

Using Native American Storytelling in Music Education

Denisa Smiley

Culturally Responsive Schooling with/in Indigenous Communities

Professional Development Program

2024

Author Note:

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Introduction

Yá'át'ééh, Hello, my name is Denisa Smiley, Tábááhi nishkí, Ta'neezahnii bashishchíin, Áadóó Áshjìhi dashicheii dóó Kinłichiini dashinalí. I am Water Edge Clan, born for Tangle People Clan. My maternal grandfathers are the Salt Clan, and my paternal grandfathers are Red Towering Clan. I am originally from Fort Defiance, New Mexico and I currently reside in Phoenix, Arizona. My father's family is from Rock Point, Arizona. I grew up in Kayenta, Arizona which is located on the Navajo Reservation and I attended Kayenta School District from primary to high school. I attended Northern Arizona University, and I graduated with a bachelor's degree in music. I am currently in my twenty-fifth year as a music educator, and I have taught general music in the Cartwright School District for 22 years. I have a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from The University of Phoenix. In 2022, I achieved the National Board Certification in Music.

My musical talent developed in school, where I learned to play the saxophone. In high school I became proficient on the saxophone, and I went on to learn classical music in college. At N.A.U. I was a part of the concert band, marching band, saxophone studio, and the women's choir. I also learned to play the piano and guitar.

Growing up on the Navajo reservation, I mostly heard men sing and rarely heard women singers. On occasions when I did see women singers, it was during pageants, background singers at pow-wow, or at a community event such as, "song & dance" events. In the Native American Church, I was taught that women do not sing in the peyote ceremonies, so I did not learn to sing Native American Church songs. However, all my eight brothers have developed their unique style, timbre, vocal range, and drumming style. At home, I listened to them practice for hours with my dad and I've become familiar with songs and verses. In the morning, my dad would be holding an infant and singing traditional songs while my mother cooked. Recently, I heard my dad singing to one of my baby nephews and it brought back memories. In today's ceremonies, you might see women singers or women drummers in present day Native American Church ceremonies. Despite the changes, I refrain from singing N.A.C. songs, but I continue to participate in the ceremony by bringing in the water. My grandfather used to say "everything you need to know is the fireplace, not books. Grandfather fire and grandmother fire have been here since the beginning, learn from them." (Johnson, 2010).

I know that music is a powerful learning tool, and I value how music can succeed in making deeper connections to learning, especially in storytelling. In the Navajo Tradition, there are sacred songs used to retain a plethora of knowledge that are embedded in the sequence and coding of songs. "The Hózhó songs are holy songs, given to us by the gods" (Curtis, 1907). These traditional songs are taught orally and passed down through generations. There are songs to heal and restore balance and harmony. I know that songs can help the learning process. In education, story books help make connections and songs help retain information and make more meaningful learning. "Native American music *is* story. Native American music is both part of a story and plays a part in stories, is itself filled with stories." (Boyea, 2000, p.17). I will create a music curriculum unit using Native American stories or folklore to enhance the learning experience and make cultural connections with my own personal stories. Students will listen to stories and learn songs that are the best correlations to the lessons.

Context

The Cartwright School District is in the Maryvale area of West Phoenix. There are a mixture of schools within the district: eleven schools are K-6, six schools are K-8, and four schools are 7-8th. Our district serves approximately 14,000 students and employs more than 2,000 people. The district motto is “Uno Team, Uno Familia”, which is our belief to elevate and celebrate each student's success as a family. The demographics of students are 89.2% Hispanic/Latino, 2.7% White, 5.8% Black, 0.4% Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. The Cartwright school district is a Title I school and offers free and reduced lunch for students. Some of my students are English Language Learners (ELL). There are many resources available to our families including food, clothing and resources if needed for our families such as: parent classes, GED courses, English Second Language classes, Computer Literacy Programs, e-books, Dual-language programs.

Justine Spitalny STEAM K-8 school, is the smallest school in the Cartwright School District. We have 614 students, and this past year I was thrilled to have some Native American families enroll in the school. I currently have ten Native American students who have entered our school: 2 Hopi, 3 Navajo, and 5 Gila River Tribe. Most of my students are Hispanic/Latino descendants and a small number of White and African American. Although our Mexican Families are Indigenous many students say they are Mexican and Spanish is their native language. “In the curriculum, Native American music can properly evoke qualities of Indian cultures and reality, opening minds to old wisdoms, providing non-Indians with alternative perspectives on life, providing learners possibilities for...”wide-awake” life.” (Boyea, 2000, p.14). I have 27 classes ranging from K-8th. I teach general music to K-5 classes, and I teach guitar to 6th, 7th, and 8th-graders. All general music classes are once-a-week and all upper grade classes are twice-a-week. I will be focusing on 1st and 4th grade for this paper.

Rationale

Although Arizona has the most Native American tribes in the state, there is still a misconception that Native Americans are people of long ago or no longer here. Living in Phoenix, I have come across people who think there are no more Indians, especially students. Perhaps, they see only in their textbooks a brief reading or a short overview in their books. “Too often, the curriculum with Native Americans with little regard for Indian mind, Indian experience, or Indian point of view. If featured at all, Native Americans get nominal mention only” (Boyea, 2000, p.19). I feel it is necessary to include Native American lessons. I want to bring awareness to our youth and instill to our Native American students that their culture is valued in our school because we have a district motto “una familia” (One family). I know that many Native American families, including my own family, live in Phoenix to make a living and attend schools in the area that may or may not have Native American programs. “Native American music is also used in classrooms as a means of inclusion for Native American students, affirming them in their histories and world views, an offering for comfort and validation.” (Boyea, 2000, p14).

The first place to start would be a proper introduction. We identify ourselves to people in this manner and it is known as “Ke”. In the Navajo tradition, “Ke” is the heartbeat of one’s identity

and the connection with each other and to the holy ones. K'e is defined as a "system of kinship" and it is how Navajo people identify themselves. This is why it is important to know your clan, it is your identity. During Meet the Teacher's night, I introduced my clan to the Navajo family and I found out with a simple introduction that I was this new student's "mother". My first clan, Tábááhí, is also my new students' first clan. Therefore, he is my son by clan.

In the boarding school days, young Navajo children were taken to far away to boarding schools, by the authorities. My Grandmother often tells of the boarding school days, and she tells how the young Navajo children used the "k'e" system to identify themselves with other Diné children and they formed families at school. The older kids were able to comfort the little crying kids and take care of their new children. My grandmother said this in Navajo "this is what the children relied on because they wholeheartedly missed their mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers." (Johnson, 2000). Imagine, the boarding school kids far away from home and they found each other's relatives by using the "ke'e" system to identify themselves and make connections. "When cultural music is integrated into the curriculum, it should not be taught in isolation, especially where there is social, cultural or personal narrative to support the integration." (Boyea, 2000, p.15). I plan to use Native American songs and Native American storybooks to help students gain a deeper understanding of Native American music and to make cultural connections. I have already started to shake my new student's hands and say "Yá'átééh" as he walks into the classroom. The other day, I played a Native American song and both my Navajo student, and my Hopi student got up and started to dance and move the beat of the drum. This inspired the rest of the class to join in and move their feet and we ended up in a circle. Our American Indian students deserve to be represented in their learning and bring awareness to our community. I hope that it generates to our students that all cultures are equally important.

As a Navajo teacher, I look forward to sharing more of my Diné culture with my students. I am excited to incorporate Navajo and Hopi culture into my music lesson. It is important despite being off reservation to continue our practices from afar so that students do not forget where they come from. I think this is important to the community because it brings about cultural awareness and a message that "We are still here". I hope that it might instill in the Hispanic community their own backgrounds and cultural awareness.

English is my first language, and I understand Navajo, but I do not speak fluently. Growing up, I had a hard time understanding and speaking to my relatives on my Dad's side of the family, because everyone spoke Navajo. My Fathers side of the family is from Rock Point, Arizona which has upheld the traditional Navajo way of life despite all the acculturation that is happening all over the reservation. In fact, Rock Point has a history in establishing the foundations to Navajo Education system & cultural immersion in their Rock Point Schools. Therefore, my weekends felt like I was "going to be a true Navajo" at Rock Point, because I was fully immersed in the Navajo language, culture, and livelihood. When I returned to Kayenta, everyone spoke in English, including my Navajo friends. No one spoke Navajo at school so I grew up thinking I'll learn it later. At the time, there was no dual language or Navajo Immersion school at Monument Valley High School. There was a Spanish and French class, but sadly we had no Navajo language class. Instead, I took a Navajo class that focused on Navajo history. In fact, many Navajo students I knew grew up learning only English and many do not speak Navajo.

Not speaking full Navajo prevented me from understanding our Navajo Origin Stories which were only told in Navajo. As a child, I enjoyed hearing the Navajo creation stories and I was fascinated because these stories had Heros, Monsters, Mythical beings. These origin stories were told by my late grandfather and my late paternal grandfather. These stories are told during the winter months and are passed down from one generation to the next. These stories are who we are as Diné people, they tell of how we came to be. Hearing them made my imagination go wild and I looked forward to hearing my late grandfather tell the stories. To help me understand the stories, my mother would retell the story in English. It was during the long drives from Window Rock to Kayenta that my mom would retell the winter creation stories in English so that my siblings and I could understand. My mom was a great storyteller, and we enjoyed hearing her retell what our grandfather said in Navajo. In education, I know that storytelling can be a powerful tool that can captivate an audience and when I think of implementing some of these stories, I think of my mom and how she was so captivating. I thought of using puppets to retell a story and I'm excited to finally get to use my puppets that I have been collecting for years.

Topic Summary

The boarding school era is a direct reason for our tribal shift in today's cultural loss. Many Native American tribes have lost their language and cultural practices, because of boarding schools and government infractions. My uncle told me vividly the details that were put in place once a Native American arrived at the boarding schools. He attended Rock Point Boarding School in the 1960's. First, they were given a number and then they were sent to a line for cutting their hair. The boys were completely shaved, and the girls were cut short with bangs. Next, they were sent to the showers where they were covered with a powder substance, because they thought they had bugs. All clothing was labeled with the number given. Every child was given a job. If you spoke your native language, you held out your hand and you received a hard whipping on your hands. My grandmother added that sometimes they would grab you by the cheeks and shove you along. She added "and they called themselves Christian!". (Johnson, 2010). It was an unpleasant atmosphere for many kids who were sad. My uncle said you could hear soft crying at night and there was nothing you could do, because you felt the same. However, at recess or when no authority was around the kids did speak their native tongues, at their own risks. Occasionally, at night the kids who knew songs, would sing and he said it comforted him. He said they had their own guards and if they saw a dorm aide coming, they would quietly sound the alarm, and everyone would jump back in bed. (Johnson, 2024). He remembers how awful Vaseline felt, because they made every child put this on their face every night. He said when they woke up, everyone had greasy shiny faces. Not much has changed in the boarding schools over the decades. In the 1980's, the boarding schools still frowned on speaking your native tongue. My husband attended Tuba City Boarding school and he was discouraged from speaking Navajo and many times he went to bed without dinner. He also mentioned, some of the students would try to run away and they were usually caught down the road. He also mentioned that they purposefully split family members apart. He was not allowed to see his brothers. (Interpreter, 2024). Siblings were split and forced to attend different denominations of churches. "The government's objective for education of Indians was, at least in part, to destroy cultural and religious convictions, which would lead to the breakdown of tribal associations." (Shipley, 2012, p.8). In my extended family, this is apparent, some of my relatives

practice Catholic, Jehovah witness, protestant, Lutheran faith, Christian Bible Schools, traditional Navajo, and Native American Church. “The goal designated by the government was to fully integrate Indian graduates into white society, not to return Indians to their tribe.” (Shipley, 2012, p.8). The only option in hopes of your return would be to “continue to work on converting other Indians to Christianity and act as teachers and examples of Christian education.” (Shipley, 2012, p.8). Sadly, many native children did not return from boarding school and those that did struggled to speak to their own grandparents.

In the 1800’s, The Code of Offenses was enforced, which was a set of policies that forbade Native Americans to practice their cultural ceremonies and rituals. As a result, when the boarding school kids returned home they had a communication gap and many cultural practices were not passed down. My grandparents tell of a time when the authorities would come inside a ceremony and disrupt it and stop the services because we were not allowed to practice our culture. My grandparents said it was a hostile environment when the authorities arrived because people were beaten, and the sacred ceremonial items were destroyed or taken. (Johnson, 2010). During this time when the “code of offenses” were upheld, many tribes lost their cultural ceremonies, songs, and way of life.

