

Composing with Boomwhackers®

Songs, Activities Reproducible Worksheets

Take your students through a sequential process
that will enable them to compose with Boomwhackers®,
recorders or Orff instruments

Includes performance/accompaniment CD
by Denise Gagne

Download Print Permission: The purchaser of this download is permitted to print ONE copy only of this publication. No sharing of this copy is allowed under international copyright law.

Themes & Variations

Box 25109 Deer Park PO, Red Deer, AB T4R 2M2
www.musicplay.ca Email: tvinfo@telus.net
Phone/Fax Toll Free: 1-888-562-4647 Printed in Canada
ISBN #: 1-894096-76-2
©2002, reprinted 2006

"Boomwhackers®" is a registered trademark under license to Whacky Music,
Inc. of Sedona, Arizona. For more information visit www.boomwhackers.com

Table of Contents

Activities and Photocopy Masters:

What are Boomwhackers®?	3
Activity #1: Follow the Leader	4
Activity #2: Improvisation	5
Ostinato Patterns to Accompany Improvisation	6
Activity #3: Improvisation Within a Song	7
Here's a Song That's Really Neat	8
Activity #4: Create a Rhythm Composition	9
Note Squares	10-12
Activity #5: Write Rhythms on a Beat Chart	13
Ten Ways to Play Rhythm Compositions	13
Beat Charts	14
Rhythm Compositions	15-17
Activity #6: ABA Form - Sing and Play a B Section	18-19
Activity #7: AABA Form - Sing and Play a B Section	20
Activity #8: Sing and Play a Rondo	21-23
Activity #9: Rhythm Composition with an Ostinato	24
Activity #10: Two Part Rhythm Composition	25
Activity #11: Three and Four Part Rhythm Compositions	26
Activity #12: Orchestrate a Poem	27-28
Chants and Poems to Orchestrate	29
Activity #13: Play a Three Note Melody	30-32
Activity #14: Create a Three Note Melody	33
Melody Template in 4/4	34
Melody Template in 3/4	35
Melody Template in 2/4	36
Activity #15: Play and Create do-mi-so Melodies	37-38
Activity #16: Play and Create Pentatonic Melodies	39-40
Activity #17: Play and Create Diatonic Melodies	41
Activity #18: Create a Melody for a Poem	42-43
Activity #19: Write Variations on a Theme	44-45
Activity #20: Write a Song	46-47
Manuscript Paper	48

Songs, Ensembles and Orchestrated Poems

		Page:			Page:
CD 1	Follow the Leader	4	CD 24	Two Little Sausages	28
CD 2/3	One One Time for Fun!	7	CD 25/26	Hot Cross Buns in C/F	30
CD 4/5	Here's a Song That's Really Neat	8	CD 27/28	Go Tell Aunt Rhody in C/F	31
	Two Part Ensembles	15	CD 29/30	Fais dodo in C/F	31
	Three Part Ensembles	16	CD 31/32	Mary Had a Little Lamb in C/F	32
	Four Part Ensembles	17	CD 33/34	Closet Key in C/F	32
CD 6/7	You Play it This Way	18	CD 35/36	Pease Porridge Hot	38
CD 8/9	Did You Ever Hear a Rhythm?	19	CD 37/38	Johnny One Hammer in C/F	38
CD 10/11	Pirolito se bate se bate	19	CD 39/40	Let us Chase the Squirrel in C/F	39
CD 12/13	Whacky Kind of Sound	20	CD 41	Make a Friend	40
CD 14/15	I Like to Play the Instruments	21	CD 42	Rocky Mountain	40
CD 16/17	Tingalayo	21	CD 43	Shortnin' Bread	40
CD 18/19	Whacky Kind of Music	22	CD 44	Tulip Round	41
CD 20/21	I am a Fine Musician	23	CD 45	Scale Round	41
CD 22/23	Cheki Morena	23	CD46	Variations on Hot Cross Buns	44

All About Boomwhackers

What are they?

Boomwhackers® Tuned Percussion Tubes are brightly colored plastic tubes that are tuned by length to musical notes. They were invented by Craig Ramsell of Sedona, Arizona. He was fooling around with cardboard wrapping paper tubes and discovered they were fun to play with. They can be used to play rhythms, melodies or chords. They are easy enough for very young children to play, but are intriguing enough to hold the interest of teenagers.

