

Title: Building Your Composing Toolbox

Level: Intermediate/Senior

Connection to a Culminating Activity:

This lesson will help students build up a series of simple chords that they can experiment with to create their own musical chord progressions within a tonic key center. It introduces a large variety of chords in a simple system.

Overall Expectation: [Strand and subheading]

The Creative Process, Elements of Music

Specific Expectation:

A1.1: apply the creative process when performing music and composing and/or arranging music

A2.2: apply the elements of music and related concepts appropriately when composing and/or arranging music

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students should know:

- All the major and minor chords available for them to use in a tonic key center
- A series of chord progressions that can create specific musical moods and textures

Success Criteria:

Students can demonstrate their understanding by performing or create a composition using the chords taught in this lesson.

Students should be able to explain their music choices and why they made them

Prior Student Knowledge Required:

Students will need to know the basic major and minor triads, the notes of the chromatic scale, and basic intervals

Outline of Lesson

Composition Activity

Instruction Format: Slides followed by experimentation

This lesson is based on the videos embedded in each slide. For each slide, play the video in class, or use them as the basis for your own demonstration and instruction. If you are unable to play the embedded videos, email info@bandology.ca for download links to the videos.

Introduction

Slide #3 - 5 will introduce the basics of chord progressions and review intervals and triads. Slides #6 introduces the students to the 4 different types of chord movements that are available.

Concept #1

Slide #7 | Chord movements of 5ths

After presenting this slide and video, the students can experiment with these chords on a piano, guitar, or digital device such as MIDI, garage band, Soundtrap, etc.

Concept #2

Slide #8 | Tertian movement

Again students can experiment. This is the largest collection of available chords so give them lots of time. If they are struggling to find the proper chords, they can use the free chord calculator on musictheory.net.

Concept #3

Slide #9 | Whole tone movement (*Allow students to experiment afterwards*)

Concept #4

Slide #10 | Semitone movement (*Allow students to experiment afterwards*)

Culminating Exercise:

Have the students write a simple chord pattern based on the chords from this exercise. The instructor can choose the length of composition.

This lesson plan on [Building Your Composing Toolbox](#) was developed by Daniel Austin (BFA, B.Ed, OCT) with Bandology Canada, Inc.

www.bandology.ca

Edited by Alexander Wright (BMus, MA²), Music and Education Co-ordinator

For comments and inquiries, please reach out to info@bandology.ca