In my research, I found one school, Hampton Institute, in the early 1900’s, that did the opposite and encouraged Native Americans to sing songs in their own languages. Shipley (2012) stated “Hampton also encouraged their Indian students to speak and sing in their Native tongue when it came to music.” (Shipley, 2012, p.9). A letter Natalie wrote, “It is indeed a beautiful proof of Hampton’s methods that it preserves the native music not on the written page alone, but as the utterance of its pupil’s soul.” (Shipley, 2012, p.19). Not only was Curtis an instructor at Hampton University, she was an advocate who helped to lift strict policies regarding Native Americans. “In 1906, and appealed to him to change the policies. She succeeded in convincing Roosevelt of the value of Indian art, music, and dance.” (Shipley, 2012, p.12). In Natalie Curtis book, *The Indian’s Book Authentic Native American Legends, Lore and Music*, there are many songs from varied Native American tribes. I attempted to play some of the songs from this book on the recorder, doot, and a Native American flute and it sounded authentic. Perhaps I will teach a song from this book in a call and response manner with my 4th-graders. According to the article by Shipley (2012) The goal of boarding schools run by the federal government during this time period was to break down tribal relationships. As a result, “Native customs, including Native music, were not allowed on boarding school campuses.” (Shipley, 2012, p.3). “The school, however, completely disregarded policies to ban Native culture, instead choosing to celebrate it.” (Shipley, 2012, p.14). Unfortunately, Hampton lost government funding because they allowed Native Americans to practice and perform their songs, language, and cultures.

Like many music teachers, I found very little on Native American resources on Native American music and songs. “Educators have sought more meaningful ways to present Native American music to students.” (Belz, 2005, p.22). To make it practical and culturally responsive for your use I will use readily published Native American storybooks and use authentic materials and songs to make it accessible for you. Too often our students lose their cultural connections because they are off-reservation or away from their tribal people. “Another reason for Indian musics in the curriculum is to provide these musics legitimacy in the larger world, to ensure their

preservation and maintenance against the forces that would engulf them or let them die.” (Boyea, 2000, p.14).

Why is it so hard to find music for Native Americans in the music curriculum? Three events have taken place to try and incorporate Native American music in the music curriculum. “First in 1967, Tanglewood Symposium resulted in eight declarations for the improvement of music education, “Music of all periods, styles, forms and cultures belongs in the curriculum.” (Belz, 2005, p.20). “Second, in 1972 Education Amendments Act, p.L. 92-318” stated, “educators were encouraged to give students opportunities to learn about their own cultures as well as other ethnic groups and cultures within the United States.” (Belz, 2005, p.20). The third event, in 1994, was “the publication of the National Standards for Arts Education” (Belz, 2005, p.20). This publication said “A core objective was that music, visual arts, dance and drama education in the United States emphasize the diverse cultural heritage of the arts.” (Shipley, 2012, p.20). This event aloud for a need to add more authentic Native American lessons and songs.

My district's current music curriculum includes both Quaver Music and Essential Elements Music Curriculum (EEMC). In the EEMC curriculum, I found no Native American music or songs, only folklore songs in African American or Mexican/Hispanic. In the Quaver music curriculum, I had trouble finding Native American songs or lessons, until I looked in the Cross-Cultural Resources under the language and pronunciation section. I found a Racoon Song from the Ojibwa tribe. Another popular online music education program is Music Play and there are several Native American songs, however, I currently do not have access to these resources.. In the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill “Spotlight in Music” there are complete Native American lessons. It is from these books that I will create a Native American Storytelling using the songs from this music education material. In 1994, “Share the Music (Macmillan/McGraw-Hill) and The Music Connection (Silver Burdett Ginn) made great strides toward providing accurate and appropriate materials under the guidance of culture-bearers and serious students of each culture”. (Belz, 2005, p.22). During my early years as a general music teacher, I had the opportunity to teach from both The Silver Burdett & Spotlight in Music. I remember feeling joy to find lessons with Native American materials. I will be using the complete curriculum and materials from Share the Music and Spotlight in Music from Macmillan/McGraw-Hill to teach Native American Songs.

Student Engagement

This lesson is an introduction to the Native American drums and connections of our sacred names. Students will chant a simple phrase while keeping a steady beat and repeating each other's names. This lesson will connect the meaning of names and explore “their” own personal history of names. “Finding our names in the pulse of Mother Earth”~Denisa Smiley

Lesson: Meaning of our names

Grade: 1st-Grade & 4th-Grade

Standard: 1st & 4th

1.a with appropriate guidance, explore, experience & improvise musical concepts Ex.Beat

1.b with appropriate guidance, explore, musical features ex. Movement, vocalization, musical instrument accompaniment.

1.5.a. With appropriate guidance apply personal, teacher, & peer feedback to refine performance
4.1.a. Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, beat, meter, rhythm, harmony, tonality
4.4.a. demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, purpose, and context.

Objective: Students will be able to

- keep a steady beat and learn each other's names
- sing a song with actions
- listen to story of names

Materials: Native American Drum, Quaver, you tube: how Native American drums are made

Procedure: whole group activity

1. Make a circle: I like to say “1-2-3-4, stand up, circle please, 5-6-7-8 hurry up, don't be late!”

Once students are in a circle,

TW demonstrate the beat on a drum and repeat each child's name.

I can keep the beat

X X X rest

I can say your name

X X X rest

Standing next to Mrs. Smiley is? ____

X X X student says his/her name &

class echo back the student's name

2. Once students can keep the beat, select a student to keep the beat on the teacher's drum. Select a new student after 3-4 passes.

2. Once you make it around the room. Ask the student what kind of drum this is? Taos Pueblo Drum or Native American Drum. What is it made out of? Discuss what the drum is made out of. Tree log or frame, Head: skin of an animal, usually deer or buffalo

3. Back to seats, watch a short video on How to make a drum or pictures of drum making

4. Listen to how Mrs. Smiley got her last name. I will share the meaning behind my last name.

Long ago when my people, the Diné or Navajos were rounded up and given new names. All the people in my tribe were given new “White” names because the cowboys and military could not say our Navajo names. At one of these gatherings my great great great grandfather was standing in one line and his father was standing in a different line. My great grandfather was asked “What is your name?” He responded with “Kinłichiini Baahózhónii” (Red House Towering Clan/Man who is happy) and the person did not know how to make his name so he dropped the “Baahózhónii” name and divided the clan name. Of course the officer that wrote down the clan name did not know how to spell it so he wrote the clan name Kinłichiini and divided and rewritten as Kim Ł Nih and my grandfather was given this name Kim L. Nih. On the other line, stood my grandfather's brothers and he was asked, What is your name? "He replied, “Kinłichiini Baahózhónii” (The man who is happy). Since the white soldier did not want to call him Mr. Happy they named him “Mr. Smiley.” Due to the separate line situation half of my relatives carry the last name “Nih” and the other half carry the last name “Smiley”. This is how I received my last name.

5. Ask students if they know the story of their last name or how they got their first name?

Encourage students to go home and ask parents how they got their name and if they can share their stories.

Extensions: Using Quaver to draw names in Quaver Song Brush. Go to Quaver Street and into the Quaver Store and select Quaver Song Brush. Simply use tools to write names of students and play back for students. They will get to hear how their name sounds in Quaver.



Assessment: Were students able to keep a steady beat with the name activity, were students able to say their name on the beat? Were students actively listening to the story of How Mrs. Smiley got her name?

This next lesson is a Native American lullaby from the Hopi tribe. Students will be learning by Total Physical Response (TPR) using stuffed animals to tenderly care for as they recite parts of the body in English, Spanish, Hopi. “One must be with it to be touched by it. In stirring the emotions, music lays a path to the familiar within the strange. Music permits an interchange of dissonance and consonance that can lead to experiment, learning, and appreciation.” (Boyea, 2000, p.15)

Lesson: Hopi Lullaby “Bu-Vah (excerpt) Sleep, sung by Wil Numkena.

Grade: 1st-Grade

Standard:

Objective: Students will be able to...

- listen to music and sway to the beat of the drum
- Sing or hum a lullaby
- Learn the parts of the body in Spanish, Hopi, Navajo *introduce one language one day.

Materials: needed: small stuffed animals (beanie babies), book: lullaby book

Classroom visual T-chart listing words in Spanish & Hopi, Introduce Navajo later

Procedure:

SW listen to the song “Bu-vah”. Teacher will ask where you might hear this song? Is this soothing music? Discuss with students what a lullaby song is. Ask if anyone sings them to sleep at night? Listen to the song again, rocking, swaying and humming and try to pronounce the song. Can they sing along? Tell the students they were pronouncing words in Hopi language. TW Introduce the Hopi Native Americans. Display pictures of Hopi culture and way of life. Next TW pass out small stuffed animals: TW play the song while students gently rock their stuffed animal.

Ask students to touch their ears? In Spanish____, In Hopi____, In Navajo ____.

Ask students to touch their nose? Mouths? belly, foot *introduce one language/one day

[Hopi body parts](#): Göti (Head), Höömi (Hair), Poosi (Eye), Yaka (Nose), Moa (Mouth), Nakuve (ear), gwaxpi (neck), maat (hand), bunu (belly), Hokya (leg), göxgö (foot)

[Spanish body parts](#): I will ask my students and they will teach me and others. (see link)

[Navajo body parts](#): bitsiits'iin (head), tsée (hair), binaa' (eye), áchëë (nose), bi'koos (neck), bijaa' (ear), bila' (hands), bigaah (arms), bikee (feet), bijáád (leg)

Assessment: create activity sheet with body parts, asking students to match in Spanish, then try matching in Hopi.

Extension: "Teddy Bear Song"

In the Navajo Tradition and way of life, babies are tied in a cradle board. I will show my students pictures of my own children who once slept comfortably in a cradleboard.

This next lesson involves maintaining a beat with actions while learning to count up to 8 in English, Spanish, Navajo, & Hopi. I would use this lesson as an introduction to a Native American tribe. For example, If we are learning about the Hopi tribe I will use this at the beginning of the lesson to set the stage.

Lesson: Music and movement

Grade: 1st-Grade

Standard:

1.a with appropriate guidance, explore, experience & improvise musical concepts ex: beat

1.7.a with appropriate guidance, list personal musical interest

Objective: SW be able to...

- Learn body parts/names
- Count up to 8 in Spanish, Hopi, Navajo

Materials: Song: Opening song by Shelly Cooper "It's So Good To See You"

It's so good to see you, that I could hardly wait. Would you (tap your head) and count to eight

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

[Spanish:](#) Uno, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis, siete, ocho *continue to 9,10 and so forth

[Navajo:](#) 1- t'áálá'í, 2- naaki, 3- táá', 4- díí, 5- ashdla', 6- hastaa, 7- tsosts'id, 8- tseebíí, 9- náhást'éeí, 10- neeznáá

[Hopi:](#) 1-suukay', 2-lööyöm, 3-páayom, 4-naalöyöm, 5-tsvot, 6-navay, 7-tsange', 8-nanalt, 9-pevt, 10-pakwt

Procedure:

1. Teacher will sing a simple song for students while they listen and do the actions
2. Repeat the melody and change "tap your head to another option:
Tap your toes, tap your knees, tap your chin, tap your ears, tap your belly
3. Try counting up to 8 in Spanish, or Navajo or Hopi

This next lesson is a Native American Storytelling with puppets. Students will act out the play using puppets while the teacher reads the story. Some students can add simple Bordun accompaniment on Xylophones. "A person is *transported* in story, thus open to hearing and participating in what one would not listen to or entertain in ordinary life." (Boyea, 2000, p.17)

Lesson: Blue bird and Coyote.

Grade: 1st-grade & 4th-grade

Standard:

1.4.d explore & describe musical concepts (vocal quality, movement dynamics, tempo, melodic contour)

1.6.a with appropriate guidance, perform music with expression (dynamics)

1.6.b perform appropriately for the audience and occasion

4.4.a demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, purpose, and context.

4.10.a identify pieces of music that are important to your family or cultural heritage.

4.8.a demonstrate and describe expressive attributes and how they support creator's/performances expressive intent.

Objective: Students will be able to...

- I can listen to the story and tell my partner who the characters are.
- I can discuss what happens at the beginning, middle and end of the story.
- I can retell the story using puppets
- I can sing or hum the vocables in the song "bluebird"

Materials: Song: Nikosi (bluebirds), Spotlight On Music, Macmillan, 2nd-grade p.230 CD12,song2.

Book: Native North American Stories retold by Robert Hull, p.32-34 1 bluebird, 1 coyote puppet, drum, rattle, & various classroom instruments *if no puppets, use picture cut-out

LINK: book Coyote and the bluebird by Malachy Doyle or you may use online version 1 [Bluebird and Coyote](#) or version 2 [Bluebird and Coyote](#) There are many different stories about Coyote and each Native American tribe have some similarities and differences. All share a common feature about a coyote's character; who is neither good nor bad, but is highly mischievous, and often portrayed as a trickster.