Boomwhackers are available for a reasonable price from most music stores. They are colored according to pitch - C is red, D is orange, E is yellow, F is lime green, G is dark green, A is purple, B is fuchsia and high C is a small red tube. The activities in this book can all be done with four sets of diatonic Boomwhackers (CDEFGABC). Four sets give you 32 tubes so that each child in the class can have one. (The Pentatonic set has 6 tubes - CDE GA C'.) One of the reasons that Boomwhackers have become such a big hit is that they are affordable enough for every child to have an instrument. Many elementary schools have only a few barred percussion instruments but every elementary school can afford a set of Boomwhackers.

The complete diatonic and chromatic scales are available in two octaves. You can add chromatics and bass Boomwhackers to your basic set. You can also purchase octavator™ tube caps that make any tube sound an octave lower. The bass Boomwhackers are quite long and somewhat difficult for younger students to play. My recommendation for younger students would be to use the octavator caps to create a bass sound rather than using the bass Boomwhackers.

How to play them:

Boomwhackers® will give the same pitch wherever you hit them. However, the timbre changes depending on how you hit them. You can hit them into your hand, on your knee, thigh, shoe, or on the floor. The best sound will result if you hit a few inches from the end of the tube. Experiment to find the best tone. If you want a much louder sound, grasp the tube in the middle and plunk it flat down on the floor. If you want to play faster notes, hold your hand above your thigh and rapidly alternate hitting the Boomwhacker between your hand and your thigh. You can also do this between your knees. You can hit the Boomwhacker with a rhythm stick or with another Boomwhacker. Use common sense if you choose to whack your body.

Boomwhackers are very durable and should last indefinitely with normal use. Avoid hitting abrasive surfaces which can scratch the tubes. Longer tubes may wrinkle in the middle if you hit them too hard or hold them incorrectly. The sound won't change if they wrinkle, but they don't look as nice. To avoid wrinkling your Boomwhackers, hold longer tubes in the middle - not at the end. The tubes will fade if exposed to sunlight. I've used Boomwhackers inside on carpet and outside on grass and cement. They scratched a little on the cement, but I've had no other problems. You can clean Boomwhackers® with a soft, damp cloth.

Begin with activities that involve the entire class doing the same thing at the same time. The songs and the ensembles that are given in this collection are to be played and sung by the entire class. Give your students lots of experience playing rhythm compositions in class before dividing them into groups to create their own. If your room is too small to have four or five groups composing at the same time, consider taking your students outside to the playground. Save the small group composition activities until the weather is nice enough to go out.

More information about playing Boomwhackers can be found at www.boomwhackers.com.

What are the Standards?

Standards refer to MENC list of what a quality music program should include. The standards are:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Visit www.menc.org for more information on the standards. This book addresses many of the standards.

Activity #1: Follow the Leader

Objectives:

Standards: 1, 2, 3

- ♪ The students will be able to keep a steady beat.
- ♪ The students will be able to watch the leader and copy exactly what they do.
- ♪ The students will be able to demonstrate the routine for handing out Boomwhackers®.

