

## Sample Lesson: Grade 3, Create Domain

Project	Creating with Poetry	
Standard(s)	<b>3.GM.Cr1.B</b> Use parameters such as improvising/composing a 2-4 measure musical idea, a pentatonic melody, or a rhythm pattern using limited note values to generate musical ideas. <b>3.GM.Cr2.A</b> Using musical ideas to be performed, demonstrate and discuss personal reasons for selecting musical ideas. <b>3.GM.Cr3.B</b> Demonstrate a final version of personal musical ideas using created vocal, instrumental, or movement pieces through performance.	
Unpack the standard to set learning targets		
What will the students know?	Structure of various poem forms How to transform a poem into a song	
What will the students understand?	Students will understand the shared characteristics between poetry and music	
What will the students be able to do?	Students will be able to create a poem and then, from there, create a song using that poem.	
Consider what the learning will look like		
<b>Presenting Content</b> How will students engage with the content?	Students will create a poem and then set it to music.	
<b>Activities, Space, and Materials</b> What level of choice will students have?	Ideally barred instruments, enough for 1 for every 2-3 students	
<b>Academic Feedback</b> What feedback will students get from the teacher about their learning? How will students give feedback to each other? How will students give feedback to the instructor?	The small group interaction will drive student feedback. This will include performing for the class and getting feedback from other groups.	
Connections		
Literacy	Writing poetry as lyrics	
Reflections and Assessment		



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**3.GM.Cr3.B** Demonstrate a final version of personal musical ideas using created vocal, instrumental, or movement pieces through performance.

## Lesson Guidance:

The creating with poetry activity is meant as a springboard for your own creative ideas. But ultimately, it is an example of how to get your students to create their own compositions. This is a long-term project that will likely span several weeks. Don't forget your other curricular goals!

1. Pick a topic. Then, have the students generate ideas and then use voting to select the final choice.
2. Begin with text. Either use a short poem or guide the class in creating their own. Some useful poem forms:
  - a. Cinquain - advantage is no rhyme scheme; probably have to modify for song
  - b. Acrostic - advantage is no rhyme scheme
  - c. Limerick - a bit tricky due to the set rhythm of this form
  - d. Haiku - works great as a soundscape, but can be tricky due to the syllable rules
  - e. Quatrain - 4 lines, rhyme pattern AABB or ABAB - very song friendly!
3. Practice reciting poem; when the words are memorized, it's time for the next step.
4. Set up barred instruments in a pentatonic key of your choice (remove the *fas* and *tis*.) Have students explore the poem on the instruments. Eventually, help them make it sound more like a song by starting and ending on Do (end the penultimate phrase on Sol to give it a very strong suggestion of dominant/tonic.
5. Now it's time to make the actual song. There are a few options here.
  - a. Assign small groups to create a melody to play for the class. The class decides which group's melody (or melodies) to use. Downside - this takes a lot of time.



- b. Teacher improvises ideas in front of the class. As the students respond to ideas they like, sketch the letter names next to the text on the board.
  - c. Save time by simply composing the melody yourself and present it to the class
- 6. Once the class is comfortable singing the song, it is time to add movement. Possibilities:
  - a. Have the entire class “act out” their own ideas.
  - b. Create small groups. Encourage high, medium, and low levels. Have the groups perform for the class and invite feedback. Encourage copying other groups’ best ideas. Vote.
- 7. Create at least a B section. The easiest way to do this is to create a rhythm chant based on the song. Start by listing words that fit the poem’s theme, looking for words with rhythmic appeal. The sky is the limit here. The B section can be spoken text, body percussion, unpitched percussion, etc. The goal here is contrast to the A section.
- 8. Create a form. Some good possibilities include ABABA, ABAB, ABACA. All of a sudden, the 10 second melody is now at least a minute long! Perhaps after the A section, each small group performs their own movement piece. Now you have a rondo. The key is to find simple ways to extend the music by adjusting the form.
- 9. One of the last things to do is create accompaniment. Assign a simple bordun to the bass xylophone to set the tonality. (Steady beat or rhythm pattern on Do and Sol.) Add in color parts by having a couple of glockenspiels play the tonic in octaves at the end of the phrases. If you want the composition to sound a little fancier, consider writing in a complementary ostinato for alto xylophones. A simple rhythm pattern on unpitched percussion can also work very well.
- 10. After rehearsing a few times, record it so that the students can view the results. Allow the students to make suggestions for fine-tuning either the performance or even the composition itself. This process should result in a satisfying composition that can be presented on stage. The best part is that the students created the vast majority of it!