Procedure:

1. SW listened to a story from youtube "Bluebird and Coyote" from the PIMA tribe.
 2. After the video, discuss with students what happened in the beginning, middle & the end.
 3. Discuss the character coyote and how he is always mischievous or a trickster.
 4. SW listen to the song "Nikosi" (Bluebirds) a Hopi Lullaby.
 5. Review with students what a lullaby is.
 6. Once students hear the song ask them to try to sing along with the song. Singing vocables
 7. Exploring with movement have students pretend to fly, swoop, glide, flutter, perch. Try moving like a coyote, sneaky, low movements. What would a coyote look like if he was acting like a bird? awkwardly flying trying to be a bird. How about a coyote swimming?
 8. TW uses a drum to keep the beat and play along with the song, while students try to learn the song.
 9. I will select various students to accompany using a native american drum.
 10. Once we can sing the song, we will add puppets and try to re-enact the story.
- On a different day repeat above but this time add the Rattle
11. Add a rattle. I will show an authentic Hopi rattle that was given to me.
 12. Talk about the materials used to make a rattle. I will compare different types of gourds: show a gourd (shakare) and talk about the process of gourd making.
 13. SW watch a [short video](#) on how a gourd is made. Tohono O'odham Youth Artist, "My Gourd Awakes" by Chandra Thomas
 14. SW watch & listen to the "[gourd dance](#)" from gathering of nations 2022 pow-wow" read an excerpt on "pow-wow".

15. Use egg shakers, maracas to follow along with the music.

Expanded: dance to the song “[Blue](#)” (Da Ba Dee) Dance Pop

This next lesson is an Apache love story using the Native American flute. Students will act out the play using props while the teacher reads the story. This lesson I learned while attending Arizona Orff workshops, I’m not sure which year it was, but I always held onto this lesson. “Music aligns with the story and both are deeply pervasive to all aspects of Indian life.” (Boyea, 2000, p.14)

Lesson: The Song of the Flute

Grade: 1st & 4th-grade

Standard:

1.11.b with appropriate guidance, explore how context eg. social, cultural, historical can inform a performance

1.5.b with appropriate guidance apply personal, teachers, & peer feedback to refine performance

4.4.a demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, purpose, and context.

4.6 perform music with appropriate expression, technique, and interpretation.

Objective: Students will be able to...

- Listen to a story and discuss beginning, middle and end
- Play instruments to create an atmosphere for

Materials: The book: The Flute Player: An Apache Folktale by Michael Lacapa, any recording of Carlos Nakai. Xylophone or small set of tone bells, drum, toy flute, a leaf

Procedure:

1. Teacher will read the story while students act the parts

Choose a girl to pantomime the girl in the story

Choose a boy to be the flute player

Choose a person to be the leaf floating down the river

Choose bell players to play soft glissandos up and down the glockenspiels

2. Read story and add dramatization

3. Repeat with new players

* For a younger audience a simplified version will suffice, for older students the entire book.

Conclude with: the next time your in the forest and hear wind in the trees you might think it’s the flute player (play flute music by Carlos Nakai)

Extension: Upper grade can try playing a simple Native American flute piece with a recorder instrument. Adding trills, long tones, and improvisation (make up as you go)

Mrs. Smiley will show students an authentic Native American flute that was handcrafted by Artist and my older brother, Darrell Smiley, when he attended Santa Fe School of Arts.

This next lesson is creating atmospheric music and nature sounds using classroom instruments. Students will create found sounds with instruments while the teacher reads the story. Some students can add simple Bordun accompaniment on Xylophones. “Both music and story connect with the Great Story.” (Boyea, 2000, p.14)

Lesson: Atmospheric Music using classroom instruments.

Grade: 1st-Grade

Standard:

1.b with appropriate guidance, explore musical features ex: movement, vocalization, musical instrument accompaniment

1.5.a with appropriate guidance apply personal, teacher, & peer feedback to refine performance

1.6.b perform appropriately for the audience and occasion

Objective: Students will be able to...

- Experience crescendo and decrescendo
- Respond to conductor's cue of crescendo and decrescendo
- Imitate the sounds of nature Ex: bird sounds

Materials: The book: "And Then There Were Birds: A Native American Tale" retold by Casey Lynn Allen, various classroom instruments, contra bass bars or tone bars, many bird whistles Rain sticks (Big, medium, small), class set of hand drums, Tree chime, glockenspiels or 8 tone bells, thunder sheet, thunder maker, wind tube, various wood instruments.

