

Beethoven Symphony No. 5, Mvt 1 – Motif

National Music Standards (rev. 2014)

Performing – Analyze: Analyze the structure and context of varied musical works and their implications for performance.

Learning Target

The student can identify the motif from the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony

Lesson Plan

Materials:

Audio recording of Beethoven Symphony No. 5, Mvt 1
YouTube video excerpt from *Fantasia 2000* (SEE Resources list)
Vocabulary visuals: *symphony, movement, motif, phrase, melody*
Notation for the central motif (SEE Resources list)

10-minute plan

Warmup:

Beethoven wrote a total of nine symphonies. A **symphony** is a long piece of music written for an orchestra to play. The music you'll hear today is from his fifth symphony. Beethoven began writing this music in 1804 and it took him four years to finish. While he was writing this music, he began to lose his hearing and he could hear a loud buzzing in his ears.

We will hear the first movement from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. A **movement** is how composers break the longer music up into shorter pieces. The fifth symphony has four movements. A movement in a symphony is like a chapter in a book.

Have students watch the YouTube excerpt from *Fantasia 2000*. After watching, have some students tell what they like about this music. Encourage use of music-specific vocabulary (refer to a word wall if this is available in your classroom).

30-minute plan

Direct Instruction:

Explanation of how motif, phrase and melody build a musical work.

In his Fifth Symphony, Beethoven uses a very short bit of music – only four notes – to tie all the music together. This four-note idea is called a **motif**. It is shorter than a phrase and too simple to be a melody. He uses the motif to build phrases. A **phrase** is like a musical sentence; several "musical sentences" or phrases make a **melody**.

The song "Happy Birthday" has four musical phrases." Have students sing the entire song as the teacher holds up finger numbers showing the phrases. "How many notes/syllables does the first phrase have (6)? The second? Third? Fourth? Which phrase is different than the others (3rd)? What pattern do these phrases make? (aaba)

Beethoven's **motif** in the Fifth Symphony is four notes long with the rhythm short-short-short-long. Show students the motif notation. Have them clap and sing this motif using the words, "Short-short-short-long".

Guided practice: *Students identify the motif in the music.*



You will hear the very beginning of the first movement from Symphony No. 5. Every time you hear the motif have the students clap and sing it again. Count on your fingers how many times it is played. Will you run out of fingers? Play the first 24 measures of movement one (until the restatement of the original motif that ends with a fermata). Ask students how many times they heard the motif played (14 times).

Listen again to check student answers. Teacher marks a tally mark on the board every time the motif is played.

Independent practice: Play the last 24 measures (coda) of movement one and have students count the number of times they hear the motif (10). Play it one more time for students to double-check their count.

Assessment

Exit ticket – either written on a slip of paper or students show finger numbers privately to teacher as they leave the classroom – students indicate the number of times they heard the motif in the coda.

Extension

Show the students a graphic representation of the score on YouTube. This is an effective visual representation of the motif in real time as the music is played. (SEE Resources list)

Artists with variations on this music on YouTube are:

Rollover Beethoven – Electric Light Orchestra (ELO)

<http://www.bing.com/search?q=youtube%20of%20rollover%20beethoven&pc=cosp&ptag=C1N0566D010816A316A5D3C6E&form=CONBDF&conlog=CT3210127>

Steve Vai – electric guitar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0pz2D7-k-M>

Trans-Siberian Orchestra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWSLYIJ39Qw>

Resources

Excerpt from *Fantasia 2000*

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=fantasia+2000+beethoven&view=detail&mid=3B159FFD37F41105C173B159FFDF37F41105C17&FORM=VIRE>

Downloadable piano solo transcription of Symphony 5, Mvt 1

<https://musescore.com/user/24069/scores/128179>

Introduction to Beethoven

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/profiles/16TQqdb1z7m7KMcN0F0p6vB/ludwig-van-beethoven

Symphony No. 5 graphic representation YouTube

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRgXUfnKIY