Making Music Mixes with Mixcraft 5 Recording Software

Lessons 033 - 034
DATES Apr. 30 – May 11, 2012 (2 classes)
Lessons © www.musictechteacher.com / Ms. Karen L. Garrett

The All City Band Evaluation Rehearsals, along with other scheduled school activities may affect some of the classes participating in music lessons at their usual time. The All City Band Evaluation is required by the Board of Education each year and is considered to be the 'ARMT' standardized test for our music students to assess progress.

Essential Questions / Ideas:
* What is a music mix?
* How do you create the mix?
* What features in Mixcraft 5 software will you use for creating your song or music mix?

Objectives:
* Students will learn to use basic features in Mixcraft 5 music software from Acoustica.com.
* Students will create a short project using Mixcraft software using their computers.
* Selected students will practice *I'll Be There* / We Shall Overcome / Tuxedo Junction on the keyboard for the All City Band Evaluation.
* Younger students will complete pages in the Alfred Basic Piano Library Level 1A (based on student level) or work on their Noteflight accounts in music composition.

Materials:
* Alfred 1A Piano Books, keyboards and related equipment
* Computers with an Internet connection for the Noteflight.com notation program.
* Computers with Mixcraft 5 software installed and Mixcraft 5 PDF Manual (a few students may have to share computers due to installation limitations).
* *I'll Be There* / We Shall Overcome / Tuxedo Junction (arrangements for keyboard by Ms. Garrett).
* Digital / Video camera for recording students rehearsing All City selections.

Standards:
National Association for Music Education Standards:
  (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.
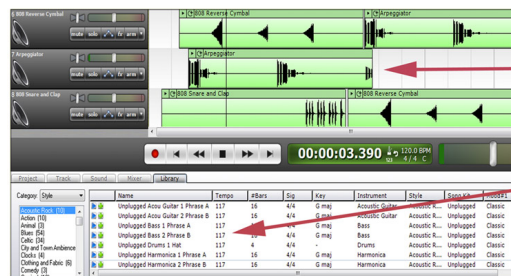 (6) Listening to, analyzing and describing music.

TI:ME Technology Strategies:
  (4) Technology-Assisted Learning
  (5) Multimedia and Digitized media

Making a Music Mix

Wave Loops on the Timeline

Music on the timeline

Library

3rd Grade Student's Music Mix
Apr.-May, 2012

MP3 Output
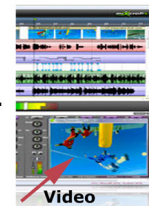
How do students make their song or music mix? Students take music loops from the music library and mix them up in any order to create a song. Every song will sound different, depending on what sounds or music loops are used. The students can save their music as an MP3 file and it can be copied to a CD, flash drive or to our website.

Next year, students will be able to add their own voices to the mix, along with videos that we will make in music class.

Video

Procedures:
1) The teacher will introduce Mixcraft recording software from Acoustica.com. Demonstrate features from the Mixcraft 5 PDF Manual.

** Basic Features: Starting a new song; Opening the Library of Loops; Dragging loops to the timeline; Deleting loops; making loops longer or shorter; adjusting the volumes on each track; Playing the music mix; Making an MP3 file; Saving files.
** Advanced Features: Pan (controlling which speaker plays); Adding effects (echo, delay); Adding our voices or instruments (microphones); Adding video (digital camera or video camera).

2) The students will create a short loop-based project with Mixcraft 5 in class after learning the features. The kids take quite a lot of time looking through the loop files and deciding which ones they like. Suggest folders of files that the students might be interested in to save time. Notice how students place the loops on the timeline and see if they can tell if the music 'sounds good' or if they are just stacking loops up visually instead of aurally. Students should save their work so they may continue working on it next week.
(Continued)

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3) Older students will continue practicing I'll Be There / *Tuxedo Junction / We Shall Overcome* for the All City Band Evaluation on May 8, 2012. This is the equivalent of our A.R.M.T. exam for music for the year. Approximately 12-14 students will perform for our evaluation, held in the music lab. Focus on phrasing and harmonies in *We Shall Overcome,* accidental notes in *Tuxedo Junction (especially E's and E flats)* and correct notes/rhythms/repeats in I'll Be There. One or two students will play the chords that accompany each song. The teacher should make a video of each rehearsal and play back sections for students to review and critique their performance.

4) Younger students will complete various pages in the Alfred Basic Piano Library Book 1 based on individual student progress. Video (digital camera) some of the students and post it using the projector for review and feedback. They also may choose to play songs from our website (Flash piano practice pages) or songs in their Noteflight accounts on the Internet.

5) Extra activities: There is a free version of a loop-based program (Acid Express 7) on the Internet on AcidPlanet.com. Students may make their own loops and music mix projects at home if they have an Internet connection or download the free program. This is a similar program to Mixcraft. Students may also continue writing songs with their Noteflight account provided by Ms. Garrett.

ACID Xpress 7
Music Creation and Mixing Software

Essential Questions / Ideas:
* What is a music mix?
* How do you create the mix?
* What features in Mixcraft 5 software will you use for creating your song or music mix?

A music mix is an arrangement of music loops or tracks from a software program. The mix can also include vocals or instruments recorded live by students. Some mixes can even include videos.

Students take music loops from the music library and mix them up in any order along a timeline to create a song. Every song will sound different, depending on what sounds or music loops are used. The students can save their music as an MP3 file and it can be copied to a CD, flash drive or to our website.

Some of the many features used to create the music mix are:
- loops in all styles of music, such as hip-hop, jazz, rock, house, R&B, etc.
- adding a real instrument like a keyboard or a vocal track of students singing,
- adding a video to the mix to work with the music that is created,
- controlling the volume and pan for each track (pan is sending sounds through different speakers).

Evaluation
* Younger students will complete one to two pages from the Alfred Basic Library Book on the keyboard with accuracy.
* Students will create a short loop-based song using music from Mixcraft and demonstrate an understanding of how to operate the program and save their work. (Progress will be noted by the teacher.)
* Older students will play the All City Music selections with accuracy, showing understanding of phrasing and introduced harmony and chords in *We Shall Overcome* and improving accidental notes in *Tuxedo Junction* and correcting notes/rhythms/repeats in *I'll Be There*. (*I'll Be There / We Shall Overcome / Tuxedo Junction* - Video Daily – 5th grade students.) The teacher will prepare the final list of students playing for the 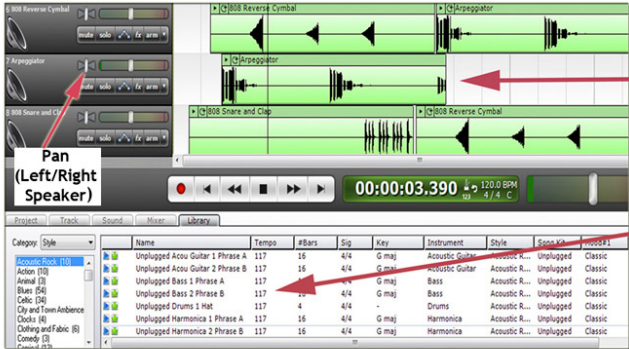test based on student performances in class.