

# If I Were the Composer...

## Discipline

Music

## Grade and/or Course Level(s)

Elementary, Grades: 2-5

## Overview

Students will use their creative writing power to explore what a composer/performer might have been trying to say or make their audience feel in a piece of music. Students will use creative writing prompts to explore musical elements, using appropriate music terminology.

## Essential Understanding, Knowledge, Skills, and/or Processes

- Tempo: Presto, Allegro, Adagio, Andante, Largo
- Dynamics: Fortissimo, Forte, Mezzo Forte, Mezzo Piano, Piano, Pianissimo
- Instruments: Woodwinds, Brass, Percussion, Strings, Electronic, Voice (Upper/Lower)

## Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of basic music vocabulary.
- Students will listen to and describe music elements using music terminology.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use personal preference to defend a piece of music.

## SOLs

- 2.3 The student will analyze music.
  - d) Use music vocabulary to describe music.
- 3.3 The student will analyze and evaluate music.
  - c) Listen to and describe basic music elements using music terminology.
- 4.3 The student will analyze and evaluate music.
  - d) Identify elements of music through listening using music terminology.
  - g) Describe performances and offer constructive feedback.

- 5.3 The student will analyze and evaluate music.
  - c) Analyze elements of music through listening using music terminology.
  - e) Apply accepted criteria when judging the quality of compositions and performances.

## Materials

- Worksheet (included, see below)
- Any piece of music with basic information provided by teacher (Title, Composer, Performer(s), Genre)

## Student/Teacher Actions

1. Teacher reviews music terminology including tempo, dynamics, instruments, etc. Students collaborate to fill in a class word bank of music terminology they can use to describe a piece of music.
2. Teacher selects a piece that students will analyze, and provide students with the title, composer, performer(s) and genre. Teacher prepares students to analyze and evaluate the piece by reviewing expectations. Teacher establishes an inclusive classroom environment that values individual voices.
3. Students listen to the first 30 seconds of the piece, before receiving the *If I Were The Composer...* worksheet. Teacher distributes the worksheet with the title, composer, and performer(s), already completed. Students work only on the *Technical Music Analysis* while the music is playing. After the piece is finished, students complete the remaining questions on the worksheet.
  - a. An online platform can be used to listen/watch the piece in segments. The piece could also be shared during live synchronous learning, with students having a live class discussion or completing the worksheet during asynchronous learning.
  - b. Student written responses can be completed in a digital worksheet, online form, or in a discussion board.
  - c. Student responses can be recorded in a virtual platform.

## Assessment Strategies

- Formative assessment questions can include, “Do you think the composer did a good job saying what you think he wanted to say? Why?” or “What music do you listen to that has a similar sound or type of message?”
- Virtual formative assessment can be submitted via a digital form, worksheet, or discussion board.
- Summative assessment can include having a peer review of the *If I Were the Composer* worksheet. Assessment can be based on proper use of music terminology, clear analysis and description of individual student’s opinions, and peer analysis reflection

with moments of agreement and disagreement. Virtual summative assessment be submitted as a picture of the worksheet, a digital worksheet/form, or a self-assessment form.

- Students can also submit recorded responses to the questions for summative evaluation using a virtual platform.

## Differentiation Strategies

- **Word Bank:** A word bank can be used with examples and definitions for each music term.
- **Pre-Filled Worksheets:** Parts of the worksheet can be filled out by the teacher in advance, including Title/Composer/Performer/Genre
- **Sentence Starters:** Provide conversational and critical analysis sentence starters to guide student writing and dialogue.

## Extensions and Connections

- Students can complete peer reviews and share answers to see how their ideas are similar or different.
- Multiple examples from the same composer, genre, or time period can be used to identify similarities and differences.

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# If I Were the Composer...

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Let's listen critically to a piece of music to investigate what the composer was doing, and why.

First, identify the information about the piece's title, composer, and performer. While listening to the piece, fill out the "Technical Music Analysis" so that we know the specifics about the piece. Finally, use your best guess and think like a composer to fill in what you think the composer was trying to say, or make us feel in this piece of music. When writing your responses, use proper music terminology to analyze and describe the music.

Music Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Composer: \_\_\_\_\_ Performer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Technical Music Analysis

Genre: \_\_\_\_\_ Tempo: \_\_\_\_\_

Dynamics used in this piece: \_\_\_\_\_

List the instruments you hear:

What do you think the composer was trying to say in this piece?

Why do you think the composer wants to say these things with music?

If this music was used in a movie, what do you think would be happening on the screen?

Why should your friend listen to this music?