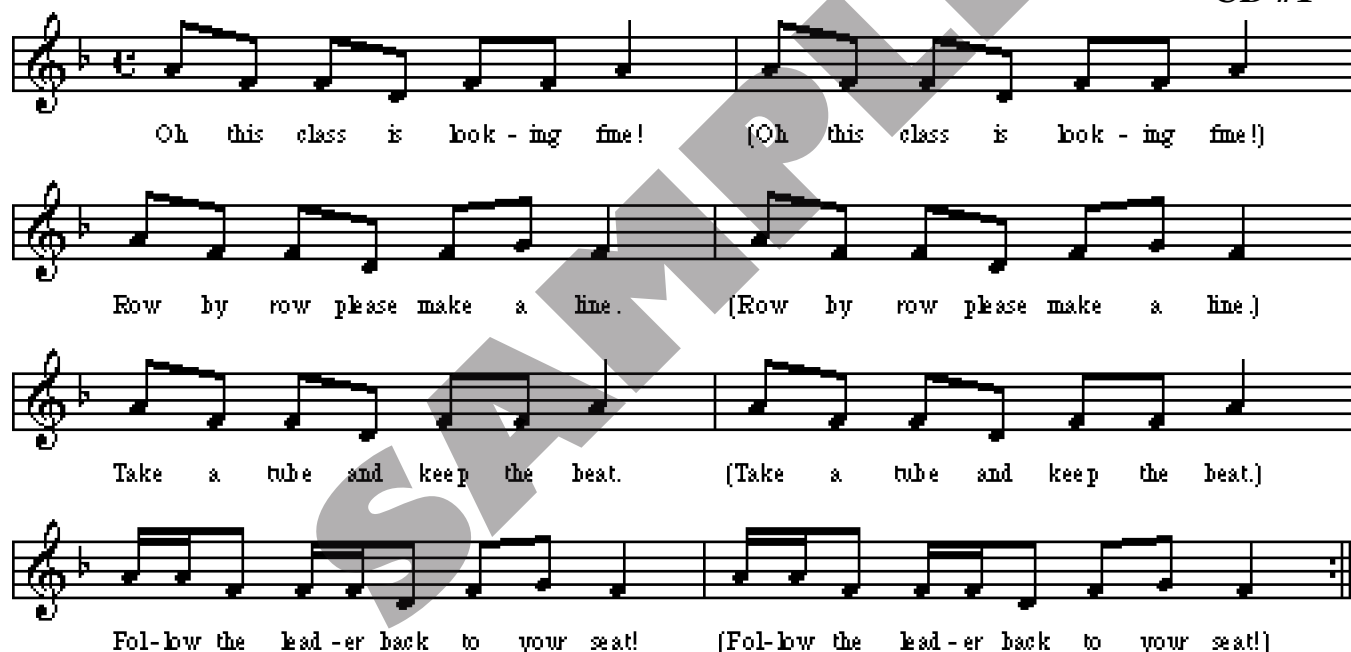
Materials to use:

- ♪ Pentatonic Boomwhackers® - one for each student C D E G A C'

As soon as children have Boomwhackers® in their hands, they want to play. Instead of dealing with management problems trying to keep them quiet while handing them out, have the students follow their rows in a line, pick up a tube and begin keeping a beat. Ask the students to keep the beat exactly as you do. Chant the song as you begin.

Follow the Leader

CD #1



Oh this class is look - ing fine! (Oh this class is look - ing fine!)

Row by row please make a line. (Row by row please make a line.)

Take a tube and keep the beat. (Take a tube and keep the beat.)

Fol-low the lead - er back to your seat! (Fol-low the lead - er back to your seat!)

Begin with the beat in your hands, but move the beat around to explore many different ways of playing the Boomwhacker. Try playing on your elbow, shoulder, shoe, floor, thigh, or desk. If you want to end with flourish, bang the tube full length on the floor. This creates the loudest sound the Boomwhacker can make. While playing, experiment with different dynamic levels and different tempos. Try having the students play only when you hold up their color. Switch colors frequently. By changing the way that you lead the class, you give them a reason to watch you. The ability to watch you while playing a beat will help students in choirs and bands learn to watch and follow a conductor.

When you do want the students to hold Boomwhackers quietly, use this chant written by Danece Workman:

“If you play before I say, I’ll take your instrument away.”

If indeed someone forgets, take their Boomwhacker away until they demonstrate that they can wait quietly.

Activity #2: Improvisation

Objectives:

Standards: 2, 3, 5

- ♪ The students will improvise rhythms while maintaining a steady beat.
- ♪ The students will play only when their color is held up.

Materials to use:

- ♪ Pentatonic Boomwhackers® - one for each student C D E G A C'
- ♪ Hand drum

Before beginning to create written compositions, students need many opportunities to improvise. There is a multitude of ways that you can have students improvise. Play a steady beat on a hand drum and ask all the students to improvise rhythms. Change meters. Play the beat in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8 meters. Try some improvisation in 5/4 and 7/4. Encourage the students to play the Boomwhackers® in a variety of ways - on hands, feet, shoes, desks, the floor, or elbows. They should use common sense when playing Boomwhackers on their body. I draw the line at playing the Boomwhackers on another student. (They are only allowed to play on their own body.) Have the students move to the beat while they play. They may find some interesting timbres around the classroom.

In the beginning, have everyone play at the same time. Then have students sit down and ask only those whose color is shown, to play. Place various color combinations on a music stand at the front of the room. If their color is on the stand, the student plays. If not, they rest. You could have students that are not playing Boomwhackers keep a steady beat using body percussion: In 4/4 use pat, clap, snap left, snap right. In 3/4 use pat, clap, snap. Challenge your students to find a different rhythm and timbre than those around them. If your students get stuck on ta ta titi ta, have them begin each measure with a titi.

Have students answer questions with the Boomwhackers®. Teacher says, "What is your name?" playing the words on the Boomwhacker. Student answers, "My name is Allyson". Encourage the students to use silly answers as well as real ones. "My name is macaroni" or "My name is Jessica, the greatest rock star ever". Have the rest of the class echo the answers. Make up questions with open ended answers. "What is your favorite food?"

Make overheads or charts of the Boomwhacker ostinatos that are given on page six. Choose an ostinato and assign a group to play it. Use other combinations of colors to improvise. You could create a rondo using this form: Theme A: ostinato 4x

B: Improvise on orange (D), yellow (E), and green (G).

Theme A: ostinato 4x

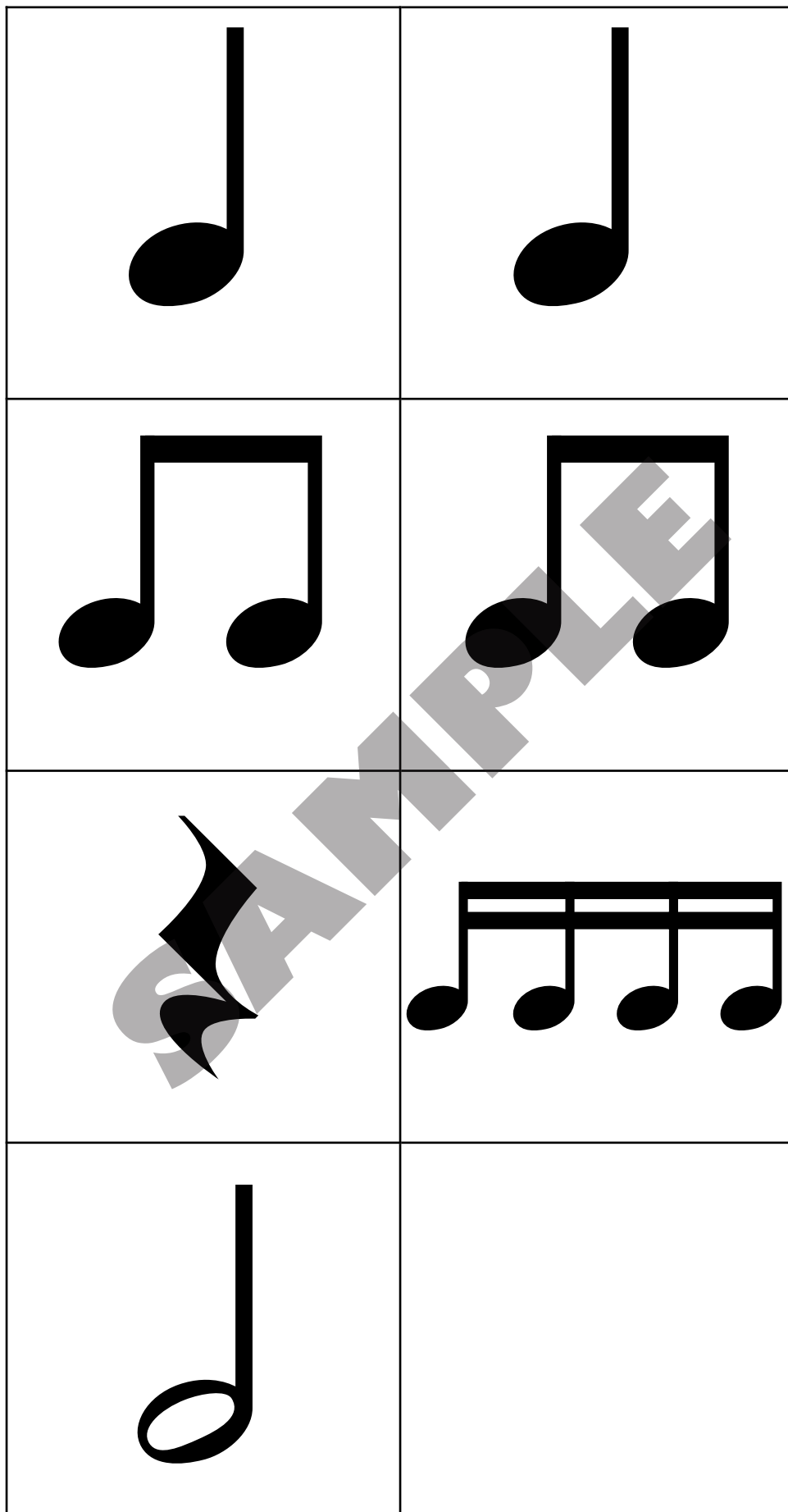
C: Improvise on yellow (E) and green (G).

