

Quest Story Educational Game: "William's Journey with Bach"

Overview

This educational game takes students on a narrative journey with William, a lonely boy who discovers the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and learns about friendship, family, and the joy of music. The quest includes challenges that are designed to deepen students' understanding of music theory, composition, and the historical context of Bach's work, all while engaging multiple learning modalities.

Grade Level: 6-8

Duration: 45 minutes

Storyline Framework

Narrative Introduction (5 minutes)

In a quaint Paris music shop, William, a lonely autistic boy, discovers a painting of Wilhelm, the son of Johann Sebastian Bach. The old shopkeeper suggests that William might enjoy fugues, which leads him to notice the tune from Bach's *Little Fugue in G Minor* being whistled by various people around him. This sparks a quest to understand the music and connect with others.

Character Roles

- **William:** The protagonist, who learns to embrace music and friendship.
- **Carl:** The boy William follows into the church, who introduces him to Bach's music.
- **The Old Man:** The shopkeeper who ignites William's interest in fugues.
- **The Builder, The Girl, The Boy:** Minor characters representing the community's connection to music.

Quest Challenges

Quest 1: Discovering the Fugue (10 minutes)

- **Objective:** Introduce students to the concept of a fugue.
- **Informational Passage:** A brief explanation of what a fugue is, its structure, and its significance in classical music.

- **Activity:**
 - **Materials:** Paper, pencils, and a printout of a simple fugue structure (exposition, development, and recapitulation).
 - **Task:** Students work in pairs to identify these sections in a short audio clip of a fugue.
- **Assessment:** Have students share their findings with the class.

Quest 2: Whistle the Tune (5 minutes)

- **Objective:** Understand melody and rhythm.
- **Activity:**
 - **Materials:** Whistles or recorders (or use their voices).
 - **Task:** Students learn to whistle or play a simple melody that resembles the fugue theme.
- **Assessment:** Pair students to practice and then perform for the group.

Quest 3: Meeting Carl (8 minutes)

- **Objective:** Explore dynamics and expression in music.
- **Informational Passage:** Explanation of musical dynamics (loud vs. soft).
- **Activity:**
 - **Materials:** A set of dynamic notation cards (piano, forte, mezzo-piano, etc.).
 - **Task:** Students match cards with corresponding sound clips demonstrating dynamics.
- **Assessment:** Students explain their choices to the class.

Quest 4: The Big Family (7 minutes)

- **Objective:** Learn about musical families (instruments).
- **Informational Passage:** Overview of different families of instruments (strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion).
- **Activity:**
 - **Materials:** Images or videos of different instruments.
 - **Task:** Students categorize instruments into their respective families and share their findings.
- **Assessment:** Quick quiz on instrument identification.

Quest 5: The Picnic Surprise (5 minutes)

- **Objective:** Synthesize their learning through a fun application.

- **Activity:**
 - **Materials:** Paper plates, crayons, and a large group drawing of a park scene.
 - **Task:** Students create a picnic scene that includes representations of the music they've learned.
- **Assessment:** Students present their drawings to the class, explaining how music is part of their picnic.

Culminating Challenge: Play the Fugue (5 minutes)

- **Objective:** Independent application of knowledge.
- **Activity:**
 - **Materials:** Keyboard (or classroom piano) access, paper for composition.
 - **Task:** Students create a simple two-voice fugue theme using the notes they learned and try to play it.
- **Assessment:** Students perform their composition for the class.

Implementation Support

Timing Guidance

- Introduction: 5 minutes
- Each Quest: 5-10 minutes
- Transition: 1 minute between quests
- Conclusion: 5 minutes

Anticipated Student Responses and Misconceptions

- Some students may struggle with the concept of fugue structure. Provide additional examples or scaffold with visual aids.
- Students may have difficulty identifying dynamics. Reinforce with sound examples.

Differentiation Suggestions

- For advanced learners, challenge them to create a more complex fugue.
- For struggling learners, provide simplified materials and one-on-one support.

Extension Options

- Encourage students to research another composer and present similarities or differences in their musical styles.
- Create a class performance showcasing learned concepts.

This Quest Story Educational Game is designed to immerse students in the world of classical music through a narrative that fosters creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking.