

Captain, Go Sidetrack Your Train



Composing with La Tonal Center

Suggested Grades: 3-5

Sarah Fairfield

National Core Arts Standards

#1 – Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Objectives

- Compose with La as Tonal Center

Materials

- Barred Instruments
- Tambourine



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Suggested Teaching Process:

1. Listen to music with a la tonal center.
2. Using the solfege ladder - lead students through solfege patterns, focusing on la as a tonal center
3. Discuss:
 - What makes a particular pitch sound like a tonal center or home note?
 - How does a La tonal center sound different from a Do tonal center?
4. Sing the song for students using solfege.

Captain Go Sidetrack Your Train

Arr. S. Fairfield

Cap-tain, go side-track your train. Cap-tain, go side-track your train.

5
Num-ber three in line, com-ing in on time. Cap-tain, go side-track your train.

5. Students listen and identify the Tonal Center: Is it la or do based? (la)
6. Identify where to find la on the staff (E=la)
7. Teach the song using echo imitation on solfege.
8. Add words.
9. Repeat until students can sing independently.

**Adding Instruments:**

1. Label the notes of the xylophone in G Pentatonic (remove the C and F bars)
2. Identify the solfege - (E=la)
3. Teach the accompaniment.
4. Sing with accompaniment.

Composition:

1. Teach the following spoken text:

**Railways and train cars speeding down the track;
Coming in on time,
So, don't look back!**

2. Students use the rhythm of the text to create a melody.
3. Discuss the idea of what makes a melody sound best with students.
 - Use notes that repeat.
 - Choose notes that move by skip or step.
 - Start and end on home tone LA.
4. Model how to break down the text into smaller chunks.
5. Start with “railways and train cars” so students can remember their melody.
6. Add additional phrases until the composition is finished.
7. Allow students to share their “compositions.”

Extension:

Consider creating a final performance using the song “Captain Don't Sidetrack Your Train” with instrumental parts, alternating with student compositions over the bass line.



Captain Go Sidetrack Your Train

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Music score for "Captain Go Sidetrack Your Train" in 4/4 time, key of G major. The score includes parts for Voice, Tambourine, Alto Glockenspiel, Alto Xylophone, and Bass Xylophone.

First System:

- Voice:** Cap-tain, go sidetrack your train. Cap-tain, go sidetrack your train.
- Tambourine:** Rhythmic accompaniment with quarter notes and rests.
- Alto Glockenspiel:** Accompaniment with eighth notes and rests.
- Alto Xylophone:** Accompaniment with chords and a specific rhythm marked "x= click mallets together".
- Bass Xylophone:** Accompaniment with quarter notes and rests.

Second System (Measures 5-8):

- Voice:** Num-ber three in line, com-ing in on time. Cap-tain, go side-track your train.
- Tambourine (Tamb.):** Rhythmic accompaniment.
- Alto Glockenspiel (AG):** Accompaniment.
- Alto Xylophone (AX):** Accompaniment with "x" marks for mallet clicks.
- Bass Xylophone (BX):** Accompaniment.

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