Theme A: ostinato 4x

















D: Improvise on green (G), purple (A), and small red (high C).

Theme A: ostinato 4x Decrescendo till the end.













As a class, create your own ostinato patterns. (This must be a teacher led activity.) Use colored, washable overhead markers to notate the suggested patterns in one of the blank ostinato templates that are given on page six. Ask students to suggest tones and rhythms to use. Try them and ask the students which they like the best. Write down the patterns on the overhead that the students prefer. Improvise with your new ostinato. If you have time, copy 10-15 blank ostinato templates. Divide the class into small groups and have each group write an ostinato pattern.



Beat Chart One - 4/4 time

Beat Chart Two - 3/4 time

Chants and Poems to Orchestrate

To Do: Choose a poem to play on your Boomwhackers®.

1. Say your poem. Then say your poem playing it on Boomwhackers. Decide how you want to play it.
2. Try it. Do you like the way it sounds? If not, what would you like to change?
3. Create an ostinato to play with your poem. Use Boomwhackers®, body percussion or drums.
4. Try the poem with the ostinato. Do you like the way it sounds? If not, what would you like to change?
5. Add sound effects, accompaniment and movement.
6. Decide on a final form. Perform it for the class.

Doctor Bell

Doctor Bell fell down the well
And broke his collar bone.
Doctors should attend the sick
And leave the well alone.

Juba This and Juba That

Juba this and Juba that
Juba chased a yellow cat
Juba up and Juba down
Juba running all around

Once I Caught a Fish

One, two, three, four, five,
Once I caught a fish alive,
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten,
Then I let go again.

Why did you let it go?
Because it bit my finger so.
Which finger did it bite?
This little finger on the right.

Round And Round The Rugged Rock

Round and round the rugged rock
The ragged rascal ran,
Count the R's that are in that!
Tell me if you can.

Doodle Doodle Doo

Doodle, doodle, doo,
The princess lost her shoe;
Her highness hopped
The fiddler stopped,
Not knowing what to do.

Jelly in the Bowl

Jelly in the bowl,
Jelly in the bowl,
Wibble wobble, wibble wobble,
Jelly in the bowl.

Andy Spandy

Andy Spandy, sugar candy, I pop down,
Andy Spandy, sugar candy, I pop up,
Andy Spandy, sugar candy, I pop in.
Andy Spandy, sugar candy, I pop out.

Sitting in the Classroom

Sitting in the classroom
Chewing bubble-gum
In walks the principal
Out goes the gum!

Don't Say Ain't

Don't say ain't
Your mother will faint
Your father will fall in a bucket of paint
Your sister will cry and your brother might fly
And your grandmother won't bake an apple pie
And the dog and the cat will say goodbye.

Goblins and Ghosties

Goblins and ghosties
Beasties and bats
Show us a face
That looks like that!

The Turkey Got Away

Oh my goodness, the turkey got away!
What will we eat on Thanksgiving Day?

Here is the Chimney

Here is the chimney
Here is the top
Open the lid and
Out Santa pops!

As I Was Sitting

As I was sitting in my chair,
I KNEW the bottom wasn't there,
Nor legs nor back, but I JUST SAT,
Ignoring little things like that.

Here Comes the Teacher Yelling

Here comes the teacher yelling
Wonder what I got in spelling?
Now he's coming up the path
Wonder what I got in math?

Motion

Fishes swim in water clear,
Birds fly up into the air,
Serpents creep along the ground,
Boys and girls run round and round.