** Brainstorm again. Write a list, on the board or overhead, of how a composer might set the mood. Prompt students — A composer sets the mood through: tempo – rhythm – melody – pattern. Tempo (speed of the music) –rhythm (movement) – melody (a pleasing succession of sounds). A good melody is one we can hum, sing or whistle). Pattern recognition occurs when we hear a similar sound or group of sounds twice, then it clicks with our brains and we recognize this as a pattern.
2. On a fresh sheet of paper, next to their name, tell the students they will write down the mood(s), feeling(s) they experience while listening to the music. Have the class listen to the music that corresponds with the chapter previously read in session one. Give them _____ amount of time to write down the feeling(s) they got from the music. Remind them they can refer to the examples of mood on the board or in their notes. Have them take notes as you discuss the following as a class.
3. Discuss the rhythm (fast, slow, soothing, does it make you want to dance?).
4. Discuss the melody. Melodies are very similar to sentences. They are a pleasing succession of sounds, like a poem suitable to put to music. What emotion(s) did the students feel with this melody? Have the students write down the emotion they felt while listening to the music.

How did the pattern (the rhythm & melody) get their attention?

5. Distribute the lyrics to the song. Choose a student or students to read, out loud, the lyrics to the song. The other students should read along. Have the students underline the repetitive pattern in the lyrics. Sometimes there will be repetition of the same lyrics and pattern (the chorus or refrain) and other times a musical pattern will be repeated but with different lyrics (the verse).
6. Ask the students if the lyrics correspond to the mood(s) they experiences while listening to the music?

Exercise:

1. Have the students take out another blank sheet of paper and write down the mood(s) the music conveyed to them.
2. Have them now look at their notes from the chapter (from session one). Have them copy the mood(s) conveyed to them in the chapter onto the paper where they just wrote down the mood(s) they experienced when listening to the music.

Give the students the following questions (see below). With the following questions, you will get more complete answers by asking the students to elaborate, explain, convince, support your answer, use examples, use evidence, etc. Before discussing their findings, give the student's _____ minutes to write answers to three of the questions below on the paper where they wrote down the mood the music conveyed and the mood of the chapter. Students will hand in these notes at the end of class.

1. Is the mood(s) the same for the chapter as the music, or was it different? Explain – support.
2. How did the author and the composer make you feel? Convince –Support.
3. Were there different moods being developed throughout the chapter? How about the music? Use Examples, Evidence.
4. Was it the word choice, dialogue, action or descriptions that set the mood in the story? Did one of these have a greater influence, or was it a combination of all four? Why?
5. Was it the tempo, rhythm, melody, or pattern that portrayed the mood in the song? Did one of these have a greater influence, or was it a combination of all four? Why? Support your answer.

As a class discuss the student's answers to the questions. Have them explain and support why the mood(s) they selected was reflected in both the music & chapter or why the music and chapter did not reflect the same mood(s).

Closure: Summarize the day's lesson. Collect all notes students took during session 1 & 2.

Assignment: Listen to any music you particularly like and think about the mood it creates.

Session Third: *Choosing a Mood(s) and Writing Paragraph(s).*

Opening: Give a verbal outline of today's class. Hand back notes from session 1 & 2. Briefly discuss what music, per assignment, they listened to and what mood it created.

1. Review the literary meaning of the word 'mood,' and the list of moods your class came up with in session one.
2. Have the students select a mood(s) by writing the mood(s) they select at the top of a blank piece of paper next to their name.
3. Below the mood(s), have them write a definition of what the mood(s) they selected will convey to the reader. Ask them, what will the reader or listener feel?
Brainstorm some examples: Happy – this mood will convey a sense of pleasure, or good luck. Gloomy – this mood will convey darkness, or distress.

Exercise:

Have them write a one page paragraph as a beginning of a story using word choice, dialogue, description or action to enhance the mood(s) they selected. The students should be writing for readers and listeners who will experience the mood(s) the student has selected for his/her paragraph. Give the students _____ minutes to complete their work.

When they complete the exercise, have them silently read through their one paragraph, making edits. Ask the students, if after they read through their paragraph, was the mood(s) different than the mood(s), they wrote at the top of their page? If so ask those students what mood did they convey in the paragraph and give examples of why the new mood is reflected in their paragraph. Have them write the mood(s) that now reflects the paragraph at the top of the page next to the one they selected. Circle the mood that was discovered as they read their paragraph. Ask the question: Why do you suppose this happened? Tell them to elaborate and be able to convince the class with their reasons. Give them _____ time to complete this task while the other students refine their work with your guidance.

1. Choose students to read aloud their paragraph. Ask the students in the classroom if they can describe the mood(s) conveyed by the writer. If the writer felt the mood was different than what others in the class experienced, they should be able to elaborate and explain why their writing matched the mood they selected or the new one revealed during their writing of the paragraph and what their fellow students thought.
2. Have the students turn in the paragraphs for your review and edits (after your review the paragraphs can be edited & polished by the students in another session as a finale to this activity). Hopefully this first paragraph will form the basis for the student writing a short story, poem or lyrics for a song.

Closure: Summarize the session's work and collect the paragraphs.

Assessment:

Did the students actively participate?

What did you observe in doing this activity?

Did the music and story help the students define mood? Can the students recognize what an author or composer does to convey a certain feeling to their audience.

How can this project be improved?

Extensions:

Have students write a short story

Have students write a poem

Have students write lyrics for a song

Have students illustrate their story, poem or lyrics to their song.

We appreciate your feedback, comments and how to improve this teacher/classroom activity.
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Suggested Chapters to Read and the Corresponding Music Selection for the chapter

1. Chapter 5 – King O’Sirus
Song # 3 – King O’Sirus and Queen Sanctuary
Examples of mood(s) – Frightening – Dangerous – Lonely – Helpless -Despair
2. Chapter 8 – The Possum Family
Song #6-The Possum Family
Examples of mood(s) – Funny – Happy – Ridiculous -Safe
3. Chapter 10 – Amulet
Song #9 – Amulet
Examples of mood(s) – Mysterious – Unknown –Anticipation
4. Chapter 26 – Crimson Tray
Song #12 - Crimson Tray
Examples of mood(s) – Anticipation – Caution – Exciting - Expecting – Caution - Action
5. Chapter 11 – Wishapick
Song # 8 – Wishapick
Examples of mood(s) – Sadness – Surprise – Uplifting -Somber
6. Chapter 15 – The Victory Eagles
Song # 13 – Victory Eagles
Examples of mood(s) – Bravery – Fearless – Wonder - Confidence
7. Chapter 38 – Touched by the Spell
Song # 14 - The Spell of Goodwill
Examples of mood(s) Relief – Gleeful – Surprise – Hopeful *

*Permission given by the author and composer to reproduce chapters and lyrics is limited solely for use in the classroom. MM Allen & Deborah Wynne.