Intro: Teacher will share with students my Navajo clan, because my first clan is Tábááhí meaning Water's Edge Clan. Native Americans have deep cultural connection to things that are sacred and water is one of those. Why might you think water is important for the desert here in Arizona? I will then share my Diné clan because my first clan is the water clan. Today, we will attempt to create a gentle rain using the rainstick then on the hand drum. I will share a personal story about the time I visited my relatives in Rock Point, Arizona. One summer visit, it was hot and dry. The weather was teasing the people with clouds because it never rained, the people would see the clouds but the clouds would pass by. On one of my visits, my auntie was very happy to see my sister and I bring our families to visit with them. One of her first words to us was "Tábááhí came to visit us, and she sprinkled water on us, so that we could bless the land with rain." Kids, do you know what happened? Yes, it rained that day. This is how our traditions are shared and knowledge is passed down and lived in the everyday Navajo way of life.

1. Read the book, And Then There Were Birds; A Native American Tale.
2. Discussed what happened in the story at the Beginning, Middle and the End.
3. TW demonstrate the sounds of a rainstick. Did that sound like rain? Talk about the [Rainstick](#). Have students try turning the rainstick upside down.
4. If you have more than one rainstick, Do they sound the exact same? How are they different? (I have a tall rainstick, a medium sized, a small rain stick and a slender rainstick made from bamboo.)
5. Discuss how the sounds gradually build up to a rainstorm when you turn the rainstick slowly.
6. Explore sounds for Rain, Nahatín, on a hand drum, first rub hand drums with hands create soft wind (Níłchíd), next using fingers to imitate soft rain, Niłtsá bíaa', (representing female rain), increase speed and more fingers to imitate a trickle of rain, Taayiidigo, (trickle) next use entire hands to drum for the downpour, representing Male rain (Biizłiigo) (crescendo then decrescendo) working backwards to smooth sound, the rain has past. More information on [Rain](#)
7. Re-Read the story and try the above rainstorm with hand drums (see below) pick groups of 2-4

Rainstorm: crescendo and decrescendo sound of rain.

Read P.3 trees (tree chime & glissando up on glockenspiels), flowers (High, Middle, low on glockenspiels), grass (glissandos rolls upward)

Read p.4 various wooden instruments

Read p.5 use Thunder sheet for cold wind

Read p.6 wood instruments play High to low

Read p.7 Use wind tube to make sound of wind

Read p.8 put wooden instruments down and pick up bird whistles

Read p.9 Next group, put instruments down and pick up bird whistles

Read p.10 Next group put down instruments and pick up bird whistles

End: All birds

Expanded: What comes after a rain? Rainbow. Sing a Fun [Rainbow Song](#)

4th will sing “Over the Rainbow” you tube

In the Navajo tradition the rainbow, Nááts’íilid, is a symbol of protection and it is also the pathway that holy ones travel on. I will unveil the Navajo Nation Flag. I will show a picture of rainbows and I will share with my students that in the Navajo way we use our thumbs to point to a rainbow, because we view it as a sacred symbol. When students sing rainbow song they will point with their thumbs.

Assessment

Students will meet expectations through observation, participation, and anecdotal notes. Students will be able to sing or hum a melody or participate by playing with musical instruments. Students will participate in a grade level performance. Grading will be based on participation. The goal is to experience making “atmospheric music” and reflect on using instruments to make sounds of nature.

Did students respect the instruments and each other?

How well did the partners work at taking turns?

How well did students play echo patterns?

Did students sing the vocables correctly?

Can students sing Native American vocables? Or hum?

Can students keep a steady beat?

Review key words: drum, rattles, rainsticks, xylophones, woods, metals, shakers, crescendo, decrescendo, vocables

Resources

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- Cooper, Shelly. It's so good to see you. Music activity. Lesson learned from Shelly Cooper during Arizona Music Educators Conference
- Teddy bear song.
- Bluebird & Coyote. Pima story on youtube
- Thomas, Chandra. My Gourd Awake. Youtube video
- Drummerly. Native American Rainsticks. [Online](#)
- Drummerly. Native American Drum. [Online](#)
- Borderlore. Native American Gourds. [Online](#)
- Blue youtube**
- Rainbow song. **You tube**