

EIGHT BUILDING BLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANS

Using The BandQuest CD-ROM

MODULE

CD-ROM BUTTON

1. INTRODUCING THE PIECE PLAY
A Model Of High Quality Performance
Before rehearsing the piece for the first time, students can listen to a performance of *Grandmother Song* by the University of Minnesota Wind Ensemble, either by playing the selection in a CD player, or by clicking the PLAY button on the control panel while running the CD-ROM program on a computer. If the computer is wired to a video monitor, the whole class can watch the performance.
2. TEACHING THE PIECE TEACHER'S GUIDE: RHYTHM DRILL
Rehearsing The Piece Through Group Instruction
Print out the RHYTHM DRILL sheets and apply them to develop the students' abilities to play the dotted and syncopated rhythms that are required in *Grandmother Song*. Printable warm-up activities are also provided to assist the students in understanding hemiola and imitation. Use the Vocable Tutorial to guide the students in singing the vocables in *Grandmother Song* in a more authentic way.
3. MODIFYING INSTRUCTION FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS SKILL BUILDERS: RHYTHM DRILL
Individualized Drill of Specific Knowledge And Technique
If particular students find reading rhythms to be challenging, assign practice with the RHYTHM DRILLS in the SKILL BUILDERS file to enhance their ability to count and perform their parts. Students can also utilize PLAY YOUR PART within the SKILL BUILDERS button for a complete recording of the work to play with and practice their part alone, play with the entire recorded work, or practice with the band minus their part.
4. USING THE PIECE TO TEACH MUSICAL CONCEPTS TEACHER'S GUIDE: TEACHING STRATEGIES
The TEACHING STRATEGIES file (in the Teacher's Guide) provides a list of musical elements contained within *Grandmother Song*. The table identifies specific measures where each concept is illustrated. The director may select a different concept for each rehearsal. Examples from *Grandmother Song* that include the concept can be compared with examples that do not. Students may be asked to identify examples where the concept is used in other pieces they are rehearsing. By the time the rehearsal process is completed, students will be able to perform the piece well and demonstrate how the concepts they have learned can be applied to other pieces of music.
5. LEARNING ABOUT CONTEXT COMPOSERS BIO, PROGRAM NOTES, GUIDED LISTENING
Enhancing An Understanding Of The Music Being Performed
As a class or individually, students may access the composer's biography, program notes, and the guided listening to learn what influenced the composer to create the piece, the form of the piece, how the piece relates to other historical examples with a similar structure or context, and the composer's background and training. Students can use this information to create their own program notes for *Grandmother Song* or as a guide for researching program notes for other compositions they perform.

6. NURTURING CREATIVITY: MAKING AESTHETIC CHOICES CREATE: ORCHESTRATION ACTIVITY
Students can re-orchestrate *Grandmother Song* by choosing different combinations of instruments and then describe why they selected particular sounds. Students can enter their selections and use software to play their new orchestration for the class.
7. CONNECT MUSIC WITH OTHER DISCIPLINES SCIENCE OF SOUND
A description of Brent Michael Davids' design and construction of lead crystal flutes exposes students to his role as a musical inventor, as well as composer. The SCIENCE OF SOUND helps students understand the essential components of musical sound. Wave form, frequency, and amplitude are explained and illustrated with examples and activities. A brief description of the history and cultural examples of instruments are provided in the EVOLUTION OF BRASS, WOODWIND AND PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS. MUSIC AND CULTURE CONNECTIONS allows students to explore traditional American Indian music, the powwow, and contemporary American Indian music and musicians, to help students understand the influence of Brent Michael Davids' Mohican heritage on his creation of *Grandmother Song*.
8. ASSESSING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT SKILL BUILDERS: PLAY WITH YOUR PART and GAMES
Students may assess their own knowledge of concepts taught by playing the games to see how well they match pitch, define terms, and aurally identify musical examples of American Indian music. Games scores can be printed for your documentation. The questions posed in the games may be paired with rhythm drills and used to teach and construct quizzes. Students can also use rhythm drills to prepare for quizzes. Assessment suggestion: collect individual performances of *Grandmother Song* by recording each student as they perform a part of *Grandmother Song* through this section on the CD-ROM, omitting of *Grandmother Song*.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

- The interactive nature of the CD-ROM program is an enticing means to motivate students.
- In band rehearsals, students shouldn't just learn pieces of music they are rehearsing. They should use the pieces of music they are rehearsing to learn about music.
- In many band programs, teachers are not able to provide instruction through individual or small group lessons. Documenting achievement and assigning a grade based on large group rehearsal is a challenge. Using the CD-ROM program provided with *BandQuest* pieces can help generate student products that can be assessed (e.g., print out a score earned on games, an ensemble composed by experimenting with syncopated rhythms, program notes, a tape of individual performance with the computer playing the